

Our Residents

St. Joseph Hospital Family Medicine Residency Program

Class of 2026

Joie Akerson, MD



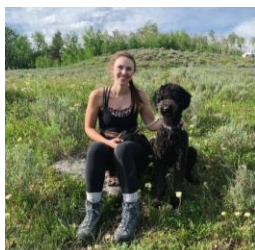
Hello! My name is Joie (pronounced Joey). I'm a Denverite – I was born at St. Joe's and attended East High School just down the street.

After a childhood of exploring the Rocky Mountains, I went to Wesleyan University in Connecticut where I majored in Neuroscience and Behavior and ran cross country. I spent the next few years working for a mental health start-up – an app focused on helping folks struggling with substance use disorder – in Chicago. The work sparked my passion for providing holistic care to marginalized populations and solidified my desire to build long-term relationships with patients of all ages and backgrounds.

In medical school, at Quinnipiac University, I fell in love with broad-spectrum family medicine. Like most of my family med colleagues, I am fascinated by all aspects of medicine, but I'm particularly interested in underserved care, reproductive justice, and environmental health.

I'm thrilled to be back west and serving my hometown as a member of the St. Joe's team. Outside of medicine, you can find me upcycling used furniture (read: nonstop sanding) or enjoying the mountains on foot, bike, or skis with my husband James, a surgery resident at CU.

Katelyn Pruett, MD



Hi everyone! My name is Kate Pruett, and I could not be more excited to join the Family Medicine team at Saint Joseph Hospital. After completing a rotation at Saint Joe's during my fourth year of medical school, I knew this program was a great fit for me. Offering exceptional training in full-spectrum medicine, St Joe's also has the patient population I am passionate about working with and excellent support from faculty and staff. Additionally, I was born and raised in beautiful Colorado and am filled with joy to be returning to Denver.

After attending Baylor University for my undergraduate degree in biology, I studied epidemiology at the Colorado School of Public Health. Throughout my educational training, I discovered my passion for working with people with varied experiences and cultures. I chose to be a family doctor because I love developing long-term relationships with patients of all ages. Combining my interests in medicine and public health, my goals for each patient are treatment of illness, prevention of disease, and promotion of wellness.

Outside of medicine, I enjoy taking advantage of the beautiful outdoors available in Colorado by backpacking, hiking, and snowshoeing. If not outdoors, you can find me at a spin class, reading a great book, working towards fluency in Spanish, or hanging out with my pup.



Ashley Herrera, MD

Hey y'all! I am so thankful and excited to be joining the St. Joe's family! I was born and raised in Dallas, Texas. In high school, I convinced my mom to go to Mbarara, Uganda with me on a mission trip, where she was the sole medical professional of our group. There, I got to see her wholeheartedly and meaningfully serve sick and injured individuals as a nurse. From then on, I knew I wanted to go into medicine and find ways to give back to communities through it.

I went to Wake Forest University in North Carolina for my undergraduate degree where I fell in love with the outdoors, biology, studio art, rock climbing, some amazing community, and my now husband, Luis. I also got the chance to spend a total of 5 months in Titanyen, Haiti working with the medical outreach team of a non-profit group where I was taught so much about global health, the intersection of faith and medicine, cross-cultural partnerships, and a whole lot about myself.

After graduating, I went back to Dallas for medical school at UT Southwestern. There, I got to explore my passions for health advocacy, palliative care, trauma-informed care, and working with underserved communities. I also got the chance to be a part of an incredible global health distinction program and to spend a month in El Salvador working in a rural hospital. Family medicine was (and is!) the natural and perfect fit for me, as I hope to be able to serve my patients and their communities through clinical care and by addressing health disparities. I know St. Joe's is exactly where I am meant to be, and I am so excited to learn and grow within this phenomenal program.

Outside of medicine, I love reading, road trips, making mediocre arts and crafts, and basically anything that gets me outside. While we will miss our people in Texas and all over, Luis and I are so excited to get to call Denver home, live near some amazing mountains, and be a part of this awesome community.



