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COM Outlook Fall 2013

College of Osteopathic Medicine

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Fall 2013

COM Outlook

Nova Southeastern University College of Osteopathic Medicine

TWISTER TURMOIL:

***NSU-COM Alumna Provides Critical Care
Following Moore Tornado***



Dean's Message

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

In August, Congress passed the Bipartisan Student Loan Certainty Act of 2013.

The new law ties student loan interest rates to the market and locks in the rate for the life of the loan. But as the economy improves, students may see interest rates rise above current levels because the rates can change from year to year. For the current school year, undergraduates can obtain federally subsidized Stafford loans at an interest rate of 3.86 percent, while graduate and PLUS loans will be offered at 5.41 percent and 6.41 percent, respectively, and are not subsidized. The law also guarantees a cap on loan interest rates, ensuring that undergraduate rates can never rise above 8.25 percent, while graduate loans are capped at 9.5 percent and PLUS loans have a limit of 10.5 percent.

Do not believe for a moment that this issue is now settled. Students in a professional/graduate curriculum, having different criteria for their loans than undergraduate students, face a higher rate of interest. With the interest rate based on the 10-Year Treasury note, interest is expected to rise in the reasonable future. As previously stated, professional/graduate student loans are no longer subsidized, so the interest starts on the first day of the first dollar borrowed and will continue throughout the four years of medical school as well as through residency.

Medicine is the only profession that requires a residency, prohibiting a new physician who completes four years of medical school from accepting a position before the completion of a residency/fellowship that lasts anywhere from three to seven additional years. Instead of interest building from six months after graduation, it begins the first day of the first loan. The interest on the previous interest can be extrapolated throughout the entire 7- to 11-year educational continuum and will increase the debt of the graduating physician significantly.

A reasonable proposal would be to include medical students in the undergraduate subsidized program at the lower interest rate cap. With the major national shortage of physicians and the significant need for primary care physicians, this would be a major incentive for students to select medicine, particularly students in the lower socioeconomic portion of our population.

When we compare the total number of medical students to the total number of all graduate/professional students in the United States, carving out the medical students from the larger group would not result in an expensive exception. Instead, that removal would have a significant impact on the opportunity for all qualified students to become physicians, regardless of their financial backgrounds.

I would suggest all of you contact your U.S. senators and representatives to recommend that medical students be considered as an exception to the graduate/professional criteria in the Bipartisan Student Loan Certainty Act of 2013, and that they will be included with the undergraduate program since they are bound to residencies/fellowships before employment after graduation.

While the current situation does have a moderate interest rate for education, the interest rate starts immediately for those entering medical school and is sure to increase. It is essential to avoid burdening students to the point where the majority who matriculate will only come from those who are economically equipped to study. Moving on this issue immediately is crucial, and the voices of students—who are most affected by the new law—should have more impact than that of practitioners.

Our country was built by providing education opportunities for all. Let's not allow the short-term gain that occurs from the inclusion of medical students in the current legislation to take an important opportunity from the people. The current law imposes an unnecessary burden on the backs of future physicians.

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May 20, 2013, started out as just another ordinary day for Dr. Terry Moy-Brown, a 2009 NSU-COM alumna who was in the midst of completing her final year as an emergency medicine resident at Moore Medical Center in Moore, Oklahoma. That all changed thanks to the unwelcome arrival of an EF-5 tornado.

Eclectic Interests Epitomize Dr. Cecilia Rokusek 23

The compelling kaleidoscope that is Dr. Cecilia Rokusek encompasses a compelling array of facets. From being a passionate lifelong learner who has visited 84 countries to her noteworthy career in various aspects of academic administration, Dr. Rokusek brings an infectious energy to everything she does.



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Over the past two decades, 1990 NSU-COM alumnus Dr. Michael Jackowitz has resolutely crafted a way to mesh his divergent vocational passions—profound love of the theater and intense interest in medicine.

Embracing OMM: Dr. Tracy Romanello 38

During her years as an NSU-COM student, 2011 alumna Dr. Tracy Romanello readily admits to being a dispassionate learner of osteopathic manipulative medicine (OMM). Discover why that all changed in this insightful first-person account.

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

Change is an inevitable part of life, especially at a major university such as NSU where remaining on the cutting edge requires constant upgrades to everything from curriculum and technology to buildings and other academic infrastructure.

As most of you have already noticed as you travel around the Health Professions Division (HPD), a number of construction and roadwork projects have either begun or will be initiated in the coming months, creating changes to our normal movement throughout the area. For example, roadwork is being implemented to improve both the ingress and egress to and from our parking garage, along with the creation of new parking areas to the north of the HPD garage. But you can be assured it's all for a good purpose.

The reason for all this heightened activity is to prepare for a transformational building called the Center for Collaborative Research (CCR) that is slated to break ground in the next several months and will positively impact the university on a number of levels. Once the center is built, it will be inhabited by myriad scientists and researchers that are already part of the NSU faculty structure throughout the HPD, the Oceanographic Center, and the Farquhar College of Arts and Sciences.

As I've listened to and reviewed the comments made by our president, Dr. George

Hanbury, over the past year or so, it's strikingly evident that NSU's future is extremely bright when it comes to the innovation and research that will emanate from this epicenter of exploration. Additionally, the CCR will serve as a wonderful complement to the nationally recognized coral reef preservation research taking place at NSU's Oceanographic Center and its Center of Excellence for Coral Reef Ecosystems Research.

As I previously mentioned, this is a transformational moment in the university's history. For the past several years, we have been preparing for the creation of the CCR by hiring top-notch research faculty in many areas of biological research related to medicine, pharmacy, optometry, dentistry, and the health care sciences. Because this is so perfectly integrated with Dr. Hanbury's Vision 2020 strategic plan, he has willingly advocated for the budget allocations needed to support the hiring of these nationally and internationally known researchers.

The creation of the Center for Collaborative Research will help alert the community throughout not only the state of Florida but throughout the United States—and in some cases the world—to the fact that Nova Southeastern University was recently classified as a research university with "high research activity" by the Carnegie Founda-

tion for the Advancement of Teaching.

As we continue to enhance our research reputation and create new knowledge through these efforts, one of the principal beneficiaries will be our students, who are the primary reason for our existence. Because our students are individuals of exceptional quality, it's imperative that we strive to be nationally and internationally known and respected for our quality education. This in turn will provide us with the gravitas we need for our colleagues in the academic community to recognize us as being one of America's preeminent educational institutions.

As we move forward with the long-awaited construction of our Center for Collaborative Research, it's essential for us to give thanks to our academic leadership, which includes the various deans and executive directors of our multidisciplinary programs, for all the hard work that went into creating these esteemed programs that are now being proffered by their colleagues around the country as being programs of excellence.

We give sincere thanks to our academic administration and the many other dedicated individuals who have laid the groundwork and provided the ardent work ethic required to assist President Hanbury in making his Vision 2020 not only take root—but blossom.

Dermatology Rotation Offers Eye-Opening Insights

By Omar Mubaidin
2011 NSU-COM Alumnus

As a fourth-year medical student in 2011, I had the opportunity to do a rural selective dermatology rotation in King Hussein Medical Center in Amman, Jordan. I knew it was going to be a great experience when, on my first day, I walked in on a lecture about a patient currently on the service being treated for toxic epidermal necrolysis. From then, it seemed a constant kaleidoscope of skin nosology ranging from textbook-only genodermatoses to diseases common in the United States—but on a different side of the spectrum of severity.

Rather than simple mild-plaque psoriasis, a patient with erythroderma psoriasis would come in, or rather than simple acne vulgaris, a case of Morbihan disease would present. Shingles in the United States is the same as shingles anywhere else, but the backdrop of a third-world country has the effect of mystifying a disease.

Because I enjoyed my first experience so much, I jumped at the opportunity to visit the region again in my second year of residency. With the nonbullous ichthyosis erythroderma and Netherton syndrome cases still etched in my mind, I anticipated what diseases I would encounter on this trip. I was academically pleased with the chronic myiasis, Vohwinkel syndrome (pictured above right), and pityriasis rotunda that could now be added to the diseases experienced in my career. A good case of paraneoplastic pemphigous or fungating psoriasis does much to overturn old trainee complaints that dermatology rotations are only cosmetic or have boring pathology. In fact, there are quite a few dermatology-related emergencies.

