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COM Outlook Winter 2014

College of Osteopathic Medicine

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Winter 2014

COM Outlook

Nova Southeastern University College of Osteopathic Medicine

BEYOND BOTOX

***Dermatology Department Delves
Deep into Challenging Cases***



Dean's Message

By Anthony J. Silvagni, D.O., Pharm.D., M.Sc., FACOPP dist.

A major challenge faced by medical education today involves the availability of quality clinical training sites. The rapid growth of new medical schools, expansion of existing medical schools, and the increasing financial challenges hospitals face have made sites more expensive, scarcer, and more competitive.

A new and growing challenge is the influx of students who attend offshore schools, which threatens the integrity of medical education because many of the offshore schools are purchasing the clinical training sites from accredited medical schools in the United States. The offshore schools are unaccredited, for-profit schools whose students are eligible for the same federally guaranteed and VA loans available to medical students in accredited U.S. schools.

In a recent report, Bloomberg News examined the role of DeVry Inc. in accepting and training medical students. DeVry, which owns two for-profit medical schools in the Caribbean, is accepting hundreds of students, some who were rejected by U.S. medical colleges. Neither DeVry's Ross University School of Medicine nor American University of the Caribbean School of Medicine (AUC) is accredited according to the standards of medical programs in the United States.

Loans from students affiliated with DeVry's schools totaled about \$310 million in the year ended June 2012, according to the Bloomberg report. Those loans become the responsibility of U.S. taxpayers if students quit, fail to get jobs, or default. Many DeVry students quit, particularly in the first two semesters, the report noted, taking their debt with them. The average attrition rate at U.S. medical schools was 3 percent for the class that began in the fall of 2008, according to the Association of American Medical Colleges. DeVry said its rate of attrition ranges from 20 to 27 percent.

One feature of offshore schools—offering money for training spots—can be difficult for accredited schools to overcome. DeVry pays hospitals in the United States to take its students for the two years of clinical training they need to complete their degrees. Bloomberg cites an example in New York, where AUC plans to pay Nassau University Medical Center on Long Island about \$1.4 million annually until 2022 for 64 slots, or about \$425 per student per week, according to the hospital's chief medical officer.

Knowing that this kind of financial support is difficult to match when adhering to accreditation standards, we need to establish stronger practices to support students from accredited schools—and Congress needs to examine the law that makes foreign for-profit medical schools eligible for federal loans. The Bloomberg report cited Senator Dick Durbin, a Democrat from DeVry's home state of Illinois. "These schools are taking advantage of an offshore loophole that allows federal funding to be released to students attending a medical school that is not accredited in the United States," Senator Durbin said. "Until Congress acts, these schools will stop at nothing to keep the American taxpayer dollars flowing."

In addition to removing the loophole that allows offshore students to acquire loans, Congress should revise the current Bipartisan Student Loan Certainty Act of 2013 to include U.S. medical students into the undergraduate subsidized program at the lower interest-rate cap. With the national shortage of physicians and the significant need for primary care physicians, changing the subsidy and interest rates would be a major incentive for students to select medicine and receive a more acceptable option for repaying loans.

Quality health care must be the goal—recruiting, accepting, and training the best. It is critical that beneficial consideration be given to the standards of accredited schools to protect the people who count on reliable care and to strengthen the foundation of lifelong learning for future physicians.

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College of Osteopathic Medicine

In This Issue - Winter 2014



NSU-COM Researchers Receive \$4.1 Million Grant 13

NSU-COM's Institute for Neuro-Immune Medicine recently received a \$4.1 million grant from the U.S. Department of Defense to fund its research project titled "Understanding Gulf War Illness (GWI): An Integrative Modeling Approach."



Beyond Botox: The Department of Dermatology 22

Like all medical disciplines, dermatology strives to improve the lives of patients. Some may see dermatologists as focused solely on the quest for physical enhancement, but Dr. Tracy Favreau, chair of the Department of Dermatology, and her residents see that as a small corner of a complex tableau.

Passionate Lifelong Learner: Dr. David Thomas 26

When you envision a portrait of nonstop hard work and leadership, imagine Dr. David Thomas. His list of achievements includes multiple degrees, decorated military service, and steadfast commitment to his community. In fact, he has mastered not one, not two, but six different careers.

Busy Times for 1988 Alumnus Dr. Tyler Cymet 32

Sometimes, life throws us an interesting curveball when we least expect it. Such was the case for Dr. Tyler Cymet, a 1988 alumnus who was out for an innocuous morning jog in Chakraseca, Nicaragua, while he was in the area researching an opportunity to establish a DOCARE international clinic.



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HPD Chancellor's Communiqué...*Fred Lippman, R.Ph., Ed.D.*



In 2014, Nova Southeastern University will be commemorating its 50th anniversary with a diverse array of celebratory activities. As I reflect on this milestone accomplishment, it brings back a flood of memories for a number of reasons.

I am currently in my 28th year as a pioneer administrator from Southeastern University of the Health Sciences, which is the precursor to what is now known as the NSU Health Professions Division. When I look back at what has transpired at NSU over the years, I am filled with a true sense of wonderment in regard to how prominent and vast our educational influence has become in a relatively short 50-year timeframe.

Reviewing the numerous educational institutions such as my alma mater Columbia University, which is over 200 years old, you realize that the formal higher education system in this nation stretches back to the 1800s. It also makes you recognize and appreciate how complex and complete NSU has become in such a short period of time.

In my opinion, NSU's far-reaching achievements are a consequence of some amazing individuals who served as the pioneers throughout its evolution. I could

list a multitude of names, but some specific examples that immediately spring to mind are Dr. Morton Terry, Dr. Abraham Fischler, Robert Steele, Hamilton C. Forman, and Royal Flagg Jonas. None of these individuals, with the exception of Dr. Fischler, were in the field of formal education, yet they possessed the instinctive humanistic and community-driven values needed to establish and then continually build a unified institution that continues to be enhanced on a daily basis.

When you examine the university's growth and the specific areas of educational presentation currently being offered, it's easy to see how NSU has become preeminent in providing innovative ideas to other sectors of the educational world. As an example, NSU was one of the pioneers in regard to presenting distance-education opportunities via the Internet. The university was also one of the first educational entities to house multiple and individually accredited health professions programs that are not branch campuses, but are part of the Health Professions Division and located on our Davie campus as well as at what are now called regional campuses.

In terms of our curriculum, we have always made sure it remains a fluid and ever-evolving product. In addition, we are consistently and diligently working on the pedagogy changes—the responsibilities we have to not only anticipate and meet the needs of the community both in the world of health care and knowledge, but also in the area of providing the systems methodology to effectively present education.

And then there is technology, which has changed the way education is presented whether it's in our bricks-and-mortar university or externally. We've been very proactive when it comes to making changes, not just for the sake of change, but for the betterment of the educational experience. It's really something to marvel about when you reflect on the fact that NSU is only 50 years old yet has been able to make such dramatic modifications in the presentation of some of the most standardized educational units such as law, medicine, pharmacy, etc.

As 2014 unfolds, it's going to provide the university with an excellent opportunity to educate not only the community at large but the vast education community about how pioneering NSU has been over the past five decades. As we present all the highlights of what has occurred at NSU during the last 50 years, the "wow" factor of our exceptional university will be transmitted to a greater audience.

Our forward-thinking president, Dr. George Hanbury, has some significant views concerning the importance of NSU's 50th anniversary for the same reasons. I believe there is a general feeling that many people both locally and nationally possess little, if any, knowledge about our university. NSU's 50th anniversary commemoration will allow us to showcase just how special Nova Southeastern University really is.

As you can tell, I'm extremely proud to be part of this great university.

Elyse Julian Named Student D.O. of the Year



In December, **OMS-III Elyse Julian** was selected from a competitive list of applicants to receive the 2013 NSU-COM Student D.O. of the Year Award from her peers, joining an exceptional group of previous winners that have become leaders in the medical field.

Excerpts from her recommendation letter illustrate why Julian was selected for this prestigious honor.

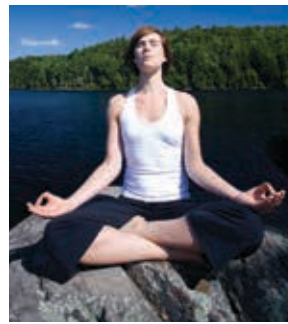
“Elyse’s leadership experiences demonstrate innovation. She founded the Student Ambassador Society in 2011, organized a student orientation guide for incoming OMS-I students, and coordinated applicant tours. These endeavors have been crucial in improving the experiences of incoming first-year students and future applicants.”

Elyse’s community service is just as extensive and demonstrates her dedication to the osteopathic tenet of a holistic approach in that her experiences are varied and touch a broad section of the South Florida community. What really sets Elyse apart is the varied nature of the work. She has spent countless hours educating undergraduates on what it means to be an osteopathic physician, tutoring OMS-I students for their classes, feeding the homeless through local soup kitchens and food drives, reading to sick children in the hospital, assisting in alumni events, and participating in health fairs for underserved populations. Her résumé is impressive by the sheer number of hours spent in research, volunteer events, committees, and academic conferences.”

As the current NSU-COM selectee, Julian is automatically entered into the national Student D.O. of the Year Award competition, which is presented annually by the Council of Osteopathic Student Government Presidents—a council of the American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine.

Division of Integrative Medicine Established

In November, the College of Osteopathic Medicine established the **Division of Integrative Medicine**, which is based within the Department of Osteopathic Principles and Practice. Integrative medicine combines traditional Western medicine with complementary treatments such



as acupuncture, transcendental meditation, yoga, neuroceuticals, and herbal medicines, manipulative medicine, and techniques in spirituality. Jill Wallace Ross, D.O., assistant professor of family medicine, is serving as interim director of the new Division of Integrative Medicine.

Student Groups Host Insightful Relationship Panel

On October 14, the Student Advocate Association (SAA) and the Student National Medical Association (SNMA) hosted a **Relationships in Medicine** panel discussion for the student body and their significant others. The panel included representation from each stage of a relationship from married with children, recently married, dating in the class, long-distance relationships, and even single and looking.

Panelists included the college’s dean, Dr. Anthony J. Silvagni, and his wife Dianna Silvagni, J.D., clinical assistant professor of medical education, who demonstrated their support of students who manage relationships while in medical school. The Silvagnis shared their experiences on adapting to life in medical school when Dr. Silvagni was a student. The panel members responded to questions from the moderator and the audience, discussing their relationships and offering wisdom on what they found works well in their lives. Understanding and compromise help students and the ones they love adapt to the many demands of medical school and maintain a healthy relationship.

The SAA offers several activities to support medical students and their significant others and will continue to offer meetings and events that embrace its mission.



Panelists (pictured from left) are Justin Tudino, Megan Welker, Boris Volfson, Antonious Fawzy, Lenzetta Lake, Dr. Anthony J. Silvagni, Dianna Silvagni, Jason Faucheux, Matthew Derby, and Charita Ray.

PINK WARS Benefits Breast Cancer Research



On October 22, the NSU-COM Student Government Association held its inaugural **PINK WARS** event to support Breast Cancer Awareness Month. **PINK WARS** featured a two-hour penny war between students, faculty members, and administration — with competitors stashing cash into jars that represented contestants (adding one point per penny, while subtracting points for other amounts of cash).

The contestant with the lowest amount of points at the event's conclusion had to dye her/his hair pink. Adding to the excitement, Dr. Anthony J. Silvagni, NSU-COM dean, agreed to dye his mustache pink if the event achieved its fund-raising target. When the goal of \$1,500 was reached, OMS-II Rita Zeidan became the *winner* and dyed her hair pink. Monies raised will be donated to a national breast cancer foundation.

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Dr. Lisa Gwynn Honored with Melnick Child Advocacy Award

On November 18, NSU-COM's Pediatrics Club honored **Lisa Gwynn, D.O., M.B.A., CPE, FAAP**, with the Arnold Melnick Child Advocacy Award for her contributions to the field of pediatrics. Dr. Gwynn, a 1998 NSU-COM alumna, serves as medical director for the University of



Miami Pediatric Mobile Clinic/Children's Health Fund South Florida Project and assistant clinical professor of pediatrics at the University of Miami Miller School of Medicine.

Dr. Gwynn, who has more than 12 years of experience in the nonprofit sector, cofounded the Darrell Gwynn Foundation in 2002, which is a

charitable organization that supports individuals with paralysis and offers injury prevention programs in high schools throughout Florida.

The Arnold Melnick Child Advocacy Award, which is named after the founding dean of NSU-COM, was established by the college's Pediatrics Club and is presented each year to individuals in South Florida who promote children's causes.

Dr. Julian Blitz Passes Away at 91

Julian Blitz, D.O., a major supporter of Southeastern College of Osteopathic Medicine (SECOM) when it was established in 1979 and served as one of its first faculty members, passed away on December 6. "While he never sought any positions in the newly minted SECOM, he was energetically involved," said Arnold Melnick, D.O., M.Sc., FACOP, SECOM's founding dean. "He was appointed as clinical associate professor of family medicine, and early on he assisted in training our students as they rotated through his practice and hospital." Dr. Blitz served as president of the Florida Osteopathic Medical Association in 1964-65 and was named as one of the Great Pioneers in Osteopathic Medicine by the American Osteopathic Association in 2011.

