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UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON, GONZAGA UNIVERSITY ANNOUNCE UW MEDICAL SCHOOL PARTNERSHIP, LAUNCH INITIATIVE TO ADVANCE MEDICAL EDUCATION AND RESEARCH IN SPOKANE REGION

SPOKANE, Wash. — The University of Washington (UW) and Gonzaga University (GU) have signed an agreement to continue, enhance and expand medical education and research in Spokane. The agreement makes Gonzaga a partner in the University of Washington's regional, community-based medical education program and sets in motion plans to advance health related research, entrepreneurship and interdisciplinary health sciences teaching in Spokane.

"Finding solutions to our most pressing issues in health care requires breaking down the traditional barriers in higher education and working together for the benefit of our State and local community," said Gonzaga President Thayne McCulloh. "Uniting Gonzaga University's commitment to educational excellence, leadership and service with the UW's nationally-recognized medical school and research engine will continue the long tradition of educating doctors in eastern Washington, and not only for our faculty and students, but the entire Inland Northwest."

Starting fall 2016, the University of Washington School of Medicine-Gonzaga University Partnership will welcome its largest-ever entering class to dedicated facilities on the Gonzaga University campus. Gonzaga faculty will recruit, teach and mentor medical students together with UW faculty utilizing the UW's new, award-winning medical curriculum. The UW and GU will also embark on a collaborative Regional Health Initiative to develop shared facilities and high-impact, applied research. A dedicated executive director at Gonzaga, Spokane-based UW School of Medicine leadership, and a new Community Advisory Board will guide the development of the partnership.

"This is about more than a medical school, it's about community and economic vitality," said UW President Ana Mari Cauce. "Partnering with Gonzaga builds on the University of Washington's lasting commitment to Spokane and eastern Washington. Together with Gonzaga, we will educate the next generation of health professionals and enhance the health, well-being and prosperity of the entire region."

"As the Spokane region asks itself where it wants to be in the next decade, it is critical to consider that growing medical education and related research has a potential \$1.7 billion annual economic impact," said Scott Morris, CEO of Avista and Chair of the Gonzaga Board of Trustees. "This partnership will be a key part of reaching that goal."

For more than 40 years, the UW School of Medicine has provided medical education in Spokane and eastern Washington through a five-state, community-based medical education program called WWAMI. Today, more than 500 faculty in 18 communities throughout eastern Washington serve as educators and mentors for UW medical students. This year, the UW was selected by the American Medical Association as one of 20 medical schools to join a consortium to create the medical school of the future.

“One of the primary reasons the University of Washington is consistently ranked as the top primary and rural health care medical school in the nation is because of WWAMI’s community partnerships – and our partnership with Gonzaga will be no exception,” said Suzanne Allen, UW Medicine vice dean for academic, rural and regional affairs. “We want to thank the Spokane medical community and clinicians for their ongoing support and dedication to the University of Washington School of Medicine. We’re eager to find new ways this initiative can advance our shared commitment to advancing the health and vitality of the region.”

ABOUT THE UW:

Driven by the determination to transform our world, the faculty, staff, and students of the University of Washington are working to find solutions to today’s major challenges, from autism and Ebola to poverty and environmental sustainability. The UW is an engaged and active community united by a steadfast belief in discovering what’s possible. With multiple campuses, a world-class academic medical center, Pac-12 athletics and extensive continuing education programs, the opportunities here are boundless. Learn more at uw.edu.

ABOUT GU:

Gonzaga University is focused on the goals and passions of its students. Through skilled teaching from expert professors, a proud Jesuit liberal arts tradition, and a supportive, yet challenging community, GU helps students realize immense possibilities. At Gonzaga, students become the innovative, compassionate, and courageous people the world needs today. Situated along the Spokane River near downtown Spokane, Washington, Gonzaga is routinely recognized among the West's best comprehensive regional universities. The university offers 75 fields of study, 26 master's degrees, doctorate degrees in leadership studies and nursing, and a juris doctor degree through the School of Law. Learn more at www.gonzaga.edu.

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