In Jordan, the specialty is still known as dermatology and venereology, much like it was in the United States, where it was once

known as dermatology and syphilology. Endemic, *old-world* diseases like leishmaniasis and garlic burns from folkloric medicine echoed this sentiment of a traditional medical setting of a bygone era. By no means was there a lack of technology; YAG and CO2 lasers, as well as a hair-transplant system akin to the NeoGraft, were readily available.

A bit of pharmacotherapy culture shock occurred as I became used to hearing names like fusidic acid—an antibiotic used extensively throughout the world but only approved in 2011 in the United States after I came back from the first trip—and various regional preparations of betamethasone and petroleum jelly.

Patient interaction was another platform for learning. Every patient that walked in was greeted with the word *salamtek*, a phrase basically meaning “I hope you feel better.” Jordan is considered a conservative country, so the impression a phrase like that evokes is only a fraction of how typical social dynamics occur. Patients would often walk in wearing a face veil (niqab), which I would assume meant they must be from a very conservative area; but in reality, they were hiding very debilitating skin lesions.



It was a reminder that every patient needs a clean slate in judgment despite previous cases. A lighter tone definitely existed, especially when elderly men figuring that since sexually transmitted diseases were treated here, erectile dysfunction must be as well. After being congratulated on the longevity of their virility, these gentlemen



would be politely directed to a department that handled their complaints.

Because there was a formal Anglophone mandate, medical education in Jordan was taught entirely in English, so my own difficulty with Arabic was not a problem there. Another interesting fact was how some scenarios of the medical education experience do not change. Listening to the interactions between residents and their attending was very similar to sitting in resident lounges in any of the South Florida teaching hospitals.

The influx of Syrian refugees provided a new element to my residency experience. The Zaatari refugee camp is now the second-largest refugee camp in the world. With 144,000 people, this camp is now Jordan's fourth-largest city. I had the opportunity to go to a primary care clinic for two days where most of the diseases treated were rashes, upper-respiratory infections, and diarrhea that were more a function of living conditions associated with mass displacement.

Despite being a refugee camp, a self-contained economy was thriving because people had been living there for over a year. The *main street*, which also included field hospitals from various countries, had butcher shops, a barber shop, a restaurant, and a hookah lounge. Unfortunately, to go along with the trappings of a brutal civil war, there were stories of infiltrators trying to poison the water system, prostitution, abuse, and AIDS cases—an entity infrequently encountered in that part of the world.

This was my first experience in a refugee camp, which was more than memorable. In fact, the entire trip of contrasts and similarities in health care delivery taught me many lessons I will hopefully carry forward for the rest of my career.

White Coat Ceremony Warmly Welcomes Class of 2017



By Julia McCandless

The journey to becoming a physician is long and complex—but it all begins with a white coat. On August 11, more than 230 students of the class of 2017 were proud to celebrate the beginning of their journey during the college's 33rd **Annual White Coat Ceremony**.

Following inspiring words from George Hanbury II, Ph.D., NSU president and chief executive officer, and Dr. Anthony J. Silvagni, NSU-COM dean, students appeared onstage to accept their white coats, spotlighting their entry into their medical careers. As parents, families, and friends sat in support, the students took the pledge of commitment, vowing to uphold the ethical and professional responsibilities of being a physician.

The day marked an important milestone in the students' lives, and as Dr. Silvagni said, "It will change their lives forever."

Several students and their family members reflected on the importance of the moment, sharing what the White Coat Ceremony meant to them. OMS-I Cassandre Voltaire

said, "It was exciting. I've worked for this for quite a while, so it was sort of surreal at first. I think everything came together and became more concrete, and I finally realized where I was when one of the physicians put the coat on my shoulders," she stated. "I do think there's a certain level of responsibility that we'll be held to, and I think we'll become better people after this."

OMS-I Anirudh Gajjala reacted similarly, saying, "I feel a mix of emotions—I'm exhilarated and excited, but also nervous for what's coming. I know it's going to be a tough road. It's still taking a while to sink in." Gajjala's mother said, "It felt great to watch him go through the ceremony. The people are so friendly and make you feel at home, and I am very happy that he's at this university. I know the school will take care of him."

Enthusiasm Highlights Orientation Week



The atrium outside the Steele Auditorium buzzed with excitement on August 9 as class of 2017 students gathered to share snacks, reflect on Orientation Week activities, and celebrate the start of their medical school odyssey.

New...Noteworthy



In July 2013, during the American Osteopathic Association's House of Delegates Meeting in Chicago, Illinois, NSU's College of Osteopathic Medicine was awarded the **Strategic Team Award and Recognition ("STAR")** accolade, which is bestowed upon affiliate organizations that make significant contributions to advancing the profession-wide objectives identified in the AOA Strategic Plan. (Pictured is Dr. Silvagni accepting the "STAR" Award in Chicago.)



The annual induction ceremony of the **Xi Chapter of Sigma Sigma Phi**, a national honorary osteopathic service fraternity at NSU-COM, was held in June at Westside Regional Medical Center in Plantation, Florida. The future physicians were recognized for their commitment to the community through service projects that include programs such as the Doctor's Bag, Medical Explorers, Pet Therapy, and Pre-D.O.ctors.

The annual induction ceremony of the **Xi Chapter of Sigma Sigma Phi**, a national honorary osteopathic

Liberty University College of Osteopathic Medicine (LUCOM), which is located in Lynchburg, Virginia, is the latest D.O. school to be established in the United States and will welcome its inaugural class in the fall of 2014. With the formation of LUCOM, the United States is now home to 30 colleges of osteopathic medicine, with 40 locations in 28 states. Currently, more than 20 percent of the nation's medical students are training to be D.O.s.

In July, Miami's Mount Sinai Medical Center, which is a member of NSU-COM's Consortium for Excellence in Medical Education, recognized the heroic efforts of

Mastering the Art of Art Observation

By OMS-I
Anurag Kalyal



OMS-I Brittany Kleefisch enjoying the art observation experience.

"I don't know what this is about, but I think it's going to be fun," a voice said, gingerly, from the front of the bus as members of the Turner Society were on their way to NSU's Museum of Art Fort Lauderdale on August 23. Because it was a Friday and was the last activity scheduled for the day, it seemed like another obstacle to tackle before we could enjoy our weekend. Or so we thought.

We visited the Museum of Art under the guidance of Dianna Silvagni, J.D., clinical assistant professor of medical education, and Anthony Lauro, M.F.A., the museum's deputy director, for a component of our Humanism in Medicine I course titled "Art Observation for Clinical Skills." It began with a discussion on how observing art was similar

to observing and diagnosing patients and how frequently the language used to describe art was the same as the one physicians used to describe physical symptoms. It was enlightening to hear how different cultural perspectives were based on the images we were being asked to observe. For example, where I saw anguish, others saw impatience, and some even saw anger.

We didn't have nearly enough time to appreciate the sensory feast we were afforded, ranging from massive sculptures and modern graffiti to abstract art, as we walked through the museum. Following a quick exchange of thoughts, we were escorted back to the auditorium, where we discussed images of diseased patients. During the discussion segment, several visiting physicians were on hand to help us articulate our thoughts to further hone our observational skills. Not surprisingly, when it came time to head back to campus, no one wanted to leave the museum.

On the bus ride back, the morale was high. I heard a familiar voice from the front say, "Who knew going to medical school and an art museum would actually be fun?" And I thought to myself, "Who knew, indeed."

Dr. Fred Lippman Named a Health Care Power Leader



Fred Lippman, R.Ph., Ed.D., HPD chancellor, was selected by the *South Florida Business Journal* as a Power Leader in Health Care by the publication's editorial department based on his accomplishments within the past year. In his role as HPD chancellor, Dr.

Lippman has helped foster the exponential growth of the division's seven colleges, which comprise more than 6,000 students and over 1,300 faculty and staff members.