New...Noteworthy



The **Biomedical Informatics Program's** faculty and staff members, students, and alumni attended the

American Medical Informatics Association Annual Symposium held November 16-20 in Washington, D.C. The symposium is the leading scientific meeting for biomedical and health informatics research and practice. The Biomedical Informatics Program sponsored a

booth in the exhibit hall to recruit students and faculty members and to connect with other biomedical/health informatics entities.

Pictured (from left) are Angel Brana, M.D., M.P.H., M.S.B.I. (alumnus), Jennie Q. Lou, M.D., M.Sc. (professor and program director), Christine Nelson (program manager), Clarissa Alexander, M.S.B.I. (alumna), and Steve Bronsborg, Ph.D., M.S., M.H.S.A. (assistant professor).

Larkin Community Hospital, which is one of Florida's 12 statutory teaching hospitals and the largest osteopathic teaching hospital in the nation, was named Top Urban Hospital in December by The Leapfrog Group. Larkin, a member of the college's Consortium for



Excellence in Medical Education, is the only hospital in South Florida to receive

this elite designation. Hospitals from across the country were included in the group considered for the Top Hospitals designation. The award recognizes Larkin Community Hospital for demonstrating the highest standards in quality of care, including lower infection rates, higher survival rates for high-risk procedures, decreased length of hospital stay, and fewer readmissions.

Steep Increase in Osteopathic Medical College Enrollment



Osteopathic medical college new student enrollment grew by 11.1 percent in 2013 according to data released by the American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine (AACOM). The steep growth in first-year student matriculation brings the total enrollment at osteopathic medical colleges to 22,054 students – an increase of 4.9 percent over fall 2012 figures. The increase in first-year student enrollment is attributed in part to three new colleges of osteopathic medicine that opened this year.

More than 20 percent of U.S. medical students currently attend osteopathic medical schools. This percentage is expected to increase as new campuses are developed and as established colleges continue to expand with increases in their class sizes. Additionally, several new colleges are in the planning stages.

Among the key findings from AACOM’s enrollment report is the fact that in spring 2013, 4,726 students graduated from osteopathic medical schools, representing an increase of more than 50 percent over the number of new osteopathic physicians who graduated a decade ago.

In addition, three colleges of osteopathic medicine

enrolled first classes this year: Alabama College of Osteopathic Medicine (Alabama), Campbell University School of Osteopathic Medicine (North Carolina), and Marian University College of Osteopathic Medicine (Indiana). Including the new schools, there are now 30 colleges of osteopathic medicine. The number of students who applied to osteopathic medical schools also hit record numbers at 16,454 – an increase of more than 1,500 over last year’s applicant pool.

NSU-COM Hosts Interprofessional Conference on Child Abuse



On November 23, NSU-COM hosted the first **Interdisciplinary Leadership Conference on Child Abuse**. The daylong conference attracted more than 90 participants – a combination of NSU and COM faculty members,

community experts, and other interested individuals.

John E. Wright, M.D., FAAP, medical director of the Broward County Child Protection Team, who trains students and residents, developed the conference’s concept. The organizing committee included NSU-COM faculty members Edward Packer, D.O., FAAP, FACOP, and Kenneth Johnson, D.O., FACOOG, as well as representatives from the Children Services Council of Broward County and the Nancy J. Cotterman Sexual Assault Treatment Center of Broward County.

Discussion topics included strategies to protect children with physical and developmental disabilities from potential abuse, application of various laws in child-abuse cases, a review of the latest statistics of child abuse in our region, and guidelines on child-abuse prevention.

NSU’s College of Health Care Sciences and NSU-COM’s Master of Public Health (M.P.H.) Program have structured a curriculum that provides students with an opportunity to receive concurrent degrees. The **Master of Medical Science (M.M.S.) in Physician Assistant Studies and Master of Public Health degree** is symbiotic with the missions of both schools. Program graduates will be prepared to use a totally holistic approach to health care that will address preventive medicine, share a common mission to provide access to those in need of basic health care, serve as leaders in the transformation of the health care system, and meet the needs of rural and underserved populations.

Cecilia Rokusek, Ed.D., RD, professor of family medicine, public health, disaster and emergency preparedness, and assistant dean for education, planning, and research, joined **Kelley Davis, Ph.D.**, associate professor of microbiology in the College of Medical Sciences and a trainer for the Institute for Disaster and Emergency Preparedness, at a symposium organized by the Uniformed Services University, the Department of Health and Human Services, the Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response, and the Federal Emergency Management Agency at Georgetown University and held September 17-18 in Washington D.C. (They are joined in the accompanying photo by



keynote speaker Tom Daschle, a former senator and majority leader from South Dakota who is also a family friend and former colleague of Dr. Rokusek; Charles L. Rice, M.D., president of the Uniformed Services University; and symposium host Kenneth S. Schor, D.O., M.P.H., the acting director at the University of Health Sciences, who was a classmate of Dr. Anthony J. Silvagni, NSU-COM dean.)



HEALTH CARE LEGAL EAGLE

The Shift Toward Value – Obamacare’s Significant, But Unpublicized, Provisions

By Fred Segal, Esq.



It appears the entire country is engrossed in the drama that is the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, colloquially known as the Affordable Care Act or Obamacare. Congress has been fighting over it for years, especially the past few months. President Barack Obama defends it daily. On every news medium, commentators, pundits, and TV personalities share their opinions. Everyone from your neighbor to your mailman has something to say on the topic.

Many of these opinions are controversial and politically charged, so it is safe to say that the future of the law and whether it will be successful is uncertain. However, the portions of Obamacare that are the most controversial may not be the most important parts of the law. Certain parts, which have been under the mainstream radar, are just as important as the most publicized provisions.

From the Affordable Care Act’s inception to its passage, the main talking points and dissent from politicians, pundits, and the general public are about the mandate that certain employers must provide, and all individuals must procure, health insurance. October’s rocky rollout of the health care marketplaces, where insurance can be purchased, has thrown fuel onto the fire.

However, amidst all this controversy, certain programs implemented by law that are unrelated to insurance mandates have been moving along pretty smoothly with little fanfare from the mainstream media. These are the provisions that were created to attempt to slowly shift the payment structure from a fee-for-service to more of a value-based structure.

Currently, the majority of physicians are paid on a fee-for-service basis. For example, a physician performs a service, and he or she is paid for that service based on a fee schedule of some sort. Most of the time, the physician is paid by a third-party payer, like a private insurance company or government program like Medicare or Medicaid. The principle goals of the Affordable Care Act are to compel physicians and other health care providers to provide better quality of care at a lower cost to a defined patient population. Certain provisions attempt to produce this result by creating different programs that pay physicians based on value (i.e., providing quality care at a lower cost) as opposed to on a fee-for-service basis.

Perhaps the Affordable Care Act’s most

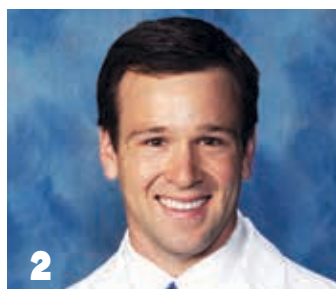
important and significant provision related to value-based payments is the creation of the Medicare Shared Savings Program (MSSP), which allows for the formation of Accountable Care Organizations to participate in the MSSP. The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) defines Accountable Care Organizations (or ACOs) as “groups of doctors, hospitals, and other health care providers, who come together voluntarily to give coordinated high-quality care to their Medicare patients.”

By *come together*, however, the CMS does not mean form a group practice where physicians become partners and share in profits. Instead, competing physician groups, and sometimes hospitals, will join an organization with the goals of bringing *value*, which is providing high-quality care to patients at a reduced overall cost. Accomplishing this objective requires the ACO’s members to work more as a team, create and share meaningful data, and focus heavily on wellness. Even though the physicians will remain competitors, the MSSP will provide the ACO with the money saved from providing patients with value. The members of the ACO share in the savings.

The MSSP commenced in 2012 and, as of now, there are currently more than 200 ACOs participating in the program. This is just a small portion of the government’s push toward value-based (i.e., high-quality care at a low cost) payment systems. The Affordable Care Act has implemented other programs and projects that promote value-based payment systems. The trend toward value-based payments will withstand any potential appeal or attempt to defund the Affordable Care Act. Thus, while Obamacare’s insurance mandates receive most of the publicity, the act’s implementation of programs promoting value (such as the Medicare Shared Savings Program) may be the most significant provision of the law.

Fred Segal is a health law attorney in the Miami office of the law firm Broad and Cassel and is a graduate of NSU’s Shepard Broad Law Center.

Research/Scholarly Activity - Faculty and Student Achievements



1 Steve E. Bronsburg, Ph.D., M.S., M.H.S., assistant professor of biomedical informatics, accepted an invitation to serve as a peer reviewer for the International Institute for Applied Knowledge Management Conference, which will be held June 25-28, 2014, at The American University in Blagoevgrad, Bulgaria. The international conference is a platform for current research and investigation concentrating on knowledge management used in academia, industry, and government to improve, advance, and sustain overall quality.

2 OMS-I Devin Collins was one of two students selected from the 18 colleges and centers at NSU to speak at the university's Fellows Society Induction Ceremony held October 15 in the Miniaci Performing Arts Center on campus. The event honors individuals and organizations that have contributed at least \$50,000 to the university. Collins was chosen based on his strong résumé and successful in-person interview.

3 Nicole Cook, Ph.D., M.P.A., assistant professor of public health, was featured in a CBS4 News report on November 20.

The segment included interviews with Dr. Cook about findings from an NSU microbiology professor's work with students and CBS4, which tested items we touch and use every day to evaluate levels of bacteria. The informative four-minute segment illustrated the levels of *Staphylococcus aureus* bacteria on smart-phone screens and tablet cases used by office workers.

4 Julie Dahl-Smith, D.O., clinical assistant professor of family medicine, presented a poster entitled "Use of an EHR Template to Develop a Patient Registry to Improve Quality Management of Patients with Diabetes Mellitus Type 2 in a Level 3 Patient-Centered Medical Home" at the 41st Annual Meeting of the North American Primary Care Research Group held November 10 in Ottawa, Ontario, Canada.

5 Michelle A. Doldren, Ed.D., M.P.H., adjunct assistant professor in the Master of Public Health Program and HPD Institute for Child Health Policy research scientist, served as a co-presenter at the 141st American Public Health Association Annual Meeting and Exposition held

November 2-6 in Boston, Massachusetts. The presentation focused on the adaptation process of the evidenced-based intervention project "Towards No Drug Abuse."

6 Elizabeth Hames, D.O., assistant professor of geriatrics, and **Naushira Pandya, M.D., CMD, FACP**, professor and chair of the Department of Geriatrics, presented a poster entitled "Analysis of Hospitalizations in a High-Acuity Nursing Home Population: A Quality Improvement Project" at the Florida Medical Directors Association annual conference held October 18 in Orlando, Florida. She also presented a poster with **Sweta Tewary, Ph.D., M.S.W.**, clinical assistant professor and evidence-based practice project director, and Dr. Pandya entitled "Reducing Hospital Readmissions and Improving Quality of Life of Socio-Medically Underserved Older Adults: An Evidence-Based Care Coordination Model" at the same event. A third poster presented at the conference was coauthored with **OMS-IV Alexandra Oleinik** and **Kenya Rivas, M.D.**, assistant professor of geriatrics, entitled "Evaluation of Cognitive Impairment Using the

Mini-Cog Test in Community-Dwelling Older Adults Seeking Health Screening."

7 T. Lucas Hollar, Ph.D., assistant professor of public health, authored the article "Academic Achievement and Physical Activity," which was published in Sage Publications' *Encyclopedia of School Health*. Dr. Hollar also presented two papers with **Dr. Nicole Cook** at the 141st American Public Health Association Annual Meeting and Exposition held November 2-6 in Boston, Massachusetts. They were entitled "Matching Public Health Administration Leadership to Changes in Societal, Political, and Economic Contexts" and "Understanding and Investigating Challenges and Opportunities Within Patient-Centered Medical Home Transformation: A Multi-Level, Multi-Perspective Systems Framework." Dr. Hollar also coauthored six other papers and two poster presentations at the annual meeting.

8 OMS-III's Logan Huff and **Jon Chapekis** presented a poster with **Robin J. Jacobs, Ph.D., M.S.W.**, which won first place in the outreach category at the 15th Annual International

Research/Scholarly Activity - Faculty and Student Achievements



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13



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14



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16

Seminar and Poster Session of the Bureau of International Osteopathic Medicine. The poster, entitled "Osteopathic Medical Leadership Training Through International Medical Outreach Trips," was recognized at the 118th Annual Osteopathic Medical Conference and Exposition (OMED 2013) held September 30-October 4 in Las Vegas, Nevada.