Savanna Rosenbaum, DO

Hi everyone! My name is Savanna Rosenbaum, and I am so happy to be joining the Saint Joe's family! I grew up and graduated high school in the small town of Sidney, NE. I attended college a little way down the interstate in Hastings, NE where I was a student-athlete in Track & Field and worked as a nursing assistant. During these years, I also spent a lot of time volunteering in my community (one of my biggest passions!) and falling more in love with healthcare.

I have been in Colorado since 2019 when I moved here for medical school at Rocky Vista University. For much of school, I was undecided about my specialty (because I loved everything) until an international rotation in Kenya when I decided that family medicine was where I truly belonged. I enjoy everything about the full scope of family practice but have a particular passion for women's health, pediatrics, and global medicine. The residents and faculty at Saint Joseph made me feel so at home during my rotation here and I am excited to be a part of this team for my residency training. I am really looking forward to continuing to serve the Denver community and improving my Spanish skills!

Outside of work, I usually spend as much time as possible with my family, friends, and three pups! My husband and I enjoy many walks with our dogs and other outdoor activities like fishing, skiing, and hiking. I also am an avid movie watcher and like playing sports, doing yoga, and traveling anywhere and everywhere.



Adam Rosencrans, MD

Hi everyone! I was born and raised in Portland, Oregon, attended medical school in Texas at TCU, and am thrilled to be in Denver joining the Saint Joe's family medicine program. After earning a BS in Human Physiology from UO (Go Ducks!), I found myself in a variety of roles - from cooking up burgers at Wendy's, to teaching ski lessons at Winter Park, and assisting research projects at OHSU. This range of experiences has instilled in me a deep appreciation for the complex and diverse human stories that intertwine within the realm of healthcare.

I've been drawn to family medicine because it enables a broad, multifaceted view of health, allowing me to address a patient's needs within the context of their life, values, and community. My interests within family medicine include preventive care, reproductive rights, gender-affirming care, and medication-assisted treatment, with a focus on addressing care gaps in underserved communities. I am eager to work for and learn from the diverse patient population and the exceptional faculty at St. Joe's, and to train within and contribute to a culture centered on education, empowerment, and advocacy.

When I'm not immersed in medicine, you can find me exploring the outdoors - be it hiking, running, skiing (especially the Jane side of Winter Park), or appreciating the beautiful landscapes of Colorado. I also enjoy a good amber from a local brewery, a long night of board games with lots of friends and even more rulebooks, and every moment I get to spend with my partner Hazel and our dog, Benito. I'm so excited and honored to have this opportunity to be a part of the St. Joe's and Denver community!

Jeremy Chu, MD

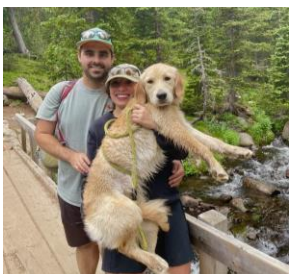
Hello there! My name is Jeremy Chu and I am moving out west from Demopolis, Alabama! I grew up in rural Alabama before venturing to Birmingham to study Biology as an undergraduate then completing medical school at UAB SOM. While observing the health disparities present in the Black Belt of the South, I developed a passion for family medicine and plan to practice full spectrum care after residency.

I'm excited to have matched at St. Joseph's due to the focus on underserved care in a diverse patient population. I was impressed with the commitment to comprehensive care in a culturally sensitive manner. My interests in family medicine are rural medicine, women's health/obstetrics, and palliative care. I can't wait to experience the broad scope of training here and become the best version of myself alongside my co-interns.

Brenna Polsinelli, MD

Hi everyone! I grew up in the great state of Montana and studied Cell Biology & Neuroscience and Hispanic Studies at Montana State University (Go Cats Go!) After completing my undergraduate education, I picked up and moved to Pittsburgh, PA to serve as a National Health Corps member in the AmeriCorps organization. I worked as a patient navigator at a family health center and fell in love with all things family medicine. My service year in Pittsburgh ignited the spark for my interests in community-oriented-primary care, addiction medicine, and cross-cultural medicine. I was also fortunate to meet some of my best friends and my husband during my AmeriCorps year, so I consider my service year a particularly special one.

