



Take 3 with Zandra Clevert

Match Day

Zandra E. Clevert, the Program Coordinator in the MCW Office of Student Affairs, writes about how Match Day affects the staff who work behind the scenes, as well ...

What has changed about Match Day over the past few years?

There have been significant changes to Match Day since I have been at MCW. The first big change is that Match Day celebration moved off campus after always being held at MCW. In 2020, the in-person celebration was cancelled due to the pandemic and the wonderful Molly Falk-Steinmetz from the Academic Enrichment and Student Success team quickly put together a congratulations video from some people in Academic Affairs that was emailed to students.

In 2021, we were again not able to gather in person at the Milwaukee Campus, so we had a communal virtual experience where we aired a congratulations video on MCW's YouTube channel about fifteen minutes before students were able to get their Match results from the NRMP. And this year—while we are able to gather in person again for the first time in three years—the in-person ceremony is not mandatory for students as in previous years when the ceremony was in person. I think this is a good thing for our students to be able to choose how they wish to celebrate this monumental day.

What was the most memorable Match Day-related experience you ever had?

My most memorable Match Day experience was attending my very first Match Day celebration in 2017 and overall learning about how student doctors apply for residency and find out about where they are going to work as doctors. To be honest with you, I found the experience exciting, overwhelming, and heartbreaking too. I was new to medical education and had no idea that all medical students learned at the same time! I remember thinking that it was like draft day for medicine.

Match Day is filled with joy for some and upset and sadness for others. I was so struck by young woman who was walking in the hall outside of the Alumni Center who had tears silently running down her beautiful face, and I asked her what was wrong, and if there was anything I could do to help her. I assumed that she did not match into her preferred program, but she shared with me that she was sad that she could not be with her whole family who had flown in from across the county to be with her. She had ten family members including her 88-year-old grandmother who had come to celebrate her accomplishment and for her the joy of the day was bittersweet because she could not fully share it with those who meant the most to her.

My heart went out to her, and her experience always makes me think about how the ways we can make Match Day celebration about our students.

What always surprises you about being part of many Match Days?

I have not been a part of that many Match Days yet, but I am surprised by the amount that I cry! I am always so moved by our phenomenal students and this culminating event in their careers as students. Our students are an inspiration to me and why I love getting to do what I do.