9 Robin J. Jacobs, Ph.D., M.S.W., associate professor of psychiatry and behavioral medicine, preventive medicine, biomedical informatics, and public health, and director of international medicine, recently authored the article "Perceptions About Homelessness in Elders and Community Responsibility" in *Educational Gerontology*. She also coauthored two articles that appeared in *ICER12013 Publications: Proceedings from the 6th International Conference of Education, Research, and Innovation*. The first, entitled "Development of a Linguistically Appropriate and Culturally Relevant Intervention to Increase Health Literacy in HIV-Positive Spanish-Speaking Hispanics in the United States," was coauthored with **Raymond Ownby, M.D., Ph.D.**,

M.B.A., professor and chair of the Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Medicine. The second article, entitled "Nursing Students' Attitudes and Intentions Toward Providing Care to the Underserved," was coauthored with **Arif M. Rana, Ph.D., Ed.S.**, assistant professor of biomedical informatics and medical education and director of faculty development programs.

10 OMS-III Carisa Champion Lippmann represented osteopathic medical students at the American Osteopathic Association's (AOA) Health Policy Forum held September 13 in Washington D.C., where she discussed issues such as payment and delivery innovation, practice models, and the Affordable Care Act. Champion Lippmann was also selected as a national competitor in the L. Edward Bryant Jr., National Health Law Transactional Moot Court Competition. In addition, she was invited to lobby with the AOA in December for the sustainable growth rate—an issue addressed in her research papers.

11 Nancy Klimas, M.D., director of the college's Institute for Neuro-Immune Medicine, was

featured as an expert source for a story about chronic fatigue syndrome that appeared on ABC News' *Good Morning America* on October 30.

12 OMS-III Angela Kuehn was recently elected as chair of the Graduate Medical Education Committee of the national student chapter of the American College of Osteopathic Emergency Physicians.

13 Jennie Q. Lou, M.D., M.Sc., professor of biomedical informatics, public health, and internal medicine and director of the Biomedical Informatics Program, made a presentation entitled "Engaging People with Chronic Conditions Through the Use of Health Information Technology" at the American Diabetes Association's 22nd Annual Conference on Diabetes, which was held November 1-2 at the Seminole Hard Rock Resort in Hollywood, Florida. Dr. Lou's presentation focused on the emerging roles of mobile health in engaging people with chronic conditions such as diabetes and the impact of social media on today's health care.

14 Kristi Messer, M.S.W., M.P.H., assistant professor of public health and disaster

and emergency preparedness, **Nadine Chipon-Schoepp, D.O.**, assistant professor of family medicine, and **Elliot M. Sklar, Ph.D., M.Sc.**, assistant professor of public health, family medicine, and disaster and emergency preparedness, discussed "Project HOPE: An Innovative Approach to Homeless Health Care Education" at the Ninth Annual International Street Medicine Symposium held October 23-26 in Boston, Massachusetts. Presenters had the opportunity to participate in primary care street outreach to the homeless with staff from the oldest and largest health care for the homeless facility in the United States—Boston Health Care for the Homeless. Attendees traveled from areas such as Nigeria, Iceland, Nepal, the United Kingdom, Denmark, India, Spain, Ethiopia, and the Netherlands to learn more about and participate in the street medicine movement.

15 Doris Newman, D.O., associate professor of osteopathic principles and practice and director of the Department of Rural Medicine, delivered two lectures at OMED 2013 in Las Vegas, Nevada. In the first lecture, she discussed "OMT in the Child with Growing Pains,"

Research/Scholarly Activity - Faculty and Student Achievements



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followed by a hands-on OMT instruction for the American Academy of Osteopathy lecture series. The second lecture, "OMT for Parents," was presented to the American College of Osteopathic Pediatricians. Dr. Newman also participated in the American Academy of Osteopathy's Leadership Conference held September 28 in Las Vegas, Nevada. The conference, held every three to five years, was attended by 40 of the top leaders in the specialty college, who discussed the organization's future direction.

16 Elizabeth Oviawe, M.Sc., M.M.I.S., M.S.B.I, NCP, adjunct professor of public health and assistant director of data analysis, development, and simulation in the Department of Medical Education, authored an article entitled "NSU Medical School Professors Create Virtual World to Enhance Students' Experience" that was published in the November 2013 issue of *South Florida Hospital News*.

17 Edward E. Packer, D.O., FAAP, FACOP, chair and professor of the Department of Pediatrics, gave a lecture on "Anticipatory Guidance" at the American College of Osteo-

pathic Pediatricians conference held September 30-October 3 in Las Vegas, Nevada. In addition, he was elected to the American Osteopathic Association's Guardians of the Profession honor roll.

18 OMS-III Andrea Palestro presented a coauthored research poster on October 10 entitled "Malformations Love Company: Intracranial Vascular Lesions in Multiple" at the Palm Beach County Medical Society's Future of Medicine Summit at the Kravis Center in West Palm Beach, Florida.

19 Naushira Pandya, M.D., CMD, FACP, professor and chair of the Department of Geriatrics, has been appointed as a reviewer for the *Journal of Health and Nutrition in Aging* and became an editorial board member for the *Journal of Geriatrics and Palliative Care*. She also participated in a presentation entitled "An Interprofessional Approach to Optimal Care Transitions" at the Florida Medical Directors Association meeting held October 19 in Orlando, Florida.

20 Cecilia Rokusek, Ed.D., RD, professor of family medicine, public health, disaster

and emergency preparedness, and assistant dean for education, planning, and research, made a presentation entitled "Interprofessional Education and Practice: Challenges, Opportunities, and Realities for it in the European Union" at a conference on interprofessional long-term care held September 27-October 2 in Budapest, Hungary. The conference was the first to bring together the highest representatives of both the Ministry of Health and Social Affairs to discuss long-term, cooperative care in geriatrics and social services. Dr. Rokusek also presented a paper entitled "Interprofessional Practice – Key to Patient-Centered Care" at the annual meeting of the Association for Behavioral Science and Medical Education held October 17-19 in Newport, Rhode Island. In addition, she presented a poster entitled "Interprofessional Education and Practice – Links to the Patient Protection and Affordability Health Care Act" at the annual meeting of the Geriatrics Society of America held November 20-24 in New Orleans, Louisiana.

21 Janet Roseman, Ph.D., R-DMT, assistant professor of

medical education, is slated to present the topics "Asclepius and the Wounded Healer" and "Gifts of Silence" for the Narrative Bridge: Connecting Through the Health Humanities conference being held February 23-25 at the Medical University of South Carolina in Charleston, South Carolina.

22 Elliot M. Sklar, Ph.D., M.Sc., assistant professor of public health, family medicine, and disaster and emergency preparedness, and **Kristi Messer, M.S.W., M.P.H.**, assistant professor of public health and disaster and emergency preparedness, presented a paper on "Barriers to Reducing Health Disparities in a Primary Care Curriculum for the Underserved" at the American Public Health Association's 141st Annual Meeting held November 2-6 in Boston, Massachusetts.

23 Melissa Tabor, D.O., assistant professor of osteopathic medicine and NSU team physician, presented a lecture on "The Role of the Team Physician in the Emergency Action Plan" for the American Osteopathic Academy of Sports Medicine at the 118th Annual Osteopathic Medical Conference and Exposition (OMED 2013) held September 30-October 4 in Las Vegas, Nevada. She also published an article entitled "An Alternative Diagnosis of Shoulder Pain Visualized on Musculoskeletal Ultrasound: Deltoid Insertional Tendinopathy" in the October edition of the *Journal of Athletic Enhancement*.



Pictured (from left) are Dr. Gary Margules, Dr. George L. Hanbury, Dr. Raymond Ownby, Dr. Robin Jacobs, and Jacqueline Travisano, M.B.A., CPA, NSU executive vice president and chief operating officer.

Dr. Raymond Ownby Wins NSU Provost's Research and Scholarship Award

On October 16, Raymond Ownby, M.D., Ph.D., M.B.A., professor and chair of the Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Medicine, received the Third Annual Provost's Research and Scholarship Award from George Hanbury II, Ph.D., NSU president and chief executive officer.

The honor was bestowed at the External Funding Recognition Reception, held at the Grande Oaks Golf Club in Davie and hosted by Gary S. Margules, Sc.D., vice president of NSU's Office for Research and Technology Transfer.

Dr. Ownby was nominated for this prestigious honor by his NSU-COM colleague Dr. Robin J. Jacobs. "I am incredibly honored to be selected by my peers for this prestigious honor," said Dr. Ownby. "I am grateful to NSU for believing in me and my team and allowing us and our fellow researchers to pursue knowledge and discovery in our fields."

The Provost's Research and Scholarship Award recognizes a faculty member who has demonstrated significant achievement in support of NSU's mission to foster scholarship, intellectual inquiry, and academic excellence. Research and scholarship

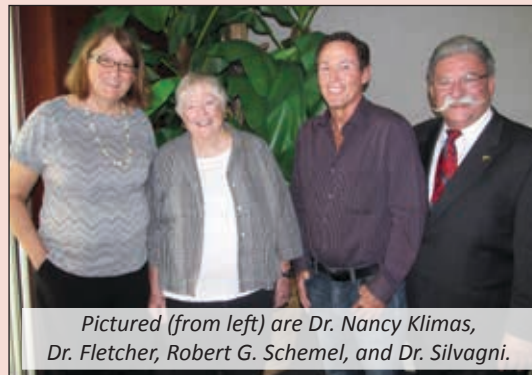
are two of NSU's eight core values, and excellence in these areas enhances education, patient care, public service, and develops superior scholarship.

Dr. Ownby has published more than 100 articles and has received several research grants from the National Institutes of Health. Recently, he and his team received a \$1.35 million federal grant to create innovative methods to evaluate patients' health literacy.

He was the founder of the Brain Fitness Program at the Center on Aging in Miami—a program that helps midlife and older adults maintain mental fitness—and created a brain fitness program at NSU. Among other accolades, Dr. Ownby was recently selected by Best Doctors® as an expert in the field of medicine and is board certified in adult psychiatry, psychosomatic medicine, behavioral sleep medicine, clinical neuropsychology, and neuropsychiatry.

In addition, he has served as contributing editor, section editor, and ad-hoc reviewer for numerous prestigious peer-reviewed journals and is a founding member of the Society of Behavioral Sleep Medicine.

Dr. Mary Ann Fletcher Joins NSU-COM as Schemel Professor for Neuro-Immune Medicine



Pictured (from left) are Dr. Nancy Klimas, Dr. Fletcher, Robert G. Schemel, and Dr. Silvagni.

In October, Mary Ann Fletcher, Ph.D., joined NSU-COM as the first Schemel Professor for Neuro-Immune Medicine, which was made possible thanks to a \$2 million endowment from the Schemel Family Foundation.

In her new role, Dr. Fletcher will oversee the research lab and conduct proteomic and genomic

research at the college's Institute for Neuro-Immune Medicine. "I am honored and grateful to the Schemel family and NSU for believing in me and allowing me to devote my efforts to helping find better treatments for these diseases, which impact so many people and deserve our attention and resources," Dr. Fletcher stated.

Prior to joining the NSU-COM team, Dr. Fletcher spent the past 40 years working at the University of Miami, most recently as a tenured professor and director of the E.M. Popper Laboratory of Clinical Immunology, which is being relocated to NSU. During her career, Dr. Fletcher has published more than 260 peer-reviewed articles in scientific journals and has presented her work at many national and international scientific conferences. In addition, she holds two U.S. patents for developing tests to determine if a person has mononucleosis.

NSU-COM Researchers Receive \$4.1 Million Grant to Investigate Gulf War Illness

N SU-COM's Institute for Neuro-Immune Medicine recently received a \$4.1 million grant from the U.S. Department of Defense (DoD) to fund its research project titled "Understanding Gulf War Illness (GWI): An Integrative Modeling Approach." The project, which was selected as one of two DoD Gulf War Illness Research Program Consortium awardees, will be led by grant recipients Mariana Morris, Ph.D., professor of clinical immunology and director of the Gulf War Illness Project, and Nancy Klimas, M.D., professor of internal medicine and director of the Institute for Neuro-Immune Medicine.

The consortium combines scientific researchers with expertise in basic and clinical research along with those with expertise in stress response and heart function models, genomics, and computational models that isolate therapeutic targets and guide drug development, formulation, and testing.

"This consortium provides an opportunity to advance our understanding of Gulf War Illness through discovery of biomarkers to more accurately diagnose and treat this syndrome," said Wanda Salzer, M.D., director of Congressionally Directed Medical Research Programs. "Working as an integrated team, the scientists, clinicians, and veterans at these accomplished organizations will be able to establish synergy and collectively develop research strategies, which may unlock the pathways leading to the regulatory dysfunction in Gulf War Illness."

Gulf War Illness is a medical condition that affects veterans and civilians who were exposed to a number of dangers, including chemical weapons, during the 1991

Gulf War. Symptoms can include chronic headaches, widespread pain, cognitive difficulties, debilitating fatigue, gastrointestinal problems, respiratory symptoms, and other abnormalities that are not explained by established medical diagnoses or standard laboratory tests. At least a quarter of the nearly 700,000 soldiers who fought in the Gulf War suffer from GWI, according to the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs' Research Advisory Committee on Gulf War Veterans' Illnesses.