Benjamin Abo, D.O. While on vacation in New York City in June, the ER residency physician and former

paramedic saved the life of a man who had a seizure and fell onto the subway tracks as a train approached. Dr. Abo evaluated the man and remained with him until he regained consciousness. To commemorate his heroic efforts, Robert Goldzer, M.D., M.B.A., FACP, chief medical officer and senior vice president for education and research at Mount Sinai, presented Dr. Abo

with a plaque recognizing his skills and bravery at a special ceremony. *Pictured (from left) are Dr. Robert Goldzer, Dr. Benjamin Abo, and David Farcy, M.D., director of emergency medicine.)*



Lakeside Medical Center in Belle Glade, Florida, which is a member of NSU-COM's Consortium for Excellence in Medical Education, graduated its first class of family medicine residents on June 25. The hospital, which is owned and operated by the

Health Care District of Palm Beach County, was accredited in 2011 by the American Osteopathic Association to offer the residency program. The program is currently training 14 residents in postgraduate years one, two, and three and involves partners such as Nova Southeastern University College of Osteopathic Medicine, the Palm Beach County Health Department, and Florida Community Health Centers. *(Pictured (from left) are Nikerson Geneve, D.O., Lakeside Medical Center's Family Medicine Residency Program director and director of medical education, and graduates Tarah Freyman, D.O., Tricia Nielsen, D.O., and Nader Abdallah, D.O.)*

NSU-COM Students Snare American Osteopathic Foundation Honors



On September 29, a number of NSU-COM students were honored at the **American Osteopathic Foundation (AOF) Honors** ceremony in Las Vegas, Nevada, which recognizes excellence among osteopathic physicians, educators, and students. Listed below are the recipients as well as the scholarship amounts they received:

CARISA C. LIPPMANN (OMS-III)

AOA Presidential Memorial Award (\$5,000)

"HumanTouch Student Leadership Project"
Staten Island, NY (\$1,100)

ERIK A. ADAIR (OMS-IV)

Welch Scholars Award (\$2,000)

AUSTIN BACH (OMS-III)

Rosnick Humanitarian Grant (\$2,000)

SAMANTHA BERR (OMS-II)

"HumanTouch Student Leadership Project"
Coachella Valley, CA (\$850)

BRENDAN GREEN (OMS-II)

"HumanTouch Student Leadership Project"
Coachella Valley, CA (\$850)

ELIZABETH E. PRICE (OMS-II)

"HumanTouch Student Leadership Project"
Staten Island, NY (\$1,100)

SOFIA A. STULL-FUNES (OMS-II)

"HumanTouch Student Leadership Project"
Staten Island, NY (\$1,100)

JENNIFER PAQUETTE

Spouse of OMS-I Konstatin Mazursky
Donna Jones Moritsugu Memorial Award

Medical Education Department Wins CAE Healthcare Video Award

On July 1, the **Department of Medical Education** earned first-place honors and a \$250 prize for its self-created video entitled *Simulation Tips and Tricks* at the Human Patient Simulation Network (HPSN) Annual World Conference held June 30-July 2 in San Francisco, California.

The department submitted the video to CAE Healthcare, the manufacturer of NSU-COM's high-fidelity mannequins. The film included techniques for removing ink stains from mannequins and competed in a contest at CAE Healthcare's HPSN Annual World Conference.

The video is based on the September 2012 simulation experience in which second-year NSU-COM students spent a week in the Simulation Clinic working with faculty members on simulated severe burn victims – part of the integumentary course that focuses on the bodily system consisting of the skin and its associated structures such as hair, nails, sweat glands, and sebaceous glands.



Medscape Malpractice Report Offers Up Key Insights



In an exclusive survey published in July by the *Medscape Malpractice Report*, key insights were uncovered in the report, which is based on the personal experiences of 1,400 U.S. physicians who were sued.

For example, 74 percent were surprised they were sued, 93 percent felt that saying "I'm sorry" would not have helped, while 29 percent said they treat patients differently after going through a lawsuit. Based on the 1,400 respondents, internal medicine physicians were most often sued (15 percent), followed by family medicine (13 percent), obstetrics/gynecology (9 percent), and psychiatry (8 percent).

GRADUATE MEDICAL EDUCATION IMPASSE:

Accreditation Standardization Fails to Materialize

Despite the best efforts of the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME), American Osteopathic Association (AOA), and the American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine (AACOM) to create a unified pathway for accreditation of residency training programs, a unified decision was unable to be negotiated. Consequently, students in colleges of osteopathic medicine will have the same opportunities they currently possess—to pursue residency programs accredited by either the AOA or ACGME.

“We remain committed to the best possible graduate medical education opportunities for our students, and a high-quality, accountable graduate medical education system for the interests of the U.S. population,” said Stephen C. Shannon, D.O., M.P.H., AACOM president. “As able, we will continue to pursue a unified accreditation system for both D.O. and M.D. graduates; however, at this time, multiple pathways for accreditation of residency training programs remain the best option for osteopathic medical students. Our number one priority is to stand by the needs of students, especially as we see the number of those entering the D.O. field continue to rise each year.”

In October 2011, the ACGME proposed changes in the Common Program Requirements that would disrupt existing opportunities for osteopathic medical students to move from training within an AOA-accredited program into an ACGME-accredited program. AACOM worked with both organizations to develop a dialogue on the impact of the

changes and began exploration of a solution to the issue. In October 2012, the ACGME, AOA, and AACOM boards passed a resolution to begin discussion to merge both accreditation systems into a unified accreditation pathway for graduate residencies.

At the time, AACOM viewed a negotiated unified pathway as being in osteopathic medical students’ best interest. However, after considerable three-way deliberations, AACOM’s leadership be-

came convinced that maintaining multiple accreditation pathways remains in the best interest of osteopathic medical students at this time. AACOM expects that COM graduates, who represent approximately 20 percent of U.S. medical school graduates annually, will continue to enjoy selection at the most prestigious residencies offered

by the ACGME and that osteopathic residency programs will continue to flourish independently of or in partnership with the ACGME in the form of residency programs with dual accreditation.

The decision to maintain multiple pathways comes at a time when osteopathic medical students had the best success at matching into both ACGME and AOA residency

programs ever, and AACOM expects the trend to continue.

Although a unified pathway was unable to be established for accreditation of residency training programs, discussions continue to occur at many levels. Despite the setback, AACOM believes the process has been productive because it has allowed both sides to learn more about the different ways GME is delivered.

(Source: AACOM)





As future physicians, you are entering the new frontier of medicine because health care laws and regulations are constantly evolving. Health care is said to be one of the most highly regulated industries in the United States, which it indeed is, to control, among other things, quality of care and health care costs, while also preventing fraud and abuse. Consequently, many physicians are practicing more prudently and taking extra precautions to avoid the pitfalls of practicing in an industry where laws are ever-changing and getting stricter over time.

Elizabeth Perez, Esq., is Of Counsel with the Fort Lauderdale office of the statewide law firm Broad and Cassel, where she is a health law attorney.

HEALTH CARE LEGAL EAGLE

Physician Contracts Must Comply with Federal and State Health Care Laws

By Elizabeth P. Perez, Esq.

One area where these laws impact physicians is in contractual arrangements with another physician, a facility, a hospital, or a new venture. Contracts manage the parties' expectations, reduce the likelihood of conflicts, and can protect your interests. Additionally, they must be carefully drafted to achieve these goals. Some of the types of contracts you may enter into as a physician are

- employment agreements
- lease agreements
- medical director agreements

More importantly, unlike a contract in any other industry, contracts in the health care industry must be drafted in such a way as to ensure compliance with applicable state and federal laws. For example, contracts must be compliant with federal Stark and anti-kickback laws, as well as state laws prohibiting self-referrals, fee-splitting, patient-brokering, and kickbacks. A contractual arrangement that potentially implicates any of these laws must be analyzed to determine if it falls within a legally recognized exception or safe harbor that could protect the physician from prosecution.

If a contract in a health care setting is not compliant with these laws, the contract may



be unenforceable or, worse, it may expose the parties to civil fines, criminal penalties, licensure sanctions by the professional board, and/or exclusion from Medicare and Medicaid.

The following are some examples of contractual arrangements that must be drafted to be compliant with federal and state laws:

EMPLOYMENT CONTRACTS – a physician's compensation is highly regulated in the health care setting to ensure the compensation is not based on making or receiving patient referrals. It is designed to address concerns about referrals that may result in overutilization of health care services, which presumably increases health care costs.

LEASING OFFICE SPACE – a lease must be at fair market value. If not, it will appear to be a benefit conferred onto the physician to solicit patient referrals. This is a perfect example of how a contract in the health care industry, even a simple lease, must be drafted to ascertain it is compliant. Otherwise, it could bring about serious consequences.

Before you sign on the dotted line, I highly recommend your contractual arrangements be reviewed to ensure the contract is compli-

ant with current health care laws and regulations. Failure to do so could prove to be a costly mistake. Protect your license and your investment and hire a good team of advisers, such as a CPA and a health law attorney, to provide advice and properly guide you.