I attended medical school at the University of Washington and had the opportunity to continue to grow my medical interests as a member of both the Underserved and Global Health Pathways. During my time at UW, I was fortunate to work on cross-cultural developmental health screening research, spend 6 weeks learning from community health workers in rural Nepal, and I co-founded a free student-run foot care clinic for unhoused folks in my hometown. I was drawn to the St. Joseph program because of their robust training and commitment to providing care for underserved communities. I am so excited to continue to build on my skill set and continue to feed my passions as a family medicine resident at St. Joe's!





Lauren Pennington, MD

Hi everyone! I'm Lauren and I'm so excited to be joining the family medicine program at St. Joseph's!

I grew up in Dallas, Texas and moved to Los Angeles for undergrad where I majored in Biology and Spanish at Loyola Marymount University. After graduating, I decided to pursue my passion for traveling and moved to Madrid, Spain where I taught English for one year and traveled around Europe. I spent my second gap year working as a scribe at Children's in Dallas and working at a local gardening company. I unfortunately did not acquire a green thumb and still struggle to keep my plants alive.

I attended medical school at the University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston (McGovern Medical School). I discovered my passion for family medicine while volunteering at Casa Maria, a clinic dedicated to providing care for uninsured patients in the Houston area. I love family medicine because of the focus on preventative care and the opportunity for continuity with patients of all ages.

Outside of medicine, I love spending time outdoors with my fiancé (IM resident at CU), hiking, skiing, walking our dogs and reading. I also love traveling and recently went on a month-long trip in South America prior to starting residency. I am excited to live in Colorado and be surrounded by the beautiful Rocky Mountains and I can't wait to explore the state in my free time.



Mary Wang, MD

Hi, I'm Mary! I grew up near Boulder, CO and went to Colorado College in Colorado Springs for undergrad where I also ran cross country and track. After college, I had no intention of going to med school, but knew I wanted to do something science related. While working as a clinical trial coordinator and with the CAFP as a policy intern, I found myself wanting to do what the physicians were doing, which in turn, jump started my adventures at the University of Colorado where I went to medical school. I did my intern year at University of Arizona and after a year away, I am thrilled to be coming back to Colorado and to be joining the St. Joe's FM program.

I love family medicine because it allows me to think about my patients in the context of their lives, not just their ailments. It means my main interest is people and my specialty is families, and communities rather than the organ system. It's breadth also allows me to foster my non-medical interests and combine that experience with

When I'm not at the hospital, you can probably find me running, skiing, or cooking an elaborate meal. I also lived in China before med school, and I love traveling - one of my favorite activities when visiting other countries is going to a McDonald's (the one's outside of the US are vastly different and their menus reflect the local cuisine).

Class of 2027



Sarah Holdren, MD

Hey everyone! I'm thrilled to be joining the St Joe's family! I'm originally from rural Ohio, but have most recently called Asheville, North Carolina home.

I've made a lot of stops along the way on my journey to St Joe's. I attended undergrad at Elon University where I studied anthropology and public health while conducting qualitative research about infant feeding and family-centered care in the NICU. That research took me to Finland on a Fulbright grant after graduation, where I got to study and work within a public healthcare system that prioritizes primary care differently than our health system in the US. My time spent in the NICU gave me a passion for caring for both parents and children, and I am so excited to continue doing this as a full-scope family doc. Upon returning to the U.S., I completed a master's degree in Narrative Medicine before attending medical school at the University of North Carolina School of Medicine.

During medical school, I used my skills in Narrative Medicine to develop and lead several workshops for faculty and students on DEI and anti-racism in medicine. I also furthered my interests in health equity, childbirth, and family-centered care by continuing to conduct qualitative research with patients and advocate for systemic changes that supported their care. In my clinical rotations, I fell in love with all aspects of family medicine: adult medicine, reproductive healthcare, care for folks with substance use disorders, and pediatrics. When looking for a residency program, I wanted to find a place where I could continue to grow as a teacher and advocate while also practicing the fullest scope possible. St. Joseph's clearly had all of this and even more-- residents who seemed genuinely happy. Outside of medicine, I enjoy hiking with my partner, Greg, and our basset hound, Banjo, making ceramics on the pottery wheel, trying new restaurants/breweries, and reading on the couch.