"Our goal is to develop a better understanding of GWI and under-



LEADING THE WAY IN GWI RESEARCH:
Dr. Nancy Klimas and Mariana Morris

stand specific causes so we can find treatments to address these causes, rather than focus on the symptoms," said Dr. Klimas. "This consortium will integrate our clinical understanding of the disease process with basic research efforts using a novel mathematical model."

It has been established that GWI is caused by a disruption in normal cell signaling that results in disabling symptoms including fainting, low blood pressure, fatigue, and pain.

This is primarily due to disruptions in normal immune, cardiovascular, and hormone signaling.

The consortium's goal is to pinpoint the causes of GWI using a multidisciplinary approach. The project will involve integrating basic and clinical research using a computational systems biology method to correlate data between the physiological compartments and levels of biology from basic models to human patients. This will allow them to tailor treatment more effectively using drugs already approved for other illnesses.

At the end of the four-year study, the consortium plans to complete early studies in human patients and be able to pursue larger-scale clinical trials for further drug testing. "By increasing the understanding of the reasons for GWI, our consortium will advance the diagnosis and treatment of the disease," said Dr. Morris. "Specifically, our more detailed understanding of the dysfunction involved in GWI would greatly increase the speed to identify targets for improved diagnosis as well as selection and testing of more specific treatments over the longer term that will address the causes of disease."

The consortium consists of the co-principal investigators, Drs. Klimas and Morris; Gordon Broderick, Ph.D., NSU Center for Psychological Studies; Travis Craddock, Ph.D., assistant professor, NSU Center for Psychological Studies; NSU-COM's Institute for Neuro-Immune Medicine genomics core; and Mary Ann Fletcher, Ph.D., NSU-COM's Schemel professor for neuro-immune medicine. The team is affiliated with the research service of the Bruce W. Carter Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center and Miami VA Healthcare System.

Faculty Members Recognized for Research Contributions at NSU External Funding Reception

More than 120 NSU faculty members were honored at the NSU External Funding Recognition Reception held at Grande Oaks Golf Club in Davie on October 16. The event was hosted by Gary S. Margules, Sc.D., NSU vice president for research and technology transfer. The event recognizes the extraordinary efforts of NSU faculty members who received external grant funding during the previous fiscal year, which totaled nearly \$62 million, and encourages the continued pursuit of future external funding. Thanks to the efforts of the following NSU-COM-affiliated individuals, ample amounts of external funding have been received to sustain, enhance, or create various programs and projects. Listed below are the 28 faculty honorees and the organizations they received funding from for their projects:

Cyril Blavo, D.O., M.P.H. and T.M.

United States Department of Health and Human Services

Nicole Cook, Ph.D., M.P.H.

Broward Regional Health Planning Council, Inc.

Kelley Davis, Ph.D.

United States Department of Health and Human Services

National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences

Joseph De Gaetano, D.O., M.S.Ed

Health Resources and Services Administration

Michelle Doldren, Ed.D.

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration

Marti Echols, Ph.D.

American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine

M. Isabel Fernandez, Ph.D.

*University of Alabama at Birmingham
National Institute of Nursing Research
Centers for Disease Control/Prevention*

Patrick C. Hardigan, Ph.D.

Florida Breast Cancer Foundation

T. Lucas Hollar, Ph.D.

Broward Regional Health Planning Council, Inc.

United States Department of Health and Human Services

Kenneth Johnson, D.O.

Sponsor's name withheld

Nancy G. Klimas, M.D.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

The Chronic Fatigue Initiative

Leonard Levy, D.P.M., M.P.H.

Health Resources and Services Administration

Jennie Lou, M.D., M.Sc.

South Florida Regional Extension Center

Multiple Sclerosis Foundation

Linda Maurice, M.A.

Retirement Research Foundation

Heather McCarthy, D.O.

American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine

Mariana Morris, Ph.D.

National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute

Deborah Mulligan, M.D.

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration

Raymond Ownby M.D., Ph.D., M.B.A.

National Institute of Mental Health

National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute

Naushira Pandya, M.D., CMD

Health Resources and Services Administration

John Pellosie, Jr., D.O., M.P.H.

Florida Department of Health

Florida Public Health Institute

Alina Perez, J.D.

Health Resources and Services Administration

Arif M. Rana, Ph.D., Ed.S.

Broward Regional Health Planning Council, Inc.

Irma Rey, M.D.

The Chronic Fatigue Initiative

Cecilia Rokusek, Ed.D., RD

Health Resources and Services Administration

Irina Rozenfeld, M.S.N., ARNP, CCR

Immunotec, Inc.

Daniel Shaw, Ph.D., M.Ed.

International Alliance for Invitational Education

Paula Waziry, Ph.D.

South Florida Veterans Foundation for Research and Education

Steven Zucker, D.M.D., M.Ed.

Health Resources and Services Administration

Florida Department of Health



Dr. Nicole Cook



Dr. Kelley Davis



Dr. Joseph De Gaetano



Dr. Michelle Doldren



Dr. Marti Echols



Dr. T. Lucas Hollar



Dr. Kenneth Johnson



Dr. Nancy Klimas



Dr. Leonard Levy



Dr. Heather McCarthy



Dr. Mariana Morris



Dr. Arif Rana



Irina Rozenfeld



Dr. Paula Waziry



Dr. Steven Zucker

Record-Setting CEME Research Poster Competition

Simultaneous to the NSU-COM Residency Fair, which was held on November 1, the Consortium for Excellence in Medical Education (CEME) held its Fifth Annual Scientific Research Poster Competition. A record 82 submissions were received from the various CEME affiliates located throughout Florida and the southeastern United States, along with NSU-COM students. This was up greatly from the 29 submissions for the 2012 poster

competition and illustrates the exponential growth of research activities at the CEME-affiliated sites and at NSU-COM.

The large number of submissions forced the competition to spill out of the OPP Lab, into the hallways, off the bulletin boards, and onto the walls. Consequently, an additional cadre of judges was needed to ensure that all posters were judged in time to announce the winners by the end of the Residency Fair.

All posters were judged based on the format and completeness of abstract, the overall poster appearance, and the entrant's oral presentation. In addition to the large number of posters, the judges commented on the high quality of research that was presented this year.

Cash prizes of \$500, \$250, and \$100 were awarded to the first-, second-, and third-place finishers in each category. Listed below are the poster competition winners:



Pictured (front row from left) are Heather Katz, D.O. (internal medicine resident at Broward Health Medical Center), OMS-II Jacob Triplet, OMS-III Steven Zhang, OMS-III Jaime Mazzurco, M.P.H., and OMS-III Matt Motisi. Pictured (second row from left) are Patrick Hardigan, Ph.D. (judge), Janet Hamstra, Ed.D. (head judge), Robin Jacobs, Ph.D. (judge), Hilda DeGaetano, D.O. (judge), and Kenya Rivas, M.D. (judge). Pictured (back row from left) are Joseph De Gaetano, D.O., M.S.Ed, Guy Nehrenz, Ed.D., RRT, (judge and NSU College of Health Care Sciences executive associate dean and professor), Daniel Shaw, Ph.D. (judge), and Ray Ownby, M.D., Ph.D. (judge).

EXPERIMENTAL RESEARCH

First Place

"Female Farmworkers' Access to and Experiences with Prenatal Care in South Florida"

Jamie Mazzurco, M.P.H. (student), **Steven Fan Zhang** (student), and **M. Isabel Fernandez, Ph.D.** (NSU-COM professor)

Nova Southeastern University College of Osteopathic Medicine

Second Place

"A Latent Class Analysis of United States Medical Students' Knowledge and Attitudes Toward the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act"

Steven Fan Zhang (student), **Jamie Mazzurco, M.P.H.** (student), and **M. Isabel Fernandez, Ph.D.** (NSU-COM professor)

Nova Southeastern University College of Osteopathic Medicine

Third Place

"Distal Femoral Arthroplasty Acute Complications and Outcomes: A Retrospective Review"

Matthew Motisi (student), **Kevin Weiss** (student), and **W. Vincent Burke, M.D.** (Broward Health Medical Center physician)

Nova Southeastern University College of Osteopathic Medicine

CASE STUDIES

First Place

"Bilateral Subtrochanteric Fractures in a Previous Long-Term Alendronate Medicated Patient"

Jacob Triplet (student), **Timothy Hawkes, D.O.** (resident), and **Sein Lwin, M.D.** (Broward Health Medical Center physician)

Nova Southeastern University College of Osteopathic Medicine and Orthopedic Medicine Residency Program at Broward Health Medical Center

Second Place

"Laparoscopic Cholecystectomy in Situs Inversus Totalis with Post-ERCP Pancreatitis and Larkin Syndrome: A Novel Diagnosis"

Anthony Abraham, D.O. (resident), **Philip Pack III, D.O.** (resident), **Joshua Simon, D.O.** (resident), and **Mohammad Masri, M.D.** (Larkin Community Hospital physician)

General Surgery Residency Program at Larkin Community Hospital in South Miami

Third Place

"Solitary Metastasis to the Small Bowel from Primary Adenocarcinoma of the Lung"

Nina Thakkar Rivera, D.O., Ph.D. (resident), **Heather Katz, D.O.** (resident), **Natasha Bray, D.O.** (Broward Health Medical Center physician), and **Delia Guaqueta, M.D.** (Broward Health Medical Center physician)

Internal Medicine Residency Program at Broward Health Medical Center

Donald Altman, M.D., clinical professor of pediatrics, was granted distinguished faculty status in October, joining a select group of clinical faculty members recognized for providing extraordinary and lasting service to the college. Dr. Altman, who has practiced pediatrics in the local community for over 58 years, took part in establishing and supporting the role of Miami Children's Hospital as a site to train NSU-COM students and residents in pediatric medicine.



Sandra Bertman, Ph.D., clinical associate professor of psychiatry, is

slated to receive two lifetime achievement awards in 2014: the Janice Palmer Award for Outstanding Leadership at the 25th Annual Conference of the Global Alliance for Arts & Health (formerly the Association for Arts in Healthcare) on April 12 in Washington, D.C., and the Herman Feifel Award from the International Workgroup on Death, Dying, and Bereavement in Victoria, Canada, on May 1.

Stanley R. Cohen Ed.D., professor of humanities and executive vice dean for educational support at NSU's Health Professions Division, served as program chairman for the national convention of the Association for the Behavioral Sciences and Medical Education (ABSAME) held October 17-19 in Newport, Rhode Island. The ABSAME also honored him with its Lifetime Achievement Award in recognition of his devoted service to the cause of improving the lives of many thousands of students.

Joseph De Gaetano, D.O., M.S.Ed, FAFP, FACOPF, professor of family medicine, associate dean for clinical curriculum and graduate medical education, and executive director of the Consortium for Excellence in Medical Education, received the Guardian of the Profession Award from the American Osteopathic Association. The AOA also named him an *Unsung Hero* because he has enhanced the image of osteopathic medicine by living each day as an example of what an osteopathic physician should be and has served as an outstanding physician and role model.



Stephen G. Grant, Ph.D., formerly a College of Pharmacy faculty member,

joined the NSU-COM faculty team in October as an associate professor in the Master of Public Health Program and is also working with the college's Institute for Neuro-Immune Medicine.

James T. Howell, M.D., M.P.H., professor of public health and rural medicine and assistant dean of professional relations, was appointed by the president of the Palm Beach County Medical Society to the organization's board of trustees in November.

Bruce M. LeClair, M.D., clinical associate professor, received the 2013 Educator of the Year Award from the Georgia Academy of Family Physicians. Dr. LeClair is a residency rotation director and a core educator for the Medical College of Georgia at Georgia Regents University.

Heather McCarthy, D.O., assistant professor of medical education and osteopathic principles and practice and director of the Simulation/Standardized Patient Lab, participated in the COMLEX-USA Level 3 Final Exam Review held November 7-9 in Chicago, Illinois.



Anthony N. Ottaviani, D.O., M.P.H., MACOI, FCCP, clinical professor

of internal medicine, regional dean, and director of medical education at Largo Medical Center in Largo, Florida, received the American Osteopathic Association (AOA) Distinguished Service Certificate

during the Osteopathic Medical Conference and Exposition held September 30-October 4 in Las Vegas, Nevada. The accolade is the AOA's highest honor, which is granted only to deserving members for outstanding accomplishments in scientific or professional affairs.

Anthony J. Silvagni, D.O., Pharm.D., M.Sc., FACOPF dist., NSU-COM dean, received the Guardian of the Profession Award from the American Osteopathic Association. The honor recognizes an osteopathic physician who advances the culture of osteopathic medicine by having served in a local, state, or national osteopathic leadership role. A guardian also demonstrates a strong sense of pride in the osteopathic medical profession.

NSU-COM Bids Farewell to Drs. Jon Dodds and Gary Hill



On September 25, the college coordinated a farewell reception for **Gary Hill, D.O., FACOI**, assistant professor of internal medicine. Dr. Hill was also one of the three physicians who ran the Employee Health and Wellness Center. He left the college after more than 11 years to become associate

dean for clinical affairs at the Edward Via College of Osteopathic Medicine in Auburn, Alabama. (Pictured are Elaine Wallace, D.O., M.S., executive associate dean, and Dr. Gary Hill.)



