

Welcome, military service members

A new web page facilitating access to military and veteran services is now live, <https://www.marshfieldclinic.org/veterans>. The page includes contact information for Dedicated Care Coordinators who will aid in navigating health care services, applying for VA benefits and identifying additional supports and services. Bryan Weichelt, Ph.D., chairs the Marshfield Clinic Health System Military Community Business Resource Group. "Our mission is to provide exceptional care and support tailored to current and former military service members' needs," he said.



Auction of Champions raises record total

Marshfield Clinic Health System Foundation is proud to announce that the 2025 Auction of Champions, "Champions Yacht Club," raised a record-high \$342,000 for the National Farm Medicine Center and its initiatives, Sept. 18, at RiverEdge Golf Course, Marshfield. Special thanks to Miron Construction, Inc., Champion Sponsor, for its ongoing commitment to Auction of Champions. Of the total, \$80,000 was raised during the Fund-A-Need portion of the auction to support the work of the National Children's Center for Rural and Agricultural Health and Safety. A special "thank you" goes to the sponsors, auction item donors and market animal donors for their generosity and commitment to the agricultural community.



Safeguarding the future of agriculture: National Action Plan offers framework for childhood safety, health

There are benefits to growing up on farms and ranches, among them a strengthened immune system, good work ethic and respect for the land. We also know youth working in agriculture are seven times more likely to die on the job than their non-agriculture counterparts. The best available data suggest that about 33 children are seriously injured daily and one child dies about every three days in U.S. agriculture. Nearly two-thirds of agricultural injuries are young, non-working children who are bystanders in a dangerous worksite.

Safeguarding Children in Agriculture: An Updated National Action Plan offers a framework of goals and strategies for protecting the health and safety of hundreds of thousands of children living, working and visiting on the nation's 1.9 million agricultural operations, while keeping them involved in agriculture. Access the plan at <https://marshfieldresearch.org/nccrahs/nap/2025>.

"The ultimate goal is to ensure safe participation of youth in agriculture," said Andrea Swenson, Ph.D., director of the National Children's Center for Rural and Agricultural Health and Safety, which published the document. "The plan emphasizes local input and strong partnerships in addressing the complexities of childhood agricultural injuries. This approach can help ensure that solutions are comprehensive, evidence-based and tailored to the diverse needs of the nation's ag communities."

Swenson, who grew up on a dairy farm, said that farm organizations, safety practitioners, researchers, policy makers, funding agencies, corporate sponsors and other safety advocates are encouraged to set their own priorities consistent with the goals and strategies proposed in the plan. The 2025 National Action Plan is an update of plans published by the National Children's Center in 1996, 2001 and 2012.

"Agriculture continues to evolve, so we incorporated several new topics such as automated production practices, new technologies, environmental exposures, extreme weather and changing demographics of farm owners and workers, along with organizational and public policies," Swenson said.



Firefighter trainer hired with CHS Foundation grant



The Rural Firefighters Delivering Agriculture Safety and Health (RF-DASH) program is excited to announce the addition of its first full-time trainer. With support from the CHS Foundation and the Upper Midwest Agricultural Safety and Health Center, Tim Zehnder, whose background combines farming, rescue and emergency preparedness, will provide training events throughout the United States, particularly in the upper Midwest, and help implement the program on farms and ranches. Zehnder is employed by Ex Environmental Inc., in Hudson, Wis., and brings a wealth of experience to

the trainers' role. He started his fire service career in 1990 in Truman, Minn., rising to the rank of chief, and has gone on to serve as fire training program manager at South Central College in North Mankato, Minn., and director of fire science at Mid-Plains Community College in McCook, Neb., as well as serving with the McCook Fire Department until 2020.

Zehnder has been very active with the rescue side of the fire service, including grain bin rescue, farm vehicle extrication, confined space among other fire service courses. Zehnder and Jay Pennfield co-produced a grain bin rescue video for Fire Engineering Books and Videos.

"This is going to be an exciting time for the RF-DASH program," said Casper Bendixsen, Ph.D., the principal investigator of the project. "We have had so much interest in the training modules from around the country. Thanks to new funding from the CHS Foundation, we can finally meet the demand for in-person training at farms that handle grain."