Caryn Ausenhus, MD



Hello! I am beyond excited to be completing my residency at St. Joe's!

My early years were spent in Colorado, exploring the Rocky Mountains and riding horses in the foothills. I then moved to the beautiful Pacific Northwest where I grew up wandering through the evergreens and paddleboarding in the Puget Sound. I graduated from Wheaton College in Illinois where I studied Applied Health Science and minored in Spanish. I had the opportunity to participate in a Spanish immersion program in Spain, which was undoubtedly a highlight of my college experience and challenged me to become conversational in Spanish.

Following college, I spent a year in Seattle working as a graduate research assistant at Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center. I devoted my time to public health research and determining how we could better improve health policy. I specifically focused on how to improve nutrition and physical activity programming in elementary schools.

I attended medical school at Loma Linda University in Southern California, an institution committed to whole-person care. It was here that I fell in love with family medicine and how the specialty allows you to journey alongside patients through their most vulnerable seasons of life. Additionally, I further pursued my passion for social justice by completing a certificate in the Policy, Advocacy, Leadership, Service (PALS) program. I also helped found a student organization, Latinidad, with the mission of advocating and improving healthcare for the Latinx community.

I am excited to begin my career as a family medicine resident and join the St. Joe's family! I also am looking forward to discovering local coffee shops, finding farmer markets, and exploring all that Colorado has to offer. I am so happy to call this place home!



Nicholas Brady, MD

Greetings! My name is Nick, and I grew up just outside Chicago, raised on a steady diet of deep-dish pizza and windy winters. In search of a new experience, I left the majestic cornfields of Illinois to study at UC Berkeley, where I majored in economics. During this time, I developed a greater appreciation for how the larger systems at play influence people's lives on a micro level, particularly with regards to health. This perspective no doubt nudged me towards family medicine with its broader emphasis on the community.

I took the scenic route from college to medical school, spending one year teaching high school math and coaching football in American Samoa and a second working as an emergency department technician in Washington, DC (which was made quite interesting when covid hit). While in the ED, I saw just how impactful quality primary care—or lack thereof—was in determining health outcomes. I then went on to medical school at the University of Maryland in Baltimore, where my passion for family medicine crystallized due to its ability to support underserved communities through a longitudinal approach and focus on the whole person. I also supplemented my clinical time with political advocacy aimed at social inequities, a value shared by St. Joe's and one of the reasons I was drawn towards the program.

My professional interests include palliative care, reproductive justice, LGBTQ+ care, social determinants of health, and community medicine. Outside of medicine, I enjoy beach volleyball, live music, writing, and exploring the beautiful scenery of Colorado via cycling, hiking, and snowboarding. I am thrilled to be starting at St. Joe's and can't wait to integrate into the community!



Lynn Wang, MD

Hi everyone! My name is Lynn Wang and I grew up in Woodbury, MN. I attended the University of Minnesota and majored in neuroscience. Thinking I would become an academic researcher, I moved out to San Francisco to earn my PhD through UCSF's Neuroscience Graduate Program. However, my time in graduate school helped me realize that what I found truly fulfilling was not working at the bench but engaging with people on a regular basis to make a difference in individual lives. I returned to my alma mater to attend medical school, where I discovered my passion for family medicine. What ultimately drew me to the specialty were the opportunities to engage in continuity of care and the breadth of practice. My interests include women's health, adolescent medicine, and community medicine. I'm really excited to be attending residency at St Joe's, where I will be training in an urban setting working with underserved communities.

Outside of work, I enjoy spending time with my family. I am married and have a 2-year-old son and a 5-year-old pittie mix. My husband is from Denver, so we are thrilled to be close to family and return to our former days of camping and hiking in the mountains. In my personal time, I enjoy playing piano and violin, biking, reading, cooking and baking, and knitting.



Shreya Bhattacharya, DO

Hi, I'm Shreya! I'm from Fort Lauderdale, Florida, and I completed undergrad at the University of Florida and medical school at Nova Southeastern University (while also getting my MPH).