On December 12, the college coordinated a farewell reception for **Jon Dodds Ph.D., M.P.H.**, assistant director of the Master of Public Health Program. Dr. Dodds, who joined NSU-

COM full-time in 2000, was recognized by many colleagues for his commitment to the college. He plans to combine the pleasure of his retirement with consulting work. (Pictured are Dr. Silvagni, Dr. Dodds, and Cyril Blavo, D.O., M.P.H. and T.M., director of the M.P.H. Program.)



FACULTY PERSPECTIVE

Proposed Hospital Offers Bonanza of Benefits

By Joseph De Gaetano, D.O., M.S.Ed, FAAFP, FACOFF
Associate Dean for Clinical Curriculum
and Graduate Medical Education



PROPOSAL: Creation of a hospital for teaching and research that will serve as the cornerstone of a collaboration between NSU and HCA East Florida, which will bring greater choice and access for patients in the community. NSU's Academical Village plans include more than three-million square feet of medical office, retail, residential, financial, hotel/conferencing, and governmental space alongside NSU's Health Care Clinics and contiguous to the university's pending Center for Collaborative Research.

(Editor's Note: Last fall, HCA East Florida filed a Certificate of Need (CON) with the Agency for Health Care Administration requesting approval to build and operate a hospital of up to 100 beds that would significantly enhance teaching and research on NSU's main campus. If approved, the hospital will anchor NSU's Academical Village—a Jeffersonian concept that is defined as "a community of scholars and students working closely, combining theory and practice"—and serve as the foundation for Broward County's only comprehensive research and medical center. Although the proposal was initially denied by the Agency for Health Care Administration on December 6, efforts are currently underway to make the hospital a reality at some point in the future. To that end, Dr. De Gaetano has detailed his reasoning for why a hospital based on NSU's main campus would be advantageous for the university, graduate medical education—and the community.)

NSU-COM takes great pride in the clinical training opportunities it affords its medical students. Similarly, the college takes great pride in the maintenance and growth of its affiliated graduate medical education (GME) training programs to serve the postgraduate needs of its students. With recent medical school expansion, however, it has become difficult to retain and identify new clinical training opportunities for NSU-COM's students.

Osteopathic medical school expansion and the proposed pending changes to the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education's (ACGME) *common program rules* have urgently demonstrated NSU-COM's need to further grow osteopathic graduate medical education (OGME) training opportunities for its graduates. The planned building of a Hospital Corporation of America (HCA)-supported academic medical center on NSU's main campus will address these urgent needs in dramatic fashion. It also will heighten health care services quality and availability to the citizens of Broward County.

The ability for NSU-COM to retain and grow inpatient clinical training opportunities for its medical students has recently become a more challenging task. Florida's original medical schools at the University of Miami, University of Florida, and University of South Florida have all expanded class sizes over the

past few years. Florida has seen the opening of five new medical schools over the past several years—University of Central Florida, Florida Atlantic University, Florida International University, Florida State University, and the Lake Erie College of Osteopathic Medicine-Bradenton Campus.

All are engaged in a *competition* to identify quality inpatient training locations for a now-expanding cadre of third- and fourth-year medical students that are attending these old and new institutions. Similarly, it should be noted that many osteopathic medical schools located outside of Florida—as well as many off-shore allopathic medical schools—also compete with the in-state schools for a finite number of inpatient clinical training sites within Florida. The opening of an academic medical center on NSU's main campus will allow NSU-COM to *internally* address the clinical training needs of its students. NSU-COM students will be afforded the ability to experience exceptional inpatient clinical training at their own *home* institution and thereby acutely diminish the college's urgent external need to identify new quality inpatient training sites for its students.

As noted above, Florida has seen a recent dramatic growth in the number of medical schools contained within its borders. Correspondingly, the United States has seen an exponential growth in medical schools across the

“The joint hospital venture between NSU and HCA will serve the people of Broward County as a resource and center of medical excellence. Patients in the local community as well as throughout Broward County will be able to seek medical care by both top specialists as well as primary care physicians who will provide cutting-edge and comprehensive care to the patients they serve.”

nation. The preponderance of this growth has been in the opening of new colleges of osteopathic medicine. There are currently 30 colleges of osteopathic medicine, offering instruction at 40 locations in 28 states. As a result, the osteopathic profession will be graduating nearly 5,000 fourth-year medical students annually within the next two or three years.

All of these graduates will need to enter minimally a first postgraduate year of training to achieve licensure in one of the 50 states. The vast majority will continue on in training for an additional two to seven years to realize a board certification in a specialty or subspecialty of medicine. Currently, the osteopathic profession only retains approximately 2,600 first postgraduate year training positions nationally. The profession as a whole acutely needs to increase osteopathic graduate medical education positions nationally so as to address the training needs of its growing number of students. Again, NSU’s ability to open an academic medical center on its own campus will allow NSU-COM to work with hospital administration to grow new OGME positions for its medical school graduates.

Compounding the OGME issue is the fact that the ACGME is projected to change the common program rules that guide the administration of ACGME-accredited programs nationally. Currently, graduates of an accredited osteopathic internship and/or residency program can pursue subspecialty training within ACGME-accredited programs. Projected changes to the common program rules in July 2015 will bar osteopathically trained physicians from being able to enter these allopathically accredited subspecialty programs. As a result, the osteopathic profession must acutely address the need to grow subspecialty

training programs for its internship and residency program graduates. NSU’s ability to open an academic medical center on its own campus will allow the COM to work with hospital administration to acutely grow new osteopathically accredited subspecialty positions for its affiliated internship and residency program graduates.

The joint hospital venture between NSU and HCA will also serve the people of Broward County as a resource and center of medical excellence. Patients in the local community as well as throughout Broward County will be able to seek medical care by both top specialists as well as primary care physicians who will provide cutting-edge and comprehensive care to the patients they serve. The care rendered at the new facility will encompass an interdisciplinary team approach that will be unique within Broward County. Teams of physicians, physician assistants, nurses, pharmacists, optometrists, and dentists will jointly care for patients in this cutting-edge model.

The hospital will be situated juxtaposed to NSU and will serve as a research center where new treatment

modalities can be developed and tested in a real-time laboratory environment. This, of course, will be the only such relationship of this kind that exists in Broward County. Again, this will serve the people of Broward County, as they will have access to unique treatment methods that are not to be found anywhere else in the local community.

Lastly, this new facility will serve as a tremendous resource for the training of the future health care professionals of Broward County. Physicians, physician assistants, pharmacists, dentists, and the like from Nova Southeastern University will all have the opportunity to train in the new and progressive medical center.

The planned building of an HCA-supported academic medical center on NSU’s main campus will address the urgent clinical experiential needs of both NSU-COM’s undergraduate and graduate trainees. The citizens of Broward County will realize the fruits of having a robust academic medical center within their midst due to the access to exceptional clinicians, cutting-edge research, and interdisciplinary care the medical center will afford them.



HPD Researcher Receives U.S. Patent... Administrative Shifts...Dolphin Research

Dr. Stanley Wilson Appointed Dean of College of Health Care Sciences



Stanley Wilson, Ed.D., P.T., CEAS, was recently named dean of NSU's College of Health Care Sciences. Dr. Wilson has served in a number of administrative positions within the college, including associate dean for academic affairs and previously as associate dean for rehabilitation services and chair of the Department of Physical Therapy.

Dr. Wilson's academic leadership experience at NSU is complemented by his prior experience as associate professor and chair of the Department of Physical Therapy at Howard University in Washington, D.C., and assistant professor in the Department of Physical Therapy at Florida International University in Miami.

Nursing Dean Selected for Notable National Nurse Fellowship



Marcella M. Rutherford, Ph.D., M.B.A., M.S.N., dean of the College of Nursing, has been named one of just 20 Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF) Executive Nurse Fellows for 2013. Dr. Rutherford joins a select group of nurse leaders from across the country chosen to participate in this world-class, three-year leadership development program designed to enhance nurse leaders' effectiveness in improving the U.S. health care system.

Begun by the RWJF in 1998, the RWJF Executive Nurse Fellows program strengthens the leadership capacity of nurses who aspire to shape health care in their communities, states, and the nation. The program will provide Dr. Rutherford and her colleagues with coaching, education, and other support to strengthen their abilities to lead teams and organizations working to improve health and health care.

HPD Researcher Receives U.S. Patent for Developing Fall Prevention Model

In an effort to prevent unnecessary injuries and deaths due to falls, **Patrick Hardigan, Ph.D.**, associate professor of public health and HPD executive director for research, set out to develop a model used to help predict the effect of medication and dosage on injurious falling. He recently received a U.S. patent (No. 8,521,490) for an algorithm he developed called the Statistical Model for Predicting Falling in Humans, also known as the Fall Model.

The Fall Model uses a robust amount of unidentified patient information from the state of Florida and other public sources such as height, weight, and age combined with each respective patient's clinical diagnosis and prescription medication regimen to determine the patient's likelihood of falling. The result is a *likely* or *not likely* determination.

This model will eventually be computerized in an easy-to-use template for use in health care settings, including hospitals, pharmacies, nursing homes, and clinics. "Statistical models like this offer significant inherent advantages for clinicians because they can correctly register the simultaneous importance of a dozen or more factors," explained Gary S. Margules, Sc.D., vice president of NSU's Office for Research and Technology Transfer.



Pictured at the patent recognition ceremony (from left) are: Dr. Gary Margules; Fred Lippman, R.Ph., Ed.D., HPD chancellor; Ralph V. Rogers, Jr., Ph.D., NSU provost and executive vice president for academic affairs; Dr. Patrick Hardigan; and George L. Hanbury II, Ph.D., NSU president and chief executive officer.

NSU OVERVIEW

NSU Researchers Uncover Genetic Surprises in Florida's Bottlenose Dolphins



Bottlenose dolphins are the most common and well known of their kind—famous in TV and movies. While one bottlenose dolphin might look similar to another, when you take a closer look at them (really close, as in genetically,) there are differences. In fact, a recently published study in the *Journal of Heredity* by a collaborative, including researchers from **NSU's Oceanographic Center**, focused on groups of these animals that live in specific areas along the eastern seaboard of the United States, comparing them to other bottlenose dolphins that live offshore, in the northwest Atlantic Ocean, the Gulf of Mexico, and the Caribbean.

This first-of-its-kind collaborative study revealed that within the Indian River Lagoon (IRL), there are two different and distinct populations of

bottlenose dolphins living in the waters. After the data were analyzed, researchers were able to determine that these two genetically different groups were divided along a north-south geographic area of the IRL. Along with identifying genetic differences in the animals within the IRL, when compared to bottlenose dolphins that live in other areas, including the open oceanic waters, additional differences were found.

While there were many findings identified, this study also provides important management implications, since it's clear the role of the habitat and subsequent modifications can directly shape bottlenose dolphin structure.

