



Office of Faculty Development

Pathology & Immunology



Dr. Kathleen Sheehan was born and raised in St. Louis – which means you need to ask her where she went to high school (*the answer is St. Joseph's Academy*). Her parents understood the value of higher education and supported Kathy and her brother to be the first generation in their family to attend college. Opportunities to take classes at the planetarium, attend art classes or even an engineering camp during high school were always encouraged. Kathy attributes her problem-solving skills to her father (a machinist) who could 'fix anything' and aspires to be as organized as her mother (an executive secretary). Growing up, a large, extended, local family provided for regular Sunday family dinners, picnics in Babler State Park, ice skating trips with cousins and numerous trips to Cardinals games, the Muny and road trips to the beach.

Dr. Sheehan attended the University of Notre Dame as one of the early classes that enrolled women, majoring in Microbiology. There she had her first introduction to tumor biology and immunology during her undergraduate research with Dr. Morris Pollard. She continued her training in microbiology and immunology earning a PhD from St. Louis University in the laboratory of James Swierkosz, PhD. Sheehan then joined the laboratory of Dr. Robert Schreiber at WUSM as a post-doctoral scholar. Her early studies focused on cytokine – cytokine receptor interactions and their impact in models of infection and autoimmunity, developing many novel monoclonal antibody panels. Based on these successes she was given the opportunity to lead the department's Hybridoma Center, a core facility that assists investigators in the development of monoclonal antibodies. Helping colleagues generate critical research reagents is always an extremely satisfying endeavor. Kathy continues working with Dr. Schreiber, applying her studies of cytokine pathways to the lab's ongoing models of tumor immunology and immunotherapy. As Dr. Schreiber grew the tumor immunology program and established the Bursky Center for Human Immunology and Immunotherapy Programs, Kathy was instrumental in the establishment of the Immunomonitoring Laboratory (IML), a cutting-edge centralized facility to provide the structure, instrumentation and expertise to monitor the impact of specific immunotherapies on patient immunologic profiles, interrogate mechanisms and pathways related to treatment protocols and advance the conceptual basis for targeted treatment strategies. She is Co-Head of the IML and Director of Immunoassays, alongside Co-Head Dr. Stephen Oh, Director of Cytometry.

Kathy is married 36 years to her husband Jere, after meeting in high school. Jere is a mechanical engineer and works in the construction industry. Over the years he has been involved in many campus building projects including Barnes' underground parking garage, McDonnell Pediatric Research Building and Siteman Cancer Center - South County. They have two children; Kevin, an analyst at Anheuser-Busch in St. Louis and Megan, who works for Epic Systems in Madison, Wisconsin. Her favorite holiday is Christmas, complete with her 12-foot tall tree from Ted Drewes encircled by her father's 1928 electric train. In her free time Kathy enjoys visiting with her family and friends, tending her herb garden, cooking and cheering on her college football team (Go Irish!).