To inquire about firefighter training or implementing the program on your farm and ranch, contact tim@exenvironmental.com or rfdash@marshfieldresearch.org. Visit www.rfdash.org for more information.

Dr. Lee earns top safety award



The world's largest society of agricultural safety and health professionals awarded its highest honor to Barbara Lee, Ph.D., "in recognition of her lifetime of achievement, deep commitment to professional excellence and transformative impact on the field."

The International Society for Agricultural Safety and Health (ISASH) presented Lee with the Maynard Coe Professional Achievement Award during its annual

conference, June 25, in Portland, Maine. Coe served as director of the Farm Division of the National Safety Council for 20 years and worked with universities, farm organizations and the agriculture industry in establishing farm safety as a recognized profession.

"This is a really special award that needs to be shared with a lot of people," Lee said. "I have had the good fortune of working with so many talented and passionate people, and together we have had a positive impact on childhood agricultural injury prevention. We've been able to grow these collaborations and now have safety advocates around the world. It's really important to celebrate the successes we have had."

More recently, Lee recently transitioned from her full-time role to emeritus scientist at the National Farm Medicine Center (NFMC) and the National Children's Center for Rural and Agricultural Health and Safety (NCCRAHS). Lee was the first full-time employee of the National Farm Medicine Center (1987). Lee will be available for collaboration, advice,

and of course, sharing her ever-valued opinions. "We are grateful for Barb's dedication, mentorship, and enduring passion for agricultural health and safety – and we're lucky she's not going far!" said Farm Medicine Director Casper Bendixsen.

ISASH also honored Farm Medicine Research Scientist Bryan Weichelt, who received the Research Achievement Award for improving the lives of farmers, workers, children and military veterans. He is perhaps best known in the field for being the "architect" of Agricultural Injury News. The ISASH conference is the largest annual gathering of professionals dedicated to agricultural safety and health. Membership includes safety professionals, educators, Extension, physicians, nurses, students, veterinarians, epidemiologists, engineers, communicators, sociologists, anthropologists, business leaders and others.

Congratulations Dr. Aby

Congratulations Dr. Guy Roger Aby, who walked in May for his Ph.D. in agricultural and biological engineering from the University of Illinois. Dr. Aby's work is driven by a strong dedication to advancing agricultural health and safety, with a particular emphasis on machinery safety. His doctoral research focused on evaluating current safety methods for autonomous agricultural machines and exploring the use of engineering risk assessment tools.

Out and about



Farm Medicine has taken its services and resources to multiple events in 2025, including: Wisconsin Potato and Vegetable Growers Association annual meeting, where Farm Medicine partnered with Marshfield Clinic Dermatology to screen more than 70 attendees for skin cancer; Marshfield Area Chamber of Commerce and Industry Power of Ag, engaging with hundreds of central Wisconsin high school students during a career day; Marshfield Dairy Breakfast, promoting the Wisconsin Slow Moving Vehicle Sign Campaign; the Marshfield Parish Tractor Pull, promoting the Wisconsin rollover protection structure (ROPS) Rebate Program; Wisconsin Farm Technology Days, promoting childhood agricultural safety; and the Agricultural Media Summit, the world's largest annual gathering of agricultural media professionals.

Farm Medicine hosts summer student



Congratulations to Christopher Sullivan, who worked with Farm Medicine mentors Roger Aby, Ph.D., and Bryan Weichelt, Ph.D., as part of the Summer Research Internship Program hosted for the past 51 years by Marshfield Clinic Research Institute and supported by generous donors.

Sullivan shared his findings at the Summer Research Internship Program Symposium. His presentation: "Analysis of injuries caused by machines in agriculture and assessment of new autonomous agricultural machines' impact on health and safety."

Our Mission

"With the ultimate goal of improving human health, wellbeing and safety of rural and agricultural communities, the National Farm Medicine Center acts as a national resource by conducting high quality research, developing and delivering health and safety information, exploring innovative intervention models, and leading initiatives and networks."