Dr. Richard Davis to Lead Regional Campuses and Online Education



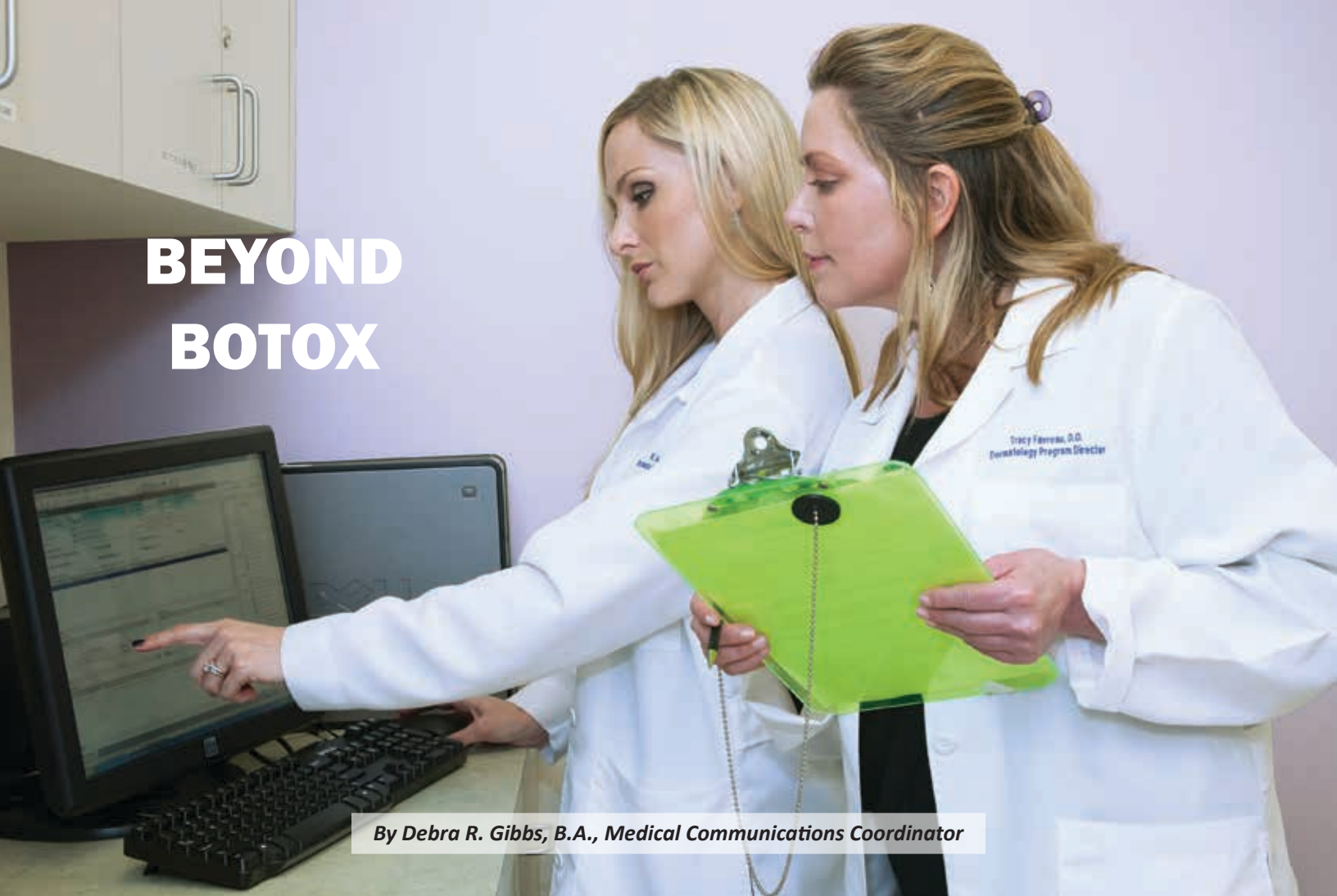
Richard Davis, Ed.D., who served as founding dean of NSU's College of Health Care Sciences, was recently named as vice president of the university's regional campus network and online education. In this role, he will provide overall leadership and strategic direction in the planning, development, and enrollment management of NSU's nine regional campuses and its online education programs. NSU has regional campuses throughout Florida in Fort Myers, Jacksonville, Miami-Kendall, Miramar, Orlando, Palm Beach, and Tampa as well as in Nassau, Bahamas, and San Juan, Puerto Rico.

Dr. Davis joined NSU in 1998 as director of the university's Physician Assistant Program and has since held multiple leadership positions. "Throughout his 15-year tenure at NSU, Dr. Davis has modeled success and innovation in the creation and evaluation of traditional classroom and distance-education programs, including the development and implementation of more than 20 new programs at NSU," said George L. Hanbury II, Ph.D., NSU president and CEO.

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BEYOND BOTOX



By Debra R. Gibbs, B.A., Medical Communications Coordinator

A Look at the Science, Art, and Service of the Department of Dermatology

Like all medical disciplines, dermatology strives to improve the lives of patients. Some may see dermatologists as focused solely on the quest for physical enhancement, but Tracy Favreau, D.O., chair of the Department of Dermatology, and her residents see that as a small corner of a complex tableau. This philosophy explains why Dr. Favreau is committed to a more complicated calling and tackles the challenges many of her colleagues avoid.

"I enjoy regular dermatology, the bread-and-butter cases of acne, eczema, contact dermatitis, or psoriasis, but I really like the hard-to-solve mysteries that other physicians find difficult to solve, so they send them here to Nova Southeastern University and my team works hard to analyze these rare diseases and discover the diagnoses and treatment plans," Dr. Favreau explained.

Many patients visit Dr. Favreau, who is board certified in both family medicine and dermatology, after they have already seen a primary care doctor because of their extraordinary situations. Thanks to her training, troubleshooting

is one of her specialties. "I was so fortunate to have trained under expert immuno-dermatologists such as Carlos Noursari, M.D., from Johns Hopkins Hospital, as well as Francisco Kerdel, M.D., from the University of Miami. Both of these brilliant dermatologists have been treating patients with difficult and life-threatening dermatologic diseases for years," she said.

Dealing with Complicated Cases

"A lot of people think dermatology is just popping zits or treating acne, but it is so much more than that," said Dr. Favreau, who leads her department with innovative, patient-centered practices that focus on fighting whatever skin-related disease she encounters. "NSU's College of Osteopathic Medicine allows me to help in the Broward Health Medical Center district clinics. A lot of the patients face very difficult life circumstances. I, along with our dermatology residents, really enjoy helping out at these clinics. It is so rewarding to be able to make a positive change in our patients' lives."

“I enjoy regular dermatology, the bread-and-butter cases of acne, eczema, contact dermatitis, or psoriasis, but I really like the hard-to-solve mysteries that other physicians find difficult to solve, so they send them here to Nova Southeastern University and my team works hard to analyze these rare diseases and discover the diagnoses and treatment plans,” Dr. Favreau explained.

Two medical challenges stand out among the many Dr. Favreau has faced—rare and unusual cases of leprosy and metastatic basal cell carcinoma that manifested in a patient’s face.

Through her studies on leprosy, Dr. Favreau was familiar with the highly contagious disease. When a patient from the Specialty Care Center in Fort Lauderdale visited the dermatology clinic, he manifested the ailment’s classic features. A biopsy confirmed lepromatous leprosy bacteria had attacked the cartilage of the man’s ears and nose, displaying the features of a collapsed saddle nose and circular depressions in the cartilage around his ears. As a result, the mandatory notification of the Broward County Health Department and Hansen’s Clinic in Miami was completed and examinations of family members and others who had been in close contact with the man were also performed. Fortunately, the patient did very well thanks to modern medicine.

The importance of a biopsy was also the core of the second case, which occurred when Dr. Favreau was called to the Broward Health Medical Center Emergency Room to examine a man with facial pain. When she removed the gauze on his cheek, she saw the flesh had eroded all the way down to the bone.

The cancer had first been discovered two years prior to her examination, when the man was incarcerated. “The biopsy performed by the infirmary physician came back positive for basal-cell carcinoma. The infirmary physician had performed plastic surgery on the man’s cheek and covered

the area of defect with a skin graft taken from his thigh and upper arm. Unfortunately, the surgical excision pathology results came back positive with basal-cell carcinoma still in one margin,” Dr. Favreau said.

The patient had a consultation with a radiation oncologist to discuss treatment. Radiation treatment would have required the removal of the patient’s teeth because the tooth enamel would absorb the radiation, making the treatment less effective. The patient decided against removing his teeth and didn’t receive further treatment.

By the time Dr. Favreau examined him, the man couldn’t even open his mouth—and the pain had become excruciating. Sadly, the beard he had grown could not disguise his disfigurement. When the skin breakdown was too obvious, he decided to hide the cancer under gauze taped to that

side of his face. Sadly, the cancer took over almost half of his face.

“I ordered a CAT scan of his head, abdomen, and lungs and an aspiration biopsy. These exams revealed multiple nodules inside his lungs. The diagnosis was proven histologically to be metastatic basal-cell carcinoma, wherein the cancer is able to grow at sites distant from the primary site of origin,” she said. “Only 0.003 percent of the population worldwide has been diagnosed with this form of cancer.”

The patient was only 41 years old, but the disease had developed too far to cure him. “We helped him with pain medication and high doses of morphine. The beautiful thing about the whole situation is that it brought his family closer together, despite the sad situation,” Dr. Favreau said. A report she later authored about the experience led to a \$15,000 grant.



Drs. Tracy Favreau (left) and Jacqueline Thomas working with a patient



Members of the dermatology team include (back row left): Khasha Toulouei, D.O. (PGY-II); Kimberly May Hull, D.O. (PGY-II); Lise Brown, D.O. (PGY-III); Dan Sheridan (office manager); Dorothy Sainvil-Brown (medical assistant); Yvette Tivoli, D.O. (PGY-III); Michael Baze, D.O., Ph.D (PGY-II); Alexis Stephens, D.O. (PGY-II); and Leor I. Porges, D.O. (PGY-II). Pictured (front row from left) are: Justin Rubin, D.O. (PGY-III); Tracy Favreau, D.O., chair of the Department of Dermatology, Jacqueline Thomas, D.O., assistant professor; and Panogiotis Mitropoulous, D.O. (PGY-III).

An Overview of NSU's Dermatology Department

Fighting cancer is the focus of the dermatology department. "We are so much more educated today," Dr. Favreau said. "The department takes pride in providing patient education and raising awareness. Nova Southeastern University is so passionate about helping and reaching out, especially to underserved communities. NSU's support allows us to work in clinics funded by grants and taxpayers' money. This support greatly helps people who are unable to pay."

At the community clinics—the Specialty Care Center on Broward Boulevard in Fort Lauderdale and the Broward Health Medical Center outpatient clinic—Dr. Favreau treated almost 2,000 patients last year. These clinics offer the opportunity "to give back and to help out," Dr. Favreau stated. "NSU-COM allows us to go to clinics and offer care that diagnoses and helps cure many severe diseases."

Both clinics stay busy, handling a two-year backlog of patients. Dr. Favreau and Jacqueline Thomas, D.O., assistant professor of dermatology, perform various other dermatology consultations at Broward Health Medical Center and are conferred with frequently.

On campus, in the dermatology clinic, four exam rooms are available to meet the high demand for appointments. Nine residents on rotation work with Drs. Favreau and Thomas. Two additional members of the team are Daniel Sheridan (office manager) and Dorothy Sainvil-Brown (medical assistant). In the past year, Dr. Favreau examined 1,787 patients in the Davie clinic.

Skin cancer—basal cell, squamous cell, and melanoma—is the primary target of the department's work. Basal cell is the most common and grows slowly. Squamous cell is the second slowest-growing, but can be a little bit more aggressive. Melanoma is highly

aggressive and can spread quickly into the lymph nodes and lymph systems. The physicians use the ABCDE rules to inform patients on how to check for red flags during a self-exam.

"A" stands for *Asymmetry*, noting whether the shape has changed.

"B" stands for *Border*, noting whether borders have changed from smooth to jagged.

"C" stands for *Color*. If the mole was light brown and is now dark brown or any other color change, it could be a sign of melanoma.

"D" stands for *Dimension*. A mole that measures at least six millimeters, which is the tip of a pinky or the head of an eraser on a pencil, could signal it's time to have it examined.

"E" stands for *Evolution*. If a mole used to be flat and becomes raised, it should be examined.

Following the A, B, C, D, and E guidelines of changes in moles can make the difference between life and death, Dr. Favreau said.

Peering into Future Plans

Dr. Favreau's interest in immunology includes more clinical research. She hopes to work with Nancy Klimas, M.D., chair of clinical immunology and director of the college's Institute for Neuro-Immune Medicine. Some of Dr. Klimas' care and study of certain genes focuses on patients with severe allergies. Chronic ailments that alter the quality of life present a challenge to find treatments or medications that will alleviate the suffering. Dr. Favreau hopes to collaborate with Dr. Klimas to explore gene malfunctions that cause severe allergic reactions and establish rotations at the institute for her dermatology residents.

A more immediate plan for research relates to three new lasers that have been approved and should arrive soon. The lasers are the most current models available. One does total resurfacing of the face for rejuvenation, another one removes red or brown spots, patches, and evens out the skin, while a third focuses on hair reduction. "We are really excited because so many patients are interested in having hair reduction and facial rejuvenation," she said. "When I first started doing Botox and fillers, it was just strictly women, but it's about 50/50 now, with both men and women seeking rejuvenation."

Dr. Favreau's passion for medicine, so evident in her work, was sparked by the special care she received as a child. "I feel so blessed," she explained. "I love being a physician. That love began with a dream I had as a five-year-old with severe asthma. When my primary care doctor helped me breathe, I thought his helping me was the best thing in the world."

"I grew up here at NSU and was a member of the second graduating class of the Physician Assistant Program," she added. "From there, I went to medical school for family medicine and completed my residency in dermatology. There is nothing more rewarding to me in this world than helping somebody. I train my residents to develop a bedside manner focused on healing. If patients can't open up and feel comfortable with you, they're not going to tell you what's wrong with them. I carefully select my residents to make sure they have a bedside manner that treats everybody like family. If my residents do not demonstrate that kind of commitment, they don't belong in my program."

"There is nothing more rewarding to me in this world than helping somebody. I train my residents to develop a bedside manner focused on healing. If patients can't open up and feel comfortable with you, they're not going to tell you what's wrong with them."

- Dr. Tracy Favreau -



By Debra R. Gibbs, B.A., Medical Communications Coordinator, and Scott Colton, B.A., APR, COM/HPD Director of Medical Communications and Public Relations



Lifelong Learning the Key to Dr. David Thomas' Diversified Career

When you envision a portrait of nonstop hard work and leadership, imagine Dr. David Thomas. His list of achievements—including multiple degrees, decorated military service, and steadfast commitment to his community—is massive and amazing. In fact, he has mastered not one, not two, but six different careers.

When asked what inspired him to be so dedicated to learning and working to help people, he said it is “just who I was.” Fortunately, it still is.

David Thomas, M.D., J.D., Ed.D., professor and chair of the college's Department of Surgery and Division of Correctional Medicine, was born in Germantown, a neighborhood north of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, in 1945 and moved to Miami when he was 6. By the age of 11, he was already showcasing his strong work ethic by working as a kennel boy in a veterinary clinic.