Research/Scholarly Activity - Faculty and Student Achievements



1 Stanley Cohen, Ed.D., professor of humanities and executive vice dean for educational support at NSU's Health Professions Division, served as the keynote speaker at Broward Mensa's regional gathering called FLoRanGe 2013 - Suite 16, held August 30-September 2 in Fort Lauderdale, Florida. His presentation highlighted experiences from his book *My Time with Einstein*. Dr. Cohen was also highlighted in an August 16 *Sun Sentinel* article entitled "Brushes with Fame: Albert Einstein's Chauffeur Shares His Memories."

2 Nicole Cook, Ph.D., M.P.A., assistant professor of public health, and **T. Lucas Hollar, Ph.D.**, assistant professor of public health, were awarded a \$32,000 grant from the Health Foundation of South Florida to conduct a study entitled "Using Patient Experience to Enhance Promising Practices in Health Center Medical Homes." The study's overarching goal is to understand factors related to patient engagement, team-based care, and patient experience at health center medical homes. Collaborative partners on the study include Borinquen Community Health Center, Broward Com-

munity and Family Health Center, Community Health of South Florida, Jessie Trice Community Health Center, Miami Beach Community Health Center, and Health Choice Network of Florida. Dr. Cook was also invited to serve as a reviewer for the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Health Care Innovation Awards, which will provide up to \$1 billion in funding for projects that develop new-payment and service-delivery models.

3 OMS-II Naveen Dhawan, M.B.A., authored an article entitled "Partnerships in Medical Business: A Framework for Choosing the Right Key Players" that was published in the September-October issue of the *Journal of Medical Practice Management*.

4 Marti Echols, Ph.D., M.Ed., assistant dean of medical education, was elected by the American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine (AACOM) to serve as chair for the Society of Osteopathic Medical Educators in April. Dr. Echols and **Heather McCarthy, D.O.**, assistant professor of medical education and director of the Simulation/Standardized Patient Lab, received a

\$5,000 research award from AACOM for the project "Medical School Applicants Perceptions of Simulation Experience Within the Interview Day." Dr. Echols also received a \$10,000 research award from AACOM for the project "Simulation-Based Intern Boot Camp."

5 Phyllis Joy Filker, D.M.D., M.P.H., who serves as associate professor in the college's Master of Public Health Program and director of quality improvement at NSU's College of Dental Medicine, coauthored a publication with **Nicole Cook, Ph.D., M.P.A.**, assistant professor of public health. The article, entitled "Electronic Health Records: A Valuable Tool for Dental School Strategic Planning," was published in the May 2013 issue of the *Journal of Dental Education*. She also was appointed regional interim director of the American Dental Education Association's Consortium of Operative Dental Educators.

6 Mark Gabay, D.O., FACOP, FAAP, assistant professor of pediatrics and osteopathic pediatric residency program director at Miami Children's Hospital, serves as an American Osteopathic Board of Pe-

diatricians' board member and was one of several lead figures in the development and implementation of the first online electronic residency in-service examination, which was administered to all osteopathic pediatric residencies across the nation in August.

7 Michelle Gagnon Blodgett, Psy.D., assistant clinical professor of geriatrics and coordinator of geriatric clinical services, coauthored an article entitled "Understanding Dementia: Etiology, Communication, and Exercise Intervention," which was published in the August edition of the *Strength and Conditioning Journal*.

8 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, coauthored an article with **Raymond Ownby, M.D., Ph.D., M.B.A.**, professor and chair of the Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Medicine, **Rosemary Davenport, M.S.N., ARNP, CCRC**, nurse practitioner and research coordinator, and **Ana Maria Homs, Psy.D., M.S.N., ARNP**, research as-



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sociate. The article, entitled “Development and Initial Validation of a Computer-Administered Health Literacy Assessment in Spanish and English: FLIGHT/VIDAS,” was published in the August edition of *Patient Related Outcome Measures*. Drs. Jacobs and Ownby also coauthored “Condom Use, Disclosure, and Risk for Unprotected Sex in HIV-Negative Midlife and Older Men Who Have Sex with Men” that was published in the *American Journal of Men’s Health*. Additionally, Dr. Jacobs was appointed as a member of the *Journal of the Society for Social Work Research* Editorial Review Board and served as reviewer for 10 scientific journals, including *HIV/AIDS – Research and Palliative Care*, *Patient Preference and Adherence*, and *Gerontology & Geriatrics Education*.

9 OMS-III Will Jaffe had his counterargument to OMS-III Sam Armstrong’s published piece on abortion published in the July 11 issue of *in-Training*, which is an online magazine for medical students. Jaffe’s opinion piece, entitled “Who Counts, What Doesn’t: Refocusing Armstrong’s Abortion Perspective,” was in direct re-

sponse to Armstrong’s “Who Counts, Who Doesn’t: Human Value, Reproductive Freedom, and the Abortion on Demand Debate” that appeared in the May 30 issue of *in-Training*.

10 OMS-IV Milla Kviatkovsky coauthored a case report entitled “Asymptomatic Anomalous Left Anterior Descending Artery Arising from the Right Coronary Artery with a Rare Anterior Course” that was published in the August edition of *British Medical Journal: Case Reports*. She also coauthored an abstract on “The Minimum Clinically Important Improvement and Patient Acceptable Symptom State in BASDAI and BASFI for Patients with Ankylosing Spondylitis” and will be presenting this research during the American College of Rheumatology/Association of Rheumatology Health Professionals Annual Meeting being held October 26-30 in San Diego, California.

11 Leonard Levy, D.P.M., M.P.H., associate dean for education, planning, and research, was accepted by the Council for International Exchange of Scholars to serve as a reviewer for the 2013-14

Fulbright Specialist Program Public/Global Health Peer Review Committee. He also was selected to be a reviewer for *Academic Medicine*, which is the journal published by the Association of American Medical Colleges that includes all U.S. allopathic medical schools.

12 OMS-III Carisa Lippmann was appointed as a student representative to the American Osteopathic Association Bureau of State Government Affairs and has been accepted for a second year as a member of The President’s 64, which comprises an elite 64-member body of NSU student leaders whose purpose is to strengthen the relationship between Nova Southeastern University and its community. She also was chosen to represent the American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine’s Council of Osteopathic Student Government Presidents as its national public relations/Web site representative. In addition, Lippmann, along with **OMS-II’s Soo Jin Lee** and **Kelly Thiber** and **OMS-III Weber Wu**, received a \$600 grant from the International Street Symposium to present their research efforts regarding

how to improve access for students who work with homeless populations in local clinics.

13 Jennie Q. Lou, M.D., M.Sc., professor of biomedical informatics, public health, and internal medicine and director of the Biomedical Informatics Program, was invited in August to become a member of the prestigious Improving Methods for Conducting Patient-Centered Outcomes Research merit review standing panel. Dr. Lou also served as a scientific reviewer for the Patient-Centered Outcome Research Institute in 2012-13.

14 Oneka B. Marriott, D.O., M.P.H., assistant professor of pediatrics and public health, was selected to join the 20th class of fellows in the Ohio University Heritage College of Osteopathic Medicine Health Policy Fellowship for the 2013-14 year.

15 Christina Ortiz, a student in the Master of Science in Disaster and Emergency Preparedness program, authored an article entitled “EM Students Must Learn How to Improve Public Awareness and Use of Technology” in the July issue of the *International Association of Emergency Managers Bulletin*.



16 Naushira Pandya, M.D., CMD, FACP, professor and chair of the Department of Geriatrics, has been recertified by the American Medical Directors Association as a certified medical director. In addition, she made a panel presentation entitled "Impaired Decision-Making in Older Adults" at the International Association of Law and Mental Health annual meeting held July 15 in Amsterdam. Dr. Pandya also co-authored a paper entitled "The Burden of Sliding-Scale Insulin Among Elderly Long-Term Care Residents with Type 2 Diabetes" that was accepted for publication by the *Journal of the American Geriatrics Society*. In addition, she was named as a Fellow of the American College of Physicians.

17 OMS-III Alex Pappas received the Medical Student Award on July 28 as a part of the Ophthalmology Section's Rabb Venable Excellence in Research Program for his research project entitled "Success of Intraocular Pressure Control in Glaucoma Patients Undergoing Canaloplasty with and Without Cataract Extraction in a Single Center Setting." Pappas presented his research at the National Medical Association's Annual Convention and Scientific Assembly in Toronto, Ontario, Canada.