With my experiences, I grew to appreciate the variety and diversity within family medicine, as well as the opportunities to advocate for and work with underserved patient populations. Within family medicine, my special interests include reproductive care, gender-affirming care, and integrative medicine. I am grateful to get full-spectrum training at St. Joe's from the physicians and faculty who share my values and mission, and where opportunities to engage in advocacy and within my special interests are plentiful.

In my free time, I enjoy traveling, reading novels, crocheting, and finding new places to eat or new recipes to try at home. I am thrilled to be here!

Anne Cardwell, MD



Hi! I'm Annie, and I'm super excited to be joining St. Joseph's family medicine program! I am looking forward to being a part of a residency program that has enthusiastic and driven residents and faculty.

I grew up moving around a lot before settling in Kalamazoo, Michigan right before I started high school. I attended Case Western Reserve University and studied Cognitive Science and Biology. Throughout high school and college, I discovered a love of education and after graduation, I joined the Peace Corps and moved to Mbeya, Tanzania, where I taught Biology in a secondary school and led community education programs on HIV and menstruation.

I attended medical school at the University of Michigan, where I found myself drawn to Family Medicine for its wide variety and the opportunities to build long-term relationships. I also got an MPH while at Michigan, which I'm excited to apply to I this next chapter of my journey here at St. Joseph's!

Outside of medicine, I enjoy almost any outdoor activity and can often be found hiking or running. I also love live music, baking for friends, and buying new houseplants! I am looking forward to getting out on the trails and seeing lots of shows and concerts while in Colorado!

Megan O'Leary, MD



Hello! My name is Megan O'Leary. I am a Colorado native, born and raised in Highlands Ranch. As a first-generation college student, I graduated from the University of Denver with a degree in biochemistry and minors in biology and communications. After graduation, I took a few gap years and worked at the University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus as a cancer research assistant in the Department of Pathology. During this time, I also enjoyed hosting trivia at various bars around the Denver Metro Area.

I attended medical school at Midwestern University Chicago College of Osteopathic Medicine in Illinois, where I met my husband. I am thrilled to be joining Saint Joe's. I instantly connected with everyone during my interview and knew I would fit in perfectly with the team. I am also very interested in the medical Spanish component built into the curriculum, as it will help me connect better with my patients.

In my free time, I love playing with my dog, Stella, and my two cats, Emma and Ozzie. I also enjoy exploring new breweries, watching sports, and spending time with my family.

Sabrina Demaestri, DO



Hi! My name is Sabrina and I am so excited to join the family medicine residency at St. Joe's! My family is from Argentina and I grew up in Washington DC and Montevideo, Uruguay. I went to Barnard College in NYC where I majored in psychology and political science. After a few years in sales, I decided to pursue my dream of becoming a physician. I attended the Post Bac Pre Med program at University of Virginia and then medical school at Kansas City University. In between academic years, my husband Nat and I lived in Denver and Golden and we fell in love with Colorado. We are so excited to continue living here!

I am a native Spanish speaker and I am passionate about serving the Latino community, both here and abroad. In medical school, I traveled twice to Guatemala where I had the chance to serve on a team that set up clinics in different towns. It was extremely rewarding to be able to connect with patients and offer so many different sustainable resources. I also have a strong interest in women's health and I hope to include obstetrics in my family medicine practice. The diverse patient population as well as the Global Health and Obstetrics tracks first drew me to this program. I was able to spend a month at St. Joe's and I felt right at home. The residents and faculty find joy in working with underserved patients and providing unparalleled support in learning and teaching, which is the perfect fit for me!

When I'm not in clinic I love jogging, yoga, and hiking with our dog Marnie! I also love traveling and I spend a lot of time in the kitchen, recreating recipes from the amazing foods we've tried on our adventures.