After graduating from Miami Edison Senior High School in 1963, the whirlwind of his accomplishments commenced at the University of Miami (UM), where he took an overload of credits and graduated in three years with his undergraduate degree. Dr. Thomas said he “always wanted to study medicine” and successfully pursued his M.D. degree at UM, graduating in 1970 before completing a surgical internship.

An Urge to Help Others

“I liked helping people, and I enjoyed the intellectual challenge of knowledge,” explained Dr. Thomas, who served as a research assistant in a clinical laboratory and a phlebotomist at the Veterans Administration Medical Center during his first year of medical school. “I perceived myself as a compassionate person even though I went into surgery.”

Additional odd jobs kept him busy during his third and fourth years of medical school. However, it would soon be an assignment of a different nature that would occupy his time. While completing his internship and residency in general surgery at the University of Miami Affiliated Hospitals, Dr. Thomas was drafted by the U.S. Army in 1971 and stationed in Vietnam, where he supervised three other surgeons at a 30-bed hospital facility that supported an infantry unit. During his time there, Dr. Thomas witnessed quite a bit of action, including the pivotal campaign known as the Tet Offensive.

“My unit was pushed back almost to the outskirts of Da Nang, and we later retook much of that territory,” recalled Dr. Thomas, who after a one-year term of service in Vietnam rose to the rank of temporary major and received the Bronze Star, which is awarded to individual members



WIFE, CHRISTINA...CLASSROOM INSTRUCTION...DAUGHTER, JACQUELINE

of the U.S. Armed Forces for bravery, acts of merit, or meritorious service.

Fulfilling his two-year army obligation, Dr. Thomas transferred to Fort Jackson, South Carolina, where he served as commanding officer of the outpatient troop clinics. He received an honorable discharge from the U.S. Army in 1973 but continued to serve as the physician-in-charge of the emergency room at the army's Moncrief Hospital and at Wallace Thompson Hospital in Union City, South Carolina.

By the early 1970s, however, Dr. Thomas sought a new challenge. "I was tired of doing general and chest surgery even though I really felt I was good at it and people told me I was good at it," he said. Unfortunately, the work didn't offer the satisfaction it had previously brought him.

It was a time for new considerations, including the idea of starting a family. He and his wife, Christina, a former scrub nurse, would go on to raise a hardworking family that follows his example of helping others. They have five children, including two who followed the health care path laid by their parents. One is a graduate of Des Moines University College of Osteopathic Medicine, specializing in pulmonology and critical care. The other is our very own Jacqueline Thomas, D.O., who is an assistant

professor of dermatology and a 2005 NSU-COM graduate. The couple also raised twin grandsons who are currently in the U.S. Army and U.S. Coast Guard, respectively.

A Study in Career Diversification

Career-wise, ophthalmology was Dr. Thomas' next move. At the University of South Florida College of Medicine Department of Ophthalmology, he pursued a residency from 1973 to 1976. He would eventually practice full-time in the disciplines of diseases and surgery of the eye from 1976 to 1994.

Being a man of many talents, Dr. Thomas wrote two novels in the early 1980s on drug smuggling in Florida, both of which were published. He also continued serving his community as a volunteer police officer, in uniform as well as in plain clothes. Because of his ardent commitment to law enforcement, Dr. Thomas completed his certification as a police instructor, graduated in 1983 from the Florida Police Academy Training Program at Sarasota Vocational Technical Institute, and served as an unpaid part-time police officer from 1981 through 1992.

His dedication to his community continued throughout the 1980s. Unhappy with the legislative repre-

sentation in Sarasota and Charlotte counties, Dr. Thomas shifted his focus to politics. "I felt I could do a better job, so I ran in 1982 and lost by the absentee ballots, but in 1984 I won. For a while, I had the record for winning by the largest majority in the Florida House of Representatives," he said.

It was while he was serving as a Republican in the Florida Legislature that he met a formidable ally in fellow representative Dr. Fred Lippman, chancellor of NSU's Health Professions Division. In contrast to the obstruction displayed by today's politicians, "Some of our most enjoyable times were when Dr. Lippman was the rules chairman and I was the equivalent in the minority party," said Dr. Thomas. "He moved me up to the front to sit beside him so we could work out issues without one of us running the length of the chamber. That participation and partnership was unheard of and was a significant and brave thing Dr. Lippman did. The minority party is usually not invited, but we got along very well and respected one another very much."

In the decade he served on the Florida House of Representatives, Dr. Thomas handled a range of legislation and served on many committees, including the House Joint Conference Committee, becoming one of the ma-

for authors of the 1988 Tort Reform and Malpractice Act.

Leaving the legislature in 1994, Dr. Thomas sought to follow the advice of his cardiologist and surgeon, who both suggested he find less stressful work after he suffered a heart attack and underwent bypass surgery. In a roundabout way, it was his son, Brett, who helped Dr. Thomas choose the next productive chapter in his life.

When Brett decided to drop out of school, Dr. Thomas required him to get a job. In order to encourage his son by setting a positive example, Dr. Thomas and his wife “quietly decided we would go back to school,” he explained. “I went to Stetson University Law School and my wife went to Eckerd College. When we sat around the dinner table, everyone except Brett was in school. We all talked about what we did and learned in school, and in about six months, Brett went back to school. Today, he has a master’s in Fine Arts degree.”

What continues to drive Dr. Thomas after all these years is the pursuit of learning. “I think education is very important, and finding the opportunity to learn new things is incredibly stimulating and worthwhile,” said Dr. Thomas, who recently earned his Ed.D. degree from NSU’s Abraham S. Fischler School of Education. “I kind of define myself in my own mind – and sometimes out loud – as a student. I’m an educator. I’m an administrator. But basically, I’m a student.”

The Road to NSU-COM

As the years progressed, Dr. Thomas’ endeavors and experiences kept evolving as he took a job with the Florida Department of Corrections, hoping that being the medical executive director based at Zephyrhills Correctional Institution would offer what he thought would be an “out-of-the-way, less-stressful environment.”

Needless to say, that wasn’t exactly the case. Within his first few weeks at

the correctional facility, Dr. Thomas examined an inmate who had a seizure disorder. After chatting with the inmate, Dr. Thomas decided to change his medications. Interestingly, while he conducted the examination, the nurses and correctional officers continually passed by, poking their heads in the door periodically.

After the inmate left to pick up his new medication, the nurses and correctional officers explained why they had kept such a close watch on Dr. Thomas. “That is Phillips, and you changed his meds,” they said in a concerned manner. Dr. Thomas nodded in agreement and said, “Yeah, they needed to be changed to control his seizures.”

Dr. Thomas’ colleagues then revealed why they had kept peeking into the office. “When Phillips’ mother changed his meds, he decapitated her.” Nonplussed, Dr. Thomas calmly replied, “Well, he was fine with it because I explained it to him.”

As this stage of his career progressed, so did the positions he held, and he eventually became deputy secretary and then director of health services of the Florida Department of Corrections. These diversified leadership positions also served to enhance his vision of teaching and research and offered “Every single thing a medical school did, except accreditation,” explained Dr. Thomas of the medical students from the University of Miami and NSU-COM who did their correctional medicine rotations under his tutelage.

“After about a year, I called the University of Miami and told the administrators not to send me their students anymore because the ones from NSU-COM were head and shoulders above the Miami students,” he admitted. “NSU-COM students were interested, aggressive, and showed up knowing there was a lot to learn.”

His training programs were a catalyst in his coming to NSU-COM, as was his attendance at strategic planning meetings with Dr. Anthony J.

Silvagni, NSU-COM’s dean. In 2003, Dr. Thomas joined the college on a full-time basis as chair of the Department of Surgery.

With all the expertise Dr. Thomas shares with colleagues and students as a leader in improving procedures and serving on academic and community groups, his crowning accomplishment is the medical specialty in correctional medicine he created at NSU-COM. “I couldn’t have done it without Dr. Silvagni,” he said. “I am very proud that we created an entirely new medical specialty for the D.O. and M.D. worlds.”

Working in collaboration with the Florida Department of Corrections, Dr. Thomas developed the correctional medicine specialty, which is a major milestone when you consider the last medical specialty to be established was emergency medicine in 1976. As a result, NSU-COM became the first medical school in the country to gain such recognition when the standards developed by the college for this distinct specialty were approved in January 2013 by the American Osteopathic Association.

Although he’s achieved a great deal in his life, Dr. Thomas continues to strive for more. Enlaced with all this success, however, are a droll sense of humor and an unmistakable sense of humility. “As you can tell from my career, I do a lot of different things – I can’t keep a job,” he joked.

For the time being, though, Dr. Thomas appears content. “I am very, very happy here at NSU-COM and have not given any thought to moving on or looking for something else,” he explained. “I truly enjoy the collegiality here, which you don’t get at other medical schools. NSU-COM is an incredibly collaborative and collegial institution that gives nontraditional people an opportunity. Because of our vetting process, I know we have taken some people that wouldn’t get into medical school anywhere else – and they make wonderful doctors.”

STAFF SNAPSHOT

Getting to Know...Angela Cruz Administrative Assistant for Dr. Leonard Levy



Date of Hire: November 2009

Family Facts: My family moved to Miami from Bogota, Colombia, when I was 11 years old. As a result, I was raised far away from family members, except my immediate family. That was very tough growing up, but it helped me become very independent. I have two sisters—one who is a year older than me and the other who was born when I was 10 years old. Due to the age difference, my little sister has been like a daughter to me and is my little princess.

Official NSU-COM Responsibilities: I enjoy working with Dr. Leonard Levy, associate dean for education, planning, and research, as well as indirectly with the Institute for Disaster and Emergency Preparedness.

Reasons I enjoy working at NSU-COM: Overall, NSU is a great institution. In addition, the diversity here makes it a great place to work and study. My favorite time of the year is December because I love Christmas, and NSU-COM has a wonderful annual Christmas party that I look forward to every year. I also like that we have an annual potluck

party that allows me to exercise my love of working in the kitchen by bringing in a homemade recipe.

What did you do professionally before joining NSU-COM? I worked with a company doing Spanish translations of recorded statements with lawyers and victims of worker compensation cases as well as car accidents. The work prompted my interest in law.

Greatest achievement in life: Getting accepted to law school and being a senator in the NSU Undergraduate Student Government Association. I graduated with my B.S. in Legal Studies in December 2013 and enjoyed writing and passing the food trucks bill that allowed a contract to be created for NSU to finally have food trucks at several on-campus events. Another significant bill I wrote and passed was the bill to create job opportunities for international students who were ineligible to work under the Federal Work Study Program. This bill allowed the issue to

be addressed, and meetings took place to create positions using NSU funds for the affected students.

Favorite way to unwind when not at work: Go to the beach and cook. I love to cook healthier versions of restaurant food. My favorite recipe is my homemade pesto bowtie pasta with grilled salmon.

My coworkers would be surprised to know this about me: I cook very often and always take pictures, which I plan to use in the future for my first cookbook. My interest in cooking began by seeing my mother cook delicious dishes that I later tried to make. Later on, while dining at restaurants, I became interested in making my favorite restaurant dishes at home.

When I retire I plan to: Travel the world and live in a secluded and peaceful place, preferably by the beach.

Three words that best describe me: Responsible, hardworking, and genuine.



Alumni Corner - Activities, Accomplishments, and Awards



Richard L. Adams, D.O. ('93) passed away on May 25, 2013, at his home in Bunnell, Florida,

following a valiant three-year battle with melanoma. Dr. Adams, who was born in Bakersfield, California, but spent most of his youth in Wilmington, Delaware, moved to Gainesville, Florida, as a senior and attended Gainesville High School. An avid Gator fan, he received his bachelor's degree in Zoology from the University of Florida and then attended Southeastern College of Osteopathic Medicine (NSU-COM), graduating in 1993. Over the past two decades, Dr. Adams was a practicing physician in Ormond Beach and Palm Coast. He is survived by his wife, Julie Peck-Adams, and his children Allison and Richard.



Ronald Bekic, D.O. ('04), who completed a fellowship in hospice and palliative

medicine at Broward Health Medical Center in 2011, is currently employed as a senior palliative care physician at Palliative Medical Associates of Florida.



Christina Caito, D.O. ('09), an OB/GYN, joined the medical staff of Parish Medical

Center in Titusville, Florida. Her areas of interest include minimally invasive surgery, preconception counseling and prenatal care, annual well-woman exams, evaluation and treatment of women's ovulation cycles.



Tyler Cymet, D.O., FACP, FACFP ('88), associate vice president for medical education

and chief of clinical education for the American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine, coauthored an article entitled "Fracture as a Result of Volcano Boarding" that was published in the September 2013 issue of *The AAO Journal*—the official publication of the American Academy of Osteopathy.



Gaston Dana D.O., FACP, FAC-CWS, FAAEP, FAAMA ('92) was recently certified by

the American Board of Wound Medicine and Surgery. He is now certified in six specialties. He also served as a consultant with Medtronic on insulin-pump therapy and as a regional primary care diabetes consultant for Sanofi Aventis.