18 Alina M. Perez, J.D., M.P.H., LCSW, associate professor of public health, presented two lectures at the 39th International Congress



of Law and Mental Health held July 14-20 in Amsterdam, Netherlands: "Reducing Social Disconnectedness and Perceived Isolation Among Older Adults for Better Health Outcomes: Could a Mandatory Chronic Disease Registry Be a Beneficial Tool?" and "The Therapeutic Value of Mandated Reporting of Poor Diabetes Control: The Case of the New York City Department of Health's A1c Registry."

19 Arif M. Rana, Ph.D., Ed.S., assistant professor of biomedical informatics and medical education, was ap-



pointed as director of faculty development to support faculty and staff members, residents, and external visitors through various interdisciplinary programs, workshops, resources, and services that fulfill the college's mission regarding scholarly activities. Dr. Rana also received a \$5,000 extramural Florida Public Health Workforce Development grant from the Broward Regional Health Planning Council in Hollywood, Florida.

20 Mark Sandhouse, D.O., associate professor and chair of the Department of Osteo-

pathic Principles and Practice, authored an article entitled "Technical Requirements to Become an Osteopathic Physician" that was published online in the *International Journal of Osteopathic Medicine*.

21 OMS-IV Erica Turse attended the American College of Gastroenterology's Annual Scientific Meeting held October 11-16 in San Diego, California, where she made two presentations based on published case reports. She singularly authored the first, entitled "An Unusual Cause of a Small Bowel Obstruction in a 55-Year-Old Male," and coauthored the second, entitled "Imatinib Resistant GIST: A Rare Case of Anaplastic Transformation and Unusual Metastasis." Both reports were published in a special supplement to the October issue of *The American Journal of Gastroenterology*.

Student Advocate Association Enjoys *Dinner with the Dean*

On August 30, Dr. Anthony J. Silvagni and his wife, Dianna, hosted members from the college's **Student Advocate Association (SAA)** at their Fort Lauderdale home, which has become an annual *Dinner with the Dean* tradition. "This year's event was exceptional," said OMS-II Jason Faucheux, who serves as SAA president. "It was a beautiful evening that allowed medical students, their family members, and significant others to mingle with the Silvagnis on top of a 24-story condominium overlooking the ocean and the Intracoastal Waterway."



PROJECT HOPE:

Where Hope Is More Than an Aspiration

By Elliot Montgomery Sklar, Ph.D., M.Sc., Project HOPE Director, and
Kristi Messer, M.S.W., M.P.H., Project HOPE Executive Director

Project HOPE (Homelessness in Osteopathic Predoctoral Education) began within the College of Osteopathic Medicine as a primary care initiative in 2010. The project was developed to educate osteopathic medical students on the unique primary care needs related to those experiencing instability in housing. In addition to evaluating change in attitudes and knowledge based upon didactic curricula and direct experience, the project seeks to disseminate curricula, research, and lessons learned on a national level.

Now in its third year, the project has gained attention through both international and national presentations and through the support of the only academic affiliation with the National Health Care for the Homeless Council. Nadine Chipon-Schoepp, D.O., assistant professor of family medicine, was recently named as a subject matter expert with the council. The project presented three oral presentations at the council's 2013 symposium. In addition, a survey of homeless health curricula within allopathic and osteopathic medical schools, which was completed by OMS-IV students Andrew Garrett, Britta Gray, and Samantha Berr, was showcased, winning the symposium's Best Poster award.

The curricular model that has been developed at NSU-COM has been lauded as an innovative model that can be replicated at other osteopathic and allopathic medical schools to focus on any vulnerable or special population. Currently, the University of Southern California, De Sales, and the University of South Florida have expressed interest in modeling the program for physician assistant and dentistry programs.

As a model that is collaborative and integrated by design, curricular plan and

project advances are facilitated through focus groups with students, faculty members, clinicians, and—most importantly—through the direct involvement of homeless health care consumers. Additionally, faculty and staff members represent Project HOPE in the community through membership and participation on local affordable housing boards, Broward County's Health Care for

ing homelessness. In addition, agreements are in place with Camillus Health Concern in Miami and with Orange Blossom Health Care for the Homeless in Orlando.

In an effort to best equip all medical students, housing intake forms became a requirement of all monthly rotation logs to both emphasize that those experiencing instability in housing do not solely present at Health Care for the Homeless centers, and that housing status is irrefutably connected to a competent patient-care plan. This was launched within rural/underserved rotations in March 2012 and in July 2012 for other rotations.

Accordingly, all medical students' experiences in primary health care delivery to the homeless will continue to be expanded. Data from 2,284 recently completed logs revealed a 6.9 percent encounter rate, with individuals experiencing homelessness across all rotations with an average of 11 patients encountered per student. As Medicaid expansion ensues, it is critical that medical students are competently trained with a skill set conducive to working with a diverse population inclusive of diverse needs. While populations may be considered *special* or vulnerable, they still reside within the general population. Accordingly, medical education programs must integrate rather than silo such underserved groups.

While project insights and data are revealing, they cannot articulate the humanistic qualities and attributes that are nurtured through our students' experiences with those less fortunate within our society. Aligned to the values and mission of NSU-COM, Project HOPE is a leader amongst medical education programs dedicated to the vulnerable and underserved through innovation and dedication.



the Homeless Consumer Advisory Board, and with the National Health Care for the Homeless Education Committee.

The culmination of these efforts is reflected through 27 curricular hours that are truly integrated across all years of medical school. Additionally, agreements with Health Care for the Homeless centers across the county are being positioned such that students working in these clinics will have the most interaction with those experienc-



FACULTY PERSPECTIVE

Embracing the Future Via Virtual World Technology

By Marti Echols, Ph.D., M.Ed.
Assistant Dean of Medical Education

What Is Virtual World?

Second Life (SL) virtual world is a tool that is enhancing socialization and social presence in distance learning by providing students and teachers a new way to interact, collaborate, and engage, in addition to learning by doing. Virtual world is a Web-enabled, computer-based, and simulated multimedia location where users can reside, socialize, and interact as avatars; however, virtual worlds are built for different purposes.

These human-controlled avatars live in virtual-land regions and act the same as their human counterparts in other social networks. While in Second Life, which is owned by Linden Labs, residents are free to do whatever they want; however, when used for educational purposes, it must be structured with well-defined goals and objectives.

How it All Began

It was during a holiday break three years ago that I was watching my granddaughter play on my computer. She was so involved in what she was doing, so I sat next to her to discover what had fascinated her. She was in a virtual world and had created an avatar of herself. She was *shopping* at designer outlet malls, changing outfits, and checking to see how she looked. I became enthralled and soon found myself as an avatar, flying around the virtual world visiting all kinds of unique places. (*Who knew I could be a blue-eyed blonde?*)

As I played in virtual world, the idea that NSU-COM could build a virtual clinic, have student doctors be the avatars, and use the clinic to practice clinical skills was born. I spent a good deal of time exploring the availabilities of virtual worlds in the fields of health care and education. To my surprise, no one was actually doing it. After presenting the idea to our medical education team members, they ventured into virtual world and began exploring.

Our goal was to provide an innovative instructional tool where our medical students could perform a realistic virtual encounter with patients. This would allow students to simulate patient care at any time and from anywhere as they reinforced didactic and clinical-skills experiences in a safe environment without risks to real patients.

The next step involved investigation into such tasks as how to obtain land, buy a *sandbox* (parcel of land), and purchase items in virtual world. We discovered NSU had purchased land in Second Life, so the I-Zone graciously donated a sandbox on which we could build the clinic's physical structure. The following year, with budgeted funds, we built the clinic structure and bought clinical equipment and supplies to create the individual physician clinic rooms.

Like all construction projects, it took more time than planned, but we did stay within our budget. Using students from the M.S. in Medical Education degree program, we tested the project. The students then made themselves avatars and moved throughout the clinic, providing us with excellent feedback to improve the clinic environment and suggesting the virtual world clinic would be the perfect environment to practice interprofessional patient care.

NSU-COM and Virtual World

The first educational project in the NSU-COM Virtual Clinic was to reinforce the clinical skills experience of medical students during the Patient-Centered Medicine course. The first clinical scenario created was to assess the ability of our second-year medical students to ask correct, open-ended questions during a virtual encounter with patients in the SL virtual world. The student doctors create their avatars and then fly in-world for a virtual patient encounter.

Upon arriving at the virtual clinic, the student doctor is presented with a brief

orientation and proceeds to the clinic room. As the student doctor walks into the room, the virtual patient presents with certain conditions. The student doctor interacts with the virtual patient by attempting to ask the patient open-ended questions. Once the correct, open-ended question is asked, the student gets immediate feedback. This process ensures timely feedback and debriefing and completes the simulated experience.