Marissa Nolan, DO

Hey Y'all! I'm Marissa and I am thrilled to be a part of the St Joe's family and to see where the next three years take me! I'm originally from Hastings, MN, a small town outside the Twin Cities. The thing I love most about Minnesota is the lakes, you can't beat boating on the lakes and rivers in the summertime! I attended the University of Minnesota-Twin Cities for undergrad, and loved everything that a Big 10 school had to offer, Go Gophers! On a whim I decided to leave the midwest and I committed to attending medical school at Campbell University School of Osteopathic Medicine (CUSOM), and thoroughly enjoyed my time on the beaches, lakes, and mountains in NC. During my time at CUSOM I was lucky enough to be able to serve at our student-run Community Care Clinic. We served a large migrant farm worker population, most of whom spoke Spanish. Through this experience, among many others, I developed my passion for serving underserved populations, Spanish-speaking populations, and serving families. What I love most about family medicine is the longitudinal and variety of care, and the opportunity to see entire families over multiple generations. My special interests in family medicine include adolescent medicine, behavioral health, obesity medicine, lifestyle, and underserved medicine.

Outside of the hospital I consider myself to be a jack of all trades, but master of none. I love the outdoors and enjoy rollerblading, hiking, biking, kayaking, etc. I occasionally will try to relearn the piano. I love reading and spent a lot of my fourth year of medical school reading ACOTAR and the other Sarah J. Maas books, iykyk. The thing I love most in the world is dogs, although I don't currently have one of my own I will certainly love on everybody's pets. I enjoy game nights, hitting up breweries, and am really game to try just about anything once.

I can't wait to get started at St. Joe's and look forward to all of the new relationships that will be formed amongst peers, colleagues, and patients :)

Class of 2028



Mikel Berria, DO

Hello! My name is Mikel and I am looking forward to joining St. Joe's Family Medicine Residency and becoming the physician I have always wanted to be!

I grew up in a small farm town in Idaho, where I enjoyed many of the same outdoor activities available in Colorado, just a little further north in the Rockies. I worked as a CNA briefly in high school, where I fell in love with the team aspect of medical care and the rewarding nature of direct patient interaction. I knew that I didn't want my medical journey to stop there so I attended college at the University of Idaho (Go Vandals!), where I majored in Medical Sciences. During this time, I had many experiences in the medical field, most of which were primary care based and with underserved populations. I began to appreciate how large of an impact Primary Care Physicians had, especially with more vulnerable populations. I decided to apply to medical school with a semi-open mind about specialty selection, but leaning heavily towards Family Medicine. I attended medical school at Touro University Nevada in Las Vegas and quickly determined that I wanted to practice preventative medicine, have continuity with my patients, and work with underserved populations. I received a scholarship through the National Health Service Corps, ensuring that after my residency training, I will be doing just that! I feel very fortunate to be joining a residency program that will prepare me well for this role!

Outside of medicine I like to remain active: lifting weights, hiking, biking, skiing, and doing pretty much any outdoor activity you can think of. My partner and I have also become sort of amateur foodies; we love trying new restaurants and new beers! I am beyond excited to finally live in a walkable/bikeable city and plan on taking full advantage.



William Tsai, MD

Hi everyone! My name is Will and I was born in Taiwan and immigrated to Irvine, California when I was six. I attended UCLA (Go Bruins!) where I majored in Psychobiology and minored in Developmental Psychology. Throughout college, I wavered between pursuing a career in education or healthcare but ultimately realized that I could fulfill both dreams by becoming a physician. After college, I took two gap years where I taught GED math at a local rescue mission and volunteered at a hospital implementing therapeutic play for pediatric patients.

I left the sunny SoCal beaches for the rolling hills of Iowan corn fields when I attended the Carver College of Medicine for medical school. I was able to further develop my passion for teaching through a Teaching Distinction Track which gave me opportunities to participate in several curricular committees and serve as an anatomy tutor for two years. I also had the chance to design and implement an MCAT preparation program for pre-meds from underrepresented backgrounds. Ultimately, I was drawn towards family medicine by the unique role of a family physician as the bridge between patients and their communities with complex healthcare systems and specialized care. I'm excited to continue my training at St. Joe's to become an effective clinician and educator in the beautifully diverse and vibrant community of Denver.

Outside of medicine, I love cooking and eating Asian food (and really any food...), running, basketball, board games, hiking, playing guitar or piano, listening to classical or jazz music, and cuddling with my sweet goldendoodle pup Manna. I'm so excited to be in Denver to hike the mountains and explore the city!