Scott A. Dinesen, D.O., M.B.A., FACOG ('91) performed the first single-site robotic

hysterectomy in Pennsylvania last May using a single 2.5 cm umbilical incision. He is the current department director of robotic surgery at Doylestown Hospital in Pennsylvania, and is a national proctor for Intuitive Inc., which manufactures the DaVinci robot.

Adam Fier, D.O. ('06) completed his anesthesia residency in 2010 at the University of Florida and went on to do a cardiac anesthesia fellowship, gaining certification in advanced



perioperative transesophageal echocardiography. He then joined forces with Brevard Anesthesia Services in Melbourne, Florida, recently becoming a partner in the organization, which has expanded to include a new company called Brevard Physician Associates—a multispecialty group composed of several medical sites in Brevard County. In addition, Dr. Fier was named vice chairman of the anesthesia division at its flagship hospital—Holmes Regional Medical Center.

Jessica Fischetti-Galvin, D.O. ('09), who is an OB/GYN, recently joined the medical staff of Monmouth Medical Center in Long Branch, New Jersey. She completed her residency in obstetrics and gynecology at the Jersey Shore University Medical Center in Neptune, where she served as chief resident.



Michael W. Gray, D.O. ('88), who is a cosmetic surgeon in Michigan, recently launched a

social media platform called *Pegged.com* that allows users to research and anonymously review, or peg, the people they meet. The site is meant to be entertaining, but at its core, the intention is to make people accountable for their interactions with others and to offer them opportunities for self-reflection and growth.

Thomas E. Green, D.O. ('98) was recently elected to the American College of Osteopathic Emergency Physicians Board of Directors. In addition, he has been accepted into



the Carnegie Mellon Heinz College of Business Master of Medical Management Program,

which will begin in September 2014. He also was promoted to the position of clinical curriculum director at Midwestern University's Chicago College of Osteopathic Medicine, where he integrates, with the basic sciences, and coordinates the clinical courses in the first two years of the medical school curriculum.



William D. Kirsh, D.O., M.P.H. ('85) coauthored an article entitled "Population-Based

Medication Adherence Programmes: A Window of Opportunity" that was published in the volume 49, number 3 issue of *World Hospitals and Health Services*, which is the official journal of the International Hospital Federation.



Janet M. Kong D.O. ('10), who completed her internship at Niagara Falls Memorial

Medical Center in Niagara Falls, New York, and her residency training at Jamaica Hospital Medical Center in Jamaica, New York, recently joined the Watson Clinic in Lakeland, Florida, as a family medicine physician. Her areas of expertise include general family medicine services and osteopathic manipulative therapy.

Mark Levenberg, D.O., FAOCD ('02), who is affiliated with the Dermatology & Mohs Surgery Center in Doylestown,

Pennsylvania, was granted medical staff privileges by Grand View Hospital in nearby Sellersville, Pennsylvania.

Stephen J. Niles D.O. ('88) recently retired from the U.S. Air Force after 28 ½ years of service. His last assignment was as materiel command surgeon general, where he had responsibility for two teaching hospitals, six outpatient clinics, and an aerospace medicine research and development organization. He subsequently accepted a position as the chief medical officer for Wuesthoff Health System—a two-hospital,

419-bed integrated network providing a full spectrum of care to the residents of Brevard County, Florida.

Jeffrey G. Pirofsky D.O. ('89) was elected to serve as vice president of the American Osteopathic College of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation Executive Council. He previously served for three years as a trustee on the council.

Michael X. Rohan, Jr. ('01) is currently working as an orthopedic spine surgeon at the Northwest Florida Surgery Center in Panama City, Florida.

Maryanne Samuel, D.O. ('10), who recently completed a residency in internal medicine at Palmetto General Hospital, where she served as chief resident, has joined the medical staff of Baptist Health Medical Group in South Florida.

Meredith Schweitzer, D.O. ('98) has joined TriStar StoneCrest Medical Center in Smyrna, Tennessee, as a family practice physician. The medical center is a 109-bed facility offering a full array of acute-care services, including emergency care, general surgery, cardiology, obstetrics, inten-

sive care, physical medicine, outpatient diagnostic services, and cancer care.



Tiffany Sizemore-Ruiz, D.O. ('09) was appointed to the American Heart Association (AHA)

and American Stroke Association's (ASA) Board of Directors for the South Florida region. She will serve in a leadership position as a medical consultant as well as help drive the organizations' missions through events and community outreach.

FIVE QUESTIONS WITH...Dr. Michael Gray

Please summarize how you became interested in medicine and decided to become a physician.



Becoming a physician and ultimately a surgeon has been a longstanding goal of mine since I had my first memory. There is not any one single event in my life

that spurred my interest in medicine. My ability in art and science, combined with my strong personality and need to help humanity, directed my choices in life and in my profession. As a cosmetic surgeon, my ability in art and science is expressed in my work, which is very rewarding.

Why did you decide to attend SECOM, and how did you come to learn about osteopathic medicine?

I was the third class to graduate from SECOM in 1988. I was accepted to many medical schools, but I accepted the position at SECOM because I was impressed with the intensity and quality of the

education provided by an outstanding core of physicians and professors. The holistic approach to medicine directed my decision to becoming an osteopathic physician.

Please describe what you are doing professionally at the moment and why you enjoy it.

Currently, I am one of the leading cosmetic surgeons in the country. I have a very large practice in West Bloomfield, Michigan, and built a 10,000-square-foot outpatient surgical facility that supports a staff of 25.

What has been the most fulfilling aspect of being a physician?

Unlike other fields of medicine, surgery allows me to actually fix rather than palliate problems. When patients trust you with their lives, it is impossible to not be humbled by this. Following surgery, seeing the happiness you have created is warming to the soul.

You recently launched a social media platform called Pegged.com that allows users to research and anonymously review, or peg, the people they meet. How did you become interested in creating the

Web site? As a physician who cares about humanity and where we are heading as a society, I felt the world needed a change. If you could get to know someone before you really got to know someone, it would allow you to make better decisions about the people you meet and allow you to find others you can trust. Pegged provides a platform to provide constructive feedback to others anonymously.

Humanity can peer-review itself in the hope of identifying individuals that could do better in life and become more self-aware of their behavior. If people knew they were being evaluated at any time based upon their performance as a human being, wouldn't it force them to be on their best behavior? If you knew in time how you treated other people could affect your humanity score (Peg score) and how people interacted with you, then could we evoke a change in human behavior.

These goals and others motivated me to create *Pegged.com*. Essentially, it is a peer-review site that produces a humanity score, which is used to assess how well you are doing as a human.

Busy Times for 1988 Alumnus Dr. Tyler Cymet

By Scott Colton, B.A., APR, COM/HPD Director of
Medical Communications and Public Relations



Sometimes, life throws us an interesting curveball when we least expect it. Such was the case for Tyler Cymet, D.O., FACP, FACP, a 1988 alumnus who was out for an innocuous morning jog in Chakraseca, Nicaragua, while he was in the area researching an opportunity to establish a DOCARE international clinic.

As he jogged past a local teaching hospital, Dr. Cymet, who serves as associate vice president for medical education and chief of clinical education for the American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine (AACOM), decided to stop and inquire about the facility. "I asked the hospital guard if I could look around, and after learning that I spoke English, I was brought to a patient that spoke only English and asked to translate the sentence 'You are okay; the problem is muscle spasm.' I offered to perform OMM on the patient, but once I began manipulation, she passed out from the pain."

Realizing the patient was suffering from something much more severe than a simple muscle spasm, Dr. Cymet requested to see her X-ray, which indicated the woman had experienced a transverse process fracture. Although the attending physician disagreed with Dr. Cymet's diagnosis and said the radiologist's reading was normal, he agreed to do additional imaging. "These later images confirmed the fracture," said Dr. Cymet of the injury, which occurred while the patient was indulging in a very risky activity called volcano boarding.

In addition to correctly diagnosing the patient's injury, Dr. Cymet helped get the woman airlifted to her hometown in Australia. The experience also spurred him to coauthor an article entitled "Fracture as a Result of Volcano Boarding" that was published in the September 2013 issue of *The AAO Journal*—the official publication of the American Academy of Osteopathy.

"Sliding over porous, sharp rocks is a unique experience," said Dr. Cymet of the dangerous sporting endeavor. "The volcanic material lets a person generate some speed, making the sport exciting, but most participants leave with some cuts and bruises; injuries comparable to those

commonly associated with mountain biking or tobogganing. While it is said to be exhilarating, volcano surfing is banned in Guatemala and other Central American countries, mainly because there is a desire to have tourists leave through the duty free shop—and not be airlifted out."

Another highlight of Dr. Cymet's action-packed 2013 occurred on October 6 when he was featured on an episode of the TV program *Untold Stories of the ER*, which airs on Discovery Fit & Health. "When I started working at AACOM, I spoke with people at the Discovery Network and offered to assist them with medical stories," he explained. "For the past few years, I have been sharing stories from faculty members at osteopathic medical schools, with the goal of getting the stories produced by the network. After several years of recommending others, I finally agreed to appear as the physician in one of the three osteopathic stories featured."



According to Dr. Cymet, the episode, entitled "A Broken Heart from a Broken Heart," was initially pitched as the story of a woman whose grief overtook her and almost killed her—a classic somatovisceral condition. "I initially saw the woman as an outpatient and watched as she deteriorated over a week's time before finally admitting her to the hospital for depression and what is called Takotsubo syndrome," he said. "The initial EKG screening showed that her depression was having some pretty severe effects on her heart.

"Takotsubo, or octopus pot heart, is a cardiomyopathy, which refers to diseases of the heart muscle," he explained. "Treatment is supportive and focuses mostly on fluid management while addressing the underlying depression that put the whole case in motion. As long as you keep the patient alive, the heart will get better on its own."

Reenacting the case for the sake of television proved to be an interesting experience for Dr. Cymet. "I enjoyed the challenge and overall experience of 'reality acting' and attempting to portray myself on television," he admitted.

Nonetheless, don't expect to see Dr. Cymet trade in his stethoscope for an acting career anytime soon.

Alumni Association Fund Honor Roll

In the spring of 1999, NSU-COM launched an alumni-based fund-raising effort to generate dollars that would be used to create an endowment fund to reduce future tuition costs for NSU-COM students and produce a funding pool that would be utilized for discretionary purposes as determined by the Alumni Association Executive Committee. Every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of the following list of donors; however, if you notice an error or omission, please contact **Lynne Cawley** in the Office of Alumni Affairs at **(954) 262-1029**.

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Dr. James Turner Receives NSU Distinguished Alumni Award



On November 14, NSU saluted 16 outstanding graduates at the Distinguished Alumni Achievement Awards reception at Grande Oaks Golf Club in Davie, Florida, including 1988 NSU-COM alumnus James M. Turner D.O., FACP, FACOEP.

The Distinguished Alumni Achievement Award is the highest and most prestigious honor NSU bestows upon its graduates. The

program recognizes alumni who are changing lives and the world by demonstrating distinguished service and extraordinary achievement in a particular profession, discipline, organization, or community cause. "The true measure of a university's greatness can be found in the achievements of its alumni," said George L. Hanbury II, Ph.D., NSU president and chief executive officer.

In early 2013, Dr. Turner was appointed dean of William Carey College of Osteopathic Medicine after having served as interim dean and associate dean—the first NSU-COM graduate to be named dean of an osteopathic medical school. After graduating from NSU-COM in 1988, he completed his residency in emergency medicine from Mount Sinai Medical Center in Miami, Florida. He received his Fellow designation from the American College of Osteopathic Family Physicians in 1998 and the American College of Osteopathic Emergency Medicine in 2008.

Dr. Turner, who has worked as an osteopathic family physician and emergency physician in Tennessee, Florida, South Carolina, and West Virginia, is married to Sherry Turner, D.O.—a 2007 NSU-COM alumnus. He currently serves on the American College of Osteopathic Emergency Medicine's Board of Directors and is an inspector of osteopathic medical colleges and emergency medicine residencies for the American Osteopathic Association.

(In the above photo, Dr. Turner (left) receives his award from Howard Neer, D.O., FACP, HPD executive associate dean for professional affairs.)



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2014 Calendar of Events

February 7-8, 2014

Seventh Annual Interprofessional Geriatrics Training Institute

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For additional information, please visit <http://www.nova.edu/gec>.

February 19-23, 2014

111th Annual FOMA Convention

Hyatt Bonaventure in Weston, Florida

NSU-COM Alumni Reception: February 21, 2014

March 13-16, 2014

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Philadelphia Marriott Downtown – Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

March 22-30, 2014

Medical Outreach Trip to Ecuador

Please visit http://medicine.nova.edu/aboutus/medical_outreach.html or http://medicine.nova.edu/aboutus/outreach_programs.html for additional information.

April 11-13, 2014

17th Annual NSU-COM Alumni Reunion and CME Weekend

(Honoring the classes of 1989, 1994, 1999, 2004, and 2009)

For additional information, please contact Lynne Cawley, director of alumni services, at (954) 262-1029 or via email at cawley@nova.edu.