The virtual Art Observation Center is the second educational project in virtual world, which involves art from the NSU Museum of Art Fort Lauderdale being used for a Web module called "Art, Medicine, and Observation." The goal of the virtual art gallery is to provide third- and fourth-year medical students with a flexible instructional medium to use during the course. The scenarios the student doctors are presented during the course involve having the virtual patients present with conditions the students can diagnose by relating them to what they have learned from the art observation session.

The Future of Virtual World

This cutting-edge instructional technology, which is unique in the field of health care and education, enhances communication and sharing—a crucial feature needed in e-health care education. Students and professors could meet in-world at any time and from anywhere to discuss projects, make presentations, do group projects, and share resources by conducting clinical skills experiences in this simulated environment without posing risks to the actual patient. Student advising and mentoring could also benefit from this modality. It also has promise as a significant platform for health care coaching, especially for patients who need chronic disease management.

SL could foster visualization of global research work and meetings, where experts would meet in-world to discuss their collaborative work, educate, socialize, and interact with one another in a risk-free environment while simulating real-life experience. The NSU-COM Virtual Clinic and Art Observation Center, developed for structured educational purposes, is the first of its kind in the nation. We are proud that NSU-COM is leading the way as we continue our tradition of High Touch, High Tech™ medical education.

STAFF SNAPSHOT

Getting to Know...Debra R. Gibbs, B.A. Medical Communications Coordinator



Debra Gibbs...circa early 1990s

Family Facts: With five siblings, I am a happy member of a large family. My brothers and sisters really prepared me for the world by furnishing me with the skills to make friends, seek fairness, and stand up for myself. I hope those experiences will help me as I build good relationships at NSU-COM.

Date of Hire: September 24, 2012. Many of you have heard my *How I Met Scott* story. We coincidentally attended a luncheon event, were introduced by a mutual friend, and just clicked. After a successful interview and all sorts of introductions, we have spent a fun year together. I'm making progress and learning the ropes.

Official NSU-COM Responsibilities: I work with Scott Colton to write and edit publications for NSU-COM, especially our quarterly, *COM Outlook*, and assist with related communications projects. Whenever you create a communications item that represents the college, please keep us in the loop. I know many of you love and depend on Scott. While I can't replace him, I hope you will come to enjoy working with me as your primary contact for COM communications.

Reasons I enjoy working at NSU-

COM: My interest in gathering and reporting news continues as I discover the workings of NSU-COM and the osteopathic community. Whether they are formal or friendly (friendly being my preference), members of the faculty, staff, students, or other colleagues, everyone has something interesting to share. Now that I have a door, it is open. Making friends is a good way to build support for getting the work done. I'm finding my fit.

What did you do professionally before joining NSU-COM?

The bulk of my professional life developed while working in the newsroom of the *Sun Sentinel*. I started in research and became an editor on the features and state-national-foreign newswire desks. Later, I enjoyed working as an assistant business editor. During my last few years, I wrote a weekly column and was an assistant editor for consumer news. Some other interesting jobs I have enjoyed include advocacy consultant and writer, investigator for the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, and teacher of English to Spanish speakers.

Greatest achievement in life:

Loving and being loved by family, friends, and Bob.

Favorite way to unwind when not

at work: Sharing food and watching films bring me pleasure. My interest in languages and cuisine opened the world to me from an early age. Finding good bargains at consignment or thrift shops is also a lot of fun.

My coworkers would be surprised to know this about me:

Even though I spent decades with a large corporation, I am comfortable in the academic community. My successful education experiences helped me become a valedictorian, Fulbright Scholar, and graduate fellow. I am ABD for a Ph.D. in French literature. Perhaps in this environment I'll consider finishing my dissertation on a Haitian novelist.

When I retire I plan to:

Perhaps I could take a long road trip and taste the country from coast to coast. Locally, I would like to work at a food bank, preparing and distributing healthy food.

Three words that best describe me:

Friendly, sensitive, and intelligent.



DYNAMIC DUO:

Scott Colton and Debra Gibbs



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1 Joseph De Gaetano, D.O., M.S.Ed, FAAFP, FACOPF, professor of family medicine, associate dean for clinical and graduate medical education, and executive director for the Consortium for Excellence in Medical Education, was named Mentor of the Year by the NSU-COM/Broward Health Medical Center Family Medicine Residency Program. The honor is awarded by the residents each summer to a faculty member who has been singled out as an exceptional educator, mentor, and role model for the academic year.

2 Nikerson Geneve, D.O., clinical assistant professor of family medicine and director of medical education at Lakeside Medical Center in Belle Glade, Florida, which is a member of NSU-COM's Consortium for Excellence in Medical Education, was featured along with the center's



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first class of family medicine residency graduates in an August 1 *Palm Beach Post* article.

3 Kenneth Johnson, D.O., FACOOG, associate professor and chair of the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology, was named a Top Obstetrician/Gynecologist by the International Association of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (IAOBGYN). As a result, Dr. Johnson will be profiled in *The Leading Physicians of the World* publication. The IAOBGYN spotlights physicians that have demonstrated success and leadership in their profession and provides an opportunity to network, collaborate, and share information with medical professions from around the globe.

4 Neil Natkow, D.O., FACOPF, clinical professor of family medicine and owner of MedMediators—a health care and mediation firm—received a Distinguished Faculty Award in July, which is presented to a clinical faculty member in recognition of his/her outstanding contributions to NSU's College of Osteopathic Medicine in the areas of teaching, scholarship, and service.

5 Anthony Ottaviani, D.O., M.P.H., MACOI, FCCP, clinical professor of internal medicine, regional dean, and director of medical education at Largo Medical Center, has been appointed chief academic and designated institutional officer at the medical center. Dr. Ottaviani will head Largo's program, having oversight of 125 interns, residents, and fellows in 13 specialized programs. He also is a member of the Health Professions Division's Board of Governors and has been elected to the American Osteopathic Association Mentor Hall of Fame.

6 Eileen Ramsaran, M.D., clinical instructor of internal medicine, traveled to Moore, Oklahoma, after the city was devastated by a tornado on May 20. Dr. Ramsaran and five other doctors spent eight days in Moore, serving 250 people at the Mercy Mobile Clinic. The group provided free medical assistance that included caring for wounds, lacerations, bone injuries, strains, diabetes, coronary artery and pulmonary disease, and administered immunizations and supplies. The North Miami Beach Mercy Mobile Clinic regularly participates in health fairs, allowing Dr. Ramsaran and NSU-COM students to provide health care to the underserved.



Clinical Scholars Program. In addition, his considerable research involving the Haitian population has appeared in a number of publications.

Ilya Fonarov, D.O., a 2002 NSU-COM graduate, became program director of the NSU-COM/Palmetto General Hospital Internal Medicine Residency in May. Prior to joining the college's faculty family, Dr. Fonarov worked as a hospitalist.

Elizabeth M. Hames, D.O., a 2009 NSU College of Osteopathic Medicine alumna who joined the Department of Geriatrics in July, completed her postgraduate education at Palmetto General Hospital in Hialeah, has performed considerable volunteer work in various geriatric settings, and finished her geriatric fellowship at NSU-COM in June.



Bruce Peters, D.O., FACOP, FAAP, who previously served as the

college's medical director, returned to NSU-COM in June to become director of medical education at Bethesda Hospital. Dr. Peters, who works in the pediatrics clinic during evening hours, received his D.O. degree from the Chicago College of Osteopathic Medicine.

NSU-COM Welcomes New Faculty Members

Sidney Coupet, D.O., M.P.H., M.Sc., who joined the Department of Internal Medicine in July, received his D.O. degree from Lake Erie College of Osteopathic Medicine and is a scholar in the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation



Welcoming New Administrators...NSU Alumna Grabs Golf Glory...Fiscally Fit

NSU Earns Perfect Financial Responsibility Score



Nova Southeastern University earned a perfect financial responsibility composite score of 3.0 from the U.S. Department of Education (DOE), confirming that NSU is “considered financially responsible.” The recently released annual report is based on the 2011 fiscal year and evaluates all nonprofit and for-profit institutions to ensure they are maintaining the financial standards necessary to participate in Title IV federal student-aid programs.