Avery Pardue, MD

Hi my name is Avery Pardue, a Kansas native and a proud graduate of North Carolina A&T State University where I earned my B.S. in Biology with a Pre-Med concentration. Throughout my undergraduate journey, I was deeply engaged in research and participated in nationally recognized programs, such as the Bluford Healthcare Leadership Institute and the Summer Health Professions Education Program. Both programs shaped my understanding of health systems and leadership.

I attended KU Medical school where I continued to develop my medical knowledge and social awareness. Beyond academics, I've been actively involved in mentoring and service. My experience includes working with Spanish-speaking elementary students abroad, mentoring high school students, and providing healthcare to Kansas City's unhoused population. I'm passionate about guiding others through education and empowerment. My experiences continue to shape my vision for equitable healthcare and leadership in medicine, which played a major role in my desire to pursue a career in Family Medicine.

Outside of medicine, you can find me practicing Spanish, hiking outdoors, or playing chess. Excited to be a part of the St Joseph community and looking forward to everything I will learn.



Lisa Hopkins, DO

Hi everyone! My name is Lisa, I'm a Colorado native and am looking forward to joining the Saint Joe's Family Medicine Program.

I completed my undergraduate studies at the University of Colorado Boulder, majoring in Integrative Physiology. My passion for global health began during that time, when I traveled to Nicaragua and Panama with Global Medical Brigades. That interest only grew throughout medical school at Rocky Vista University in Parker, CO, where I had the incredible opportunity to continue exploring healthcare in diverse settings through clinical work in Kenya and Guatemala.

I've also developed a strong interest in Sports Medicine, volunteering at events like the Boulder Ironman and working alongside local sports physicians to provide care to athletes in our community.

Outside of medicine, I love spending time with my fiancé, our family and friends, and our two golden retrievers, Wynn timer and Indy. You can usually find us hiking, skiing, or occasionally taking our tandem bike for a spin to a local brewery. I'm looking forward to this next chapter at Saint Joe's and getting involved with the local community!



Alisa Rippee, DO

Hi y'all! My name is Alisa, and I'm from Kansas City, MO. I like to pretend that I am a Colorado native since I was born in Pueblo, so being in Denver is like a homecoming of sorts. I completed undergrad at Truman State University where I majored in Psychology and Exercise Science and played rugby all four years. After undergrad, I thought I might want to do medicine, so I got my EMT license and worked for a while on an ambulance out in California before coming back home to Kansas City and working in the ER before starting medical school at Kansas City University. I got my Masters in Bioethics at the same time, where I learned a lot about the really hard things that inevitably pop up in medicine.

Those four years between undergrad and medical school gave me tons of great experiences and taught me a lot about how much we need good primary care providers. Between that and the fact that I like a little bit of everything, Family Medicine felt like the perfect way to have my cake and eat it too! My main professional interests are LGBTQ+ care, palliative care, community medicine, and inpatient medicine. I am so excited to be at St. Joe's, as this feels like the perfect place for me to learn and grow as a doctor.

Outside of work, I live with my younger brother and my three cats. I love to travel, when I can, and have been fortunate enough to visit one of my best friends in South Korea twice! I love to read and pretend I'm good at gaming with my friends on the weekends. I can't wait to get to know the St. Joe's community and make this place my home!



Tsion Shiferaw, MD

Hi everyone! I'm Tsion (pronounced SEE-yon), and I'm so excited to be joining the St. Joseph Family Medicine Residency!

I was born in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, and grew up in Denver, Colorado. I studied Biochemistry at the University of Denver and earned my Master of Public Health in Global Maternal and Child Health from the Colorado School of Public Health. I've always been passionate about working with and for underserved communities, and this passion has guided my path through medicine.

I knew St. Joe's was the right fit for me because of our shared core belief that medicine is more than just treating disease — it's about addressing the social determinants of health, advocating for those who face health disparities, and building trust across cultures. My desire to combine clinical care with reducing inequities and fostering effective cross-cultural communication has solidified family medicine as my path. I'm committed to providing care grounded in humility, social justice, and trust — qualities I believe are the true essence of family medicine.

Alongside medicine, I also enjoy expressing myself through painting and exploring new fine-art mediums, finding cozy coffee shops, trying new restaurants, spending quality time with my lovely cats, and traveling whenever I can. I also firmly believe Beyoncé is the greatest artist of all time and will happily hold a spirited discourse to prove it.

