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2026 Wisconsin Biohealth Awards Honor Breakthrough Science and Transformative Leadership

[BioForward Wisconsin](#) is proud to announce the recipients of the 2026 Wisconsin Biohealth Awards, recognizing exceptional scientific achievement and visionary business leadership across the state's rapidly advancing biohealth sector.

Kathleen M. Schmainda, PhD, Professor of Biophysics at the [Medical College of Wisconsin](#), will receive the Hector F. DeLuca Scientific Achievement Award, while Peter C. Vogel, President and CEO of [Vogel Bros. Building Co.](#), will receive the Wisconsin Biohealth Business Achievement Award.

Established in 2015, the Wisconsin Biohealth Awards honor individuals whose work is transforming health, driving innovation, strengthening Wisconsin's biohealth ecosystem, and creating lasting impact for patients, organizations and communities.

The Hector F. DeLuca Scientific Achievement Award celebrates groundbreaking scientific contributions that expand the boundaries of discovery and advance human health. The Wisconsin Biohealth Business Achievement Award recognizes business leaders whose vision, leadership and commitment have helped Wisconsin's biohealth industry grow and thrive.

HECTOR F. DELUCA SCIENTIFIC ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

Kathleen M. Schmainda, PhD

Professor of Biophysics | Medical College of Wisconsin

Kathleen M. Schmainda, PhD, is a professor of biophysics at the [Medical College of Wisconsin](#) and a nationally recognized leader in advanced MRI and brain tumor imaging. Since joining [MCW](#)'s faculty in 1996, she has built a research program focused on translating sophisticated imaging technologies into tools that can improve the evaluation and treatment of patients with brain tumors.

Schmainda established MCW's first translational brain tumor imaging research laboratory, integrating imaging science with clinical neuro-oncology. Her foundational work contributed to the development of a national consensus protocol for the clinical use of perfusion MRI in patients with primary and metastatic brain tumors.

She has also held leadership roles in multicenter clinical trials, developed patented imaging technologies, and helped translate discoveries into commercial products through Wisconsin-based startup companies, [Imaging Biometrics LLC](#) and [Prism Clinical Imaging, Inc.](#) Her work exemplifies the path from scientific discovery to clinical application and more informed patient care.

WISCONSIN BIOHEALTH BUSINESS ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

Peter C. Vogel

President and CEO | Vogel Bros. Building Co.

Peter C. Vogel is President and CEO of [Vogel Bros. Building Co.](#), a fifth-generation, family-owned construction firm founded in 1875 and headquartered in Madison. With more than 40 years of experience

in the construction industry, Vogel represents the fourth generation of his family to lead the company and has built his career around collaboration, innovation, mentorship and service.

Since the early 1990s, Vogel has been a committed partner and advocate for Wisconsin's growing biohealth industry. Under his leadership, [Vogel Bros.](#) has completed over 100 life science projects in the past 30 years, representing more than \$1 billion in construction and renovation and 2.5 million square feet in the Madison market.

Through work with organizations like [Arrowhead Pharmaceuticals](#), [MilliporeSigma](#), [University Research Park](#), [FUJIFILM Cellular Dynamics](#), [Illumina](#) and others, Vogel has helped create the highly specialized research, laboratory and manufacturing environments that enable scientific discovery, commercialization and growth across Wisconsin's biohealth ecosystem.

Lisa Johnson, CEO of BioForward Wisconsin, shared her enthusiasm for this year's award recipients:

"I am extremely excited to honor the 2026 Wisconsin Biohealth Award awardees, Kathleen Schmainda and Pete Vogel. Kathleen's work is advancing how we understand, evaluate and treat some of the most challenging cancers, while Pete's decades of leadership have helped build the physical infrastructure and partnerships that allow Wisconsin's biohealth companies to innovate and grow. Together, they illustrate that delivering successful patient outcomes takes an entire ecosystem — from groundbreaking science to the people and organizations that make progress possible."

Awards to Be Presented at the 2026 Wisconsin Biohealth Summit

The 2026 Wisconsin Biohealth Awards will be presented during the [Wisconsin Biohealth Summit](#), held October 21–22, 2026, at the newly expanded [Baird Center](#) in Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

This year's Summit, From Molecule to Medicine: Delivering Successful Patient Outcomes, will explore the full journey of biohealth innovation — from scientific discovery and technology development to commercialization, clinical application and ultimately better outcomes for patients and will bring together scientists, clinicians, innovators, entrepreneurs, investors, industry leaders and ecosystem partners from across Wisconsin and beyond.

Building on the success of previous years, the 2026 Summit will feature 1.5 days of programming that will examine the science, technologies, partnerships and business strategies required to successfully move breakthroughs beyond the lab and into the lives of patients. Attendees will hear from leaders across the biohealth continuum through keynote presentations, scientific and business sessions, Wisconsin Biohealth Tech Hub updates, expert discussions and opportunities for networking and collaboration.

New this year, the Summit will kick off with a half-day pre-Summit experience, [+Venture Health](#), presented by [NVNG](#). The program will spotlight the investment, entrepreneurship and commercialization strategies needed to advance promising innovations, creating even more opportunities to connect emerging companies with investors and leaders across the biohealth ecosystem.

To learn more or register, visit: [2026 Wisconsin Biohealth Summit](#)

About BioForward

[BioForward Wisconsin](#) represents more than 250 member organizations across an integrated network of health solution leaders, including research institutions, biotech and biopharma, digital health, healthcare systems, medical devices, and diagnostics. It is an action-oriented association that focuses on initiatives to strengthen the state's biohealth industry. Learn more about BioForward Wisconsin at www.bioforward.org.

Sponsor Acknowledgments

The 2026 Wisconsin Biohealth Summit is made possible through the generous support of organizations committed to advancing Wisconsin's biohealth ecosystem, scientific innovation, industry growth and improved patient outcomes.

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