One of several standards used by the DOE to measure the financial responsibility of a university or college is a composite score based on three ratios derived from the institution’s audited financial statements—a primary-reserve ratio, an equity ratio, and a net-income ratio. The composite score, ranging from negative 1.0 to positive 3.0, measures the fundamental elements of the financial health of each institution. NSU scored a perfect 3.0. Within the state of Florida, 25 percent of the 172 colleges and universities reviewed earned a perfect score.

Linda Smelser Appointed Vice President for Clinical Operations

Linda Smelser, B.S., who was previously affiliated with the University of Central Florida’s College of Medicine, has been appointed NSU vice president for clinical operations. In this role, Smelser will report directly to Jacqueline Travisano, M.B.A., CPA, NSU’s executive vice president and chief operating officer, and be responsible for the oversight and centralization of the university’s Division of Clinical Operations, which consists of 25 health care centers in Broward and Miami-Dade counties.

Dr. Ralph Rogers Named NSU Provost and Executive V.P.



Ralph V. Rogers, Jr., Ph.D., who previously served as vice chancellor for academic affairs and provost at Purdue University Calumet in Indiana, has been named as NSU’s new provost and executive vice president for academic affairs.

In previous professional incarnations, Dr. Rogers held administrative positions as founding dean and professor at East Carolina University College of Technology and Computer Science and chair and professor at Old Dominion University’s Department of Engineering Management and Systems Engineering. He previously held faculty positions at the University of Central Florida and Ohio University.

Dr. Ronald Chenail Assumes Associate Provost Post



Ronald J. Chenail, Ph.D., who previously served as NSU’s vice president of institutional effectiveness, was appointed associate provost for the university’s Division of Applied Interdisciplinary Studies (DAIS) in August. As associate provost, Dr. Chenail will provide leadership for the division’s Center for Psychological Studies, Graduate School of Humanities and

Social Sciences, Mailman Segal Center for Human Development, and Institute for the Study of Human Service, Health, and Justice. He also will be responsible for furthering the DAIS’ efforts to achieve its goals as part of the university’s Vision 2020 business plan, with special focus on collaboration, fiscal performance, extramural research, fund-raising, and student recruitment. Since becoming a faculty member at the university in 1989, Dr. Chenail has secured 12 grants and contracts for NSU totaling over \$1 million and produced over 120 publications, including four books.

NSU OVERVIEW

Dr. Jennifer O'Flannery Anderson Named V.P. for Advancement and Community Relations



Jennifer O'Flannery Anderson, Ph.D., has been appointed vice president for advancement and community relations. In this new position, she will provide leadership for the university's Offices of Advancement, University Relations, and Governmental and Community Affairs. In addition, she will be responsible for overseeing NSU activities related to community

engagement and support, including such areas as advancement, fundraising, alumni relations, communications, public relations, marketing, advertising, and governmental/community relations.

Prior to joining NSU, Dr. O'Flannery Anderson served as vice president for community engagement and executive director of the FAU Foundation at Florida Atlantic University and as president and CEO of the United Way of Broward County.

Dr. Linda Niessen Appointed Dean of the College of Dental Medicine



Linda Niessen, D.M.D., M.P.H., M.P.P., who is an internationally renowned academician, researcher, author, and public health advocate, was named as the new dean of NSU's College of Dental Medicine. During her tenure as professor and chair of the Department of Public Health Sciences at Texas A&M University's Baylor College of Dentistry, she initiated advanced education programs in dental public health and geriatric dentistry as part of Baylor's partnership with the Department of Veterans Affairs and the University of North Texas Health Science Center in Fort Worth.

She also served as vice president and chief clinical officer for DENTSPLY International, Inc., where she oversaw the global clinical education and professional relations activities for the worldwide dental manufacturing company.

Dr. Lisa Deziel Designated as Dean of the College of Pharmacy

Lisa Deziel, Pharm.D., Ph.D., who has been affiliated with the College of Pharmacy since 1989, reached the highest rung on the academic ladder when she was named as the college's new dean. Over the years, she has served in a number of administrative positions within the college, including associate professor and executive associate dean, interim dean, acting chair of pharmacy practice, assistant dean for academic innovation and technology, and assistant dean for academic affairs.

Dr. Deziel is a licensed pharmacist in Florida and Georgia, a board-certified pharmacotherapy specialist, and a Fellow in the American Society of Health System Pharmacists. She has been involved in pharmacy education for more than 25 years and holds a Ph.D. in Computer Technology, specializing in the use of technology in education.

NSU Alumna Taylor Collins Wins Big Break Mexico



Taylor Collins recently won the Golf Channel's hit reality TV competition *Big Break Mexico*, which featured a cast of six men and six women competing in a mixed-gender team format in an attempt to make their lifelong dreams of playing alongside the world's

top golfers on either the LPGA or PGA tours come true. Collins, who has been the most successful competitor in the show's history, helped her team survive more eliminations than any other group. In recognition of her accomplishment, Collins received a number of prizes, including \$50,000, an endorsement contract from Adams Golf, and an exemption to compete on the LPGA Tour in November at the Lorena Ochoa Invitational in Guadalajara, Mexico.

TWISTER TURMOIL



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

Dr. Terry Moy-Brown Provides Critical Care in Moore Tornado Aftermath

May 20, 2013, started out as just another ordinary day for Terry Moy-Brown, D.O., a 2009 NSU-COM alumna who was in the midst of completing her final year as an emergency medicine resident at Moore Medical Center in Moore, Oklahoma. With her mind focused on the day's tasks that lay ahead, Dr. Moy-Brown arrived at the hospital ready to tackle whatever came her way.

What she couldn't have anticipated on that seemingly mundane Monday afternoon was the deadly arrival of a two-mile-wide EF-5 tornado that touched down around 3:00 p.m., carving a devastating swath of destruction across the city and killing dozens of people in the process. Even more terrifying was a fact unknown at the time, which was that the monstrous cyclone was about to set its sights on Moore Medical Center.

When the emergency sirens began blaring their warning, Dr. Moy-Brown immediately leapt into action by quelling her own fears and transitioning into crisis mode. "I was very concerned for the safety of our staff, the pa-

tients, and myself," admitted Dr. Moy-Brown, who was seven months pregnant at the time. "However, there was little time to feel when action needed to be taken, so we immediately began to enact emergency plans. We also had to simultaneously care for the patients that were currently in the emergency room. We had an asthmatic child in the ER at the time, so I continued to give orders for breathing treatments as long as I could.

"We then moved the patients and staff to the center of the building, which is known as the fast-track area. Since the hospital did not have a basement, it was the most secure inner portion of the building because it is away from all sides and windows and located on the first floor," she added. "Once the staff members, the patients, and their charts were secured in the middle of the building, my attending and I finally sat down while one of the adjunct staff members walked around and directed people to stay calm and to go ahead and pray if they had any spiritual beliefs. I heard others quietly sobbing, including my attending."

What she couldn't have anticipated on that seemingly mundane Monday afternoon was the deadly arrival of a two-mile-wide EF-5 tornado that touched down around 3:00 p.m., carving a devastating swath of destruction across the city and killing dozens of people in the process.



Within minutes, the gut-churning sounds of the approaching tornado began to fill the room, causing those inside to become eerily silent. "It sounded like someone was holding a very powerful suctioning device over the building, as if we were inside a vacuum cleaner," Dr. Moy-Brown explained. "The lights, including the emergency lighting that had remained on, finally went off. Then there was just silence and darkness as particles of insulation and dust descended on us from the ceiling."

Once the tornado had passed, the grateful survivors left the safety of the fast-track area to survey the damage, assist the patients, and enact the hospital's emergency protocols. As she walked toward the emergency room, a sense of shock spread through Dr. Moy-Brown as she surveyed the surreal scene. "The ER was completely destroyed," she said. "If we had remained in it, there would have been grave injuries and loss of life."

Operating by instinct while also following well-honed hospital procedures, the medical and ancillary staff swiftly responded. "There was an emergency plan in place for such

situations because Oklahoma is not new to natural disasters such as tornados," she stated. "Some adjunct staff members, which included the nurses and technicians, were sent to find a secure way out of the building. We also stationed staff members with flashlights at points along the escape route and began directing and wheeling patients out of what was left of Moore Medical Center. The patients

were then relocated to the adjacent Warren Movie Theater parking lot, which was a safer area situated away from gas leaks and debris."

Gathering whatever supplies were available, the medical team quickly coordinated an impromptu treatment area that allowed physicians such as Dr. Moy-Brown to triage their patients and determine if there were any further injuries resulting from the tornado. "Once emergency medical services (EMS) arrived, we began the process of transferring patients out to surrounding hospitals," she explained. "With the disaster supplies brought by EMS, we then set up a formal triage center for the walking wounded who were sure to begin showing up at the hospital."