I'm really looking forward to growing as a physician and person alongside the St. Joe's community!



Sam Durkin, MD

Hello! My name is Sam, and I grew up in Northeast Ohio in between Cleveland and Akron. My childhood consisted of snowboarding at the stunning ski resort of Boston Mills and Brandywine, exploring the Cuyahoga Valley National Park, and playing a wide variety of sports.

The next step in my life took place at Ohio State for undergrad, where I initially had no clue exactly what I would be studying and started off with an interest in some form of business. The one thing I knew for certain was, no matter what I studied, it would not include science (thanks to a rough Honors Chemistry experience in high school). I quickly realized that my initial interest in the field of business was wildly off base, and thanks to a chance lecture about the school of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences, as well as a realization that I wasn't happy doing what I was doing, I found myself fully interested in the field of medicine. This quickly progressed through an interest in PT, OT, PA and finally, medical school.

I attended medical school at Wright State University in Dayton, Ohio, where I once again had no idea what I wanted to do. I allowed the experiences of medical school and my interest in longitudinal relationships, impacting patients' whole health outside of just clinical encounters, and an overall love for medicine to shape my path. Ultimately, this led me to Family Medicine, where I knew I could achieve all of my goals and truly impact the health of the patients that I would care for in a wide variety of ways.

I'm truly blessed to be here at St. Joseph's. It has been made abundantly clear that this is a program that values a strong culture where everyone is safe to be themselves, while simultaneously pushing you to be the best Family Medicine Physician you can be. For someone who strives every day to keep an open mind and to let my experiences shape the kind of person and physician I will be, I could not be luckier to be at this program for the next three years. The beautiful scenery of Colorado is just a bonus, and I am excited to continue to explore the area through hiking, snowboarding, and camping!



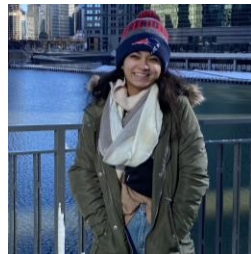
Sophia Lee, MD

Hey y'all!!!! My name is Sophia. I'm from Tulsa, Oklahoma. I studied biology and Italian at OU, where I continued to study for medical school (Boomer Sooner & Thunder Up!!)

During my time at OU, I was able to be an ambassador for the DEI Office where I fell in love with advocacy. I've had the privilege of long-term relationships with various organizations dedicated to communities with special needs, the homeless, and at-risk youth. This is where I really got to see the need for primary care and developed a passion for working with underserved populations. I had a blast on my family medicine rotation third year and realized it was the perfect blend of medicine and people that I had been looking for.

I am so excited to be doing my residency at St. Joe's! I was immediately drawn to the full-spectrum training and dedication to service. I truly believe it will be an amazing place to continue my training.

Outside of work, I am probably spending time with my friends or partner, Blake. We love to ski, hike, and travel somewhere new! At home, you can usually find me reading, painting, or taking up a new hobby just for fun,



Ranjini Nagaraj, DO

Hi everyone! My name is Ranjini Nagaraj, and I'm so grateful to be joining the St. Joe's family! I was born in Boston (go Pats!) but grew up mostly in the Bay Area before heading to Rice University in Houston for undergrad. After college, I joined Teach for America in Fort Worth and taught high school science for two years- an experience that sparked my passion for education and community-focused work. I then attended medical school just outside of Houston at Sam Houston State University. During my third year of medical school, I was torn between pediatrics, OBGYN, and family medicine. I realized I couldn't give up any patient population, landed on family medicine, and never looked back.

I did a sub-I at St. Joe's in August of my fourth year, and I immediately felt the warmth, support, and camaraderie of the program. It was clear this was a program that truly values its people, and I'm so thrilled to be part of it! During residency, I hope to build a strong foundation in full-spectrum care, with a particular focus on women's health and obstetrics.

Outside of the hospital, you can find me watching bad reality television, trying new coffee shops/restaurants/breweries/bars in the Denver area, attempting to climb mountains, skiing in the winters, and reading! I am so excited to get to explore Colorado during my time here!