The decision proved to be a prudent one because residents from the surrounding communities were unaware that Moore Medical Center had been virtually destroyed by the murderous twister. "It was very moving to



Dr. Moy-Brown (left) and a colleague survey the damage as they await the arrival of the emergency medical services team.



TERROR ON THE MOVE: IMAGES OF MOORE TORNADO AWE AND APPALL

see a school bus arrive with children that needed to be evaluated.” Dr. Moy-Brown said. “It was equally as moving to see how many nurses, doctors, and other medical professionals arrived to volunteer their services.”

As with any tragedy, there are images and incidents that will remain forever etched in Dr. Moy-Brown’s memory. “Watching a body bag being removed from the 7-Eleven convenience store across the street from the hospital was a powerful reminder of how fortunate we were to survive—and that so many had lost so much,” she admitted before sharing several other gripping tales. “I took care of a woman who arrived with blood all over her and was clutching a plastic bag filled with her life savings—all in dollar bills. She had a look of desperation on her face that I will never forget. Being able to tell her she was going to be okay physically, but knowing the emotional toll she would have to endure would be far greater, was a harrowing experience.”

Although scenes of destruction, as well as horrifying tales of physical and emotional suffering, had engulfed her psyche, Dr. Moy-Brown was able to recount an uplifting event that brought joy at a time when misery was the predominant theme. “One story that shed a little ray of light in such a dark situation was of the baby that was born in the hospital just prior to the tornado,” she recalled. “The dad arrived at the hospital frantically searching for his wife, but we were able to direct him to his wife and infant, who were both safe and sound inside the movie theater. The reunion was a beautiful sight because it provided a vision of new life in the midst of all the devastation and loss of life.”

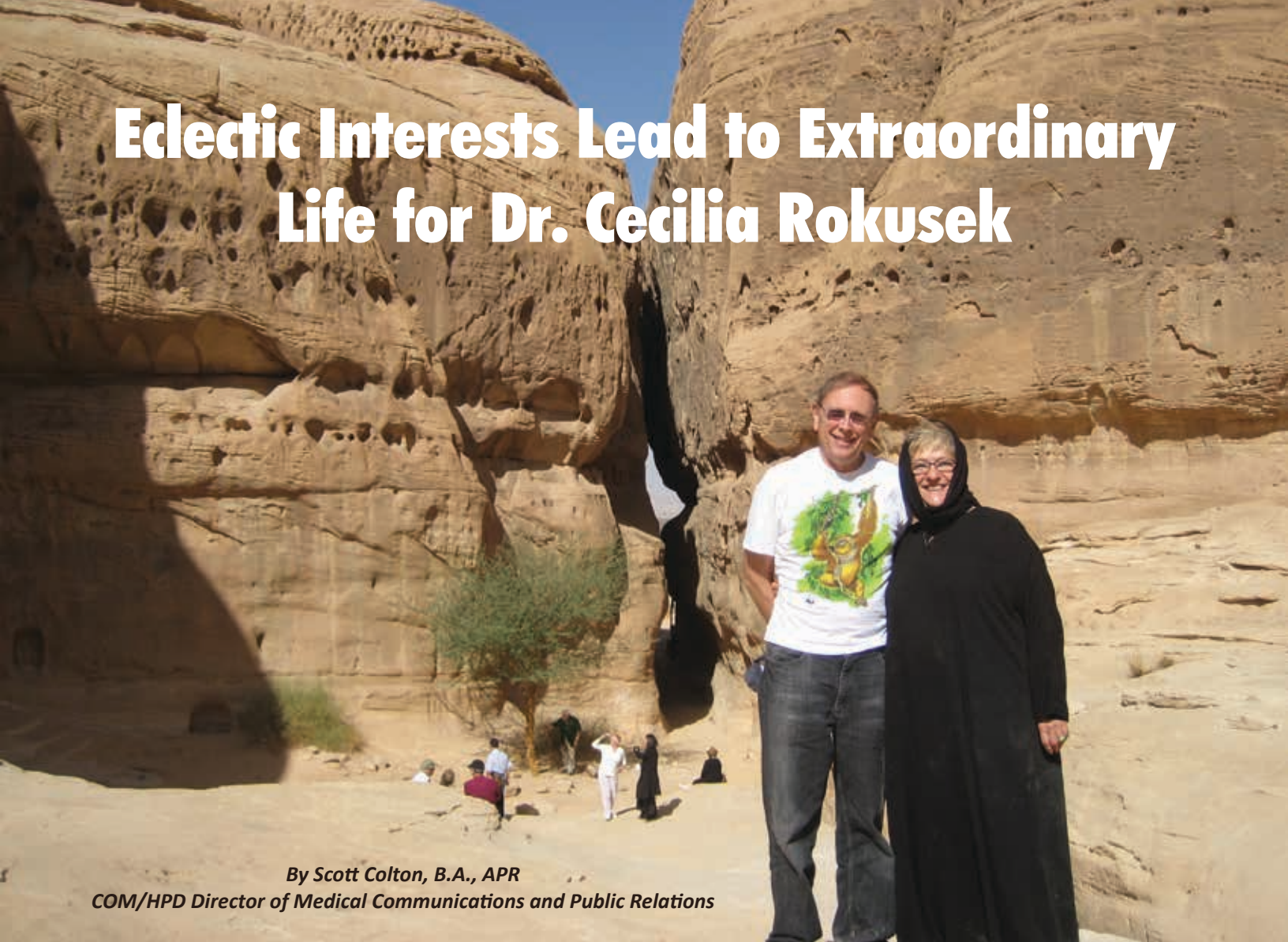
Now that a number of months have passed since the Moore tornado devastated the community and created life-altering upheaval for many of its citizens, Dr. Moy-Brown has had time to reflect on how the events that unfolded that fateful day have impacted her life. “I was incredibly humbled to be a part of

the team that was able to direct others who did not have training in emergency medicine and disaster medicine,” she explained. “Doctors of many specialties arrived to help, but none was trained in disaster medicine and mass-casualty triage. As an ER resident a month away from graduation, my training was put to the test—and I passed. I was reminded of why I chose to become an ER physician because my training helped me to remain calm and to know what to do in that chaotic situation.”

She also had an important message to impart to current NSU-COM students as they progress through their medical school experience. “I really want to provide encouragement to all the NSU medical students as they study and sacrifice so much to pursue their goal of becoming a physician,” she stated. “It is a worthy and noble calling, so press on and don’t give up. You may not be involved in an EF-5 tornado, but I truly believe each and every one of you will make a difference in someone’s life.”

“I was incredibly humbled to be a part of the team that was able to direct others who did not have training in emergency medicine and disaster medicine. Doctors of many specialties arrived to help, but none was trained in disaster medicine and mass-casualty triage. As an ER resident a month away from graduation, my training was put to the test—and I passed.”

Eclectic Interests Lead to Extraordinary Life for Dr. Cecilia Rokusek



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

Because she's such a multifaceted person, it's difficult to sum up the essence of Cecilia Rokusek, Ed.D., RD, professor of family medicine/public health/disaster and emergency preparedness and assistant dean for education, planning, and research, in just a few words.

The compelling kaleidoscope that is Dr. Rokusek encompasses a compelling array of facets. From being a passionate lifelong learner who has visited 84 countries to her noteworthy career in various aspects of academic administration, Dr. Rokusek brings an infectious energy to everything she does. Perhaps no words sum up Dr. Rokusek more succinctly than the ones found in her curriculum vitae, where she describes herself as a "charismatic leader committed to higher education in a global society" and "an innovative and visionary administrator committed to students, faculty, staff, and the external community."

To become the venerated professional she is today, Dr. Rokusek began absorbing knowledge and learning life's lessons in a small town in South Dakota called Yankton before relocating to nearby Tabor, where everybody literally *knew your name*. "When you grow up in a small town, you seem to know everyone," said Dr. Rokusek, who is a

proud mixture of both Czech and Slovak heritage. "There was just one church, one physician in the entire county, and one high school."

Because her parents were industrious individuals, Dr. Rokusek, who is an only child, quickly adopted their exemplary work ethic and incorporated it into all phases of her life. Her mother, who quit teaching once she got married, later took a job at the post office in Tabor, eventually becoming postmistress – the female version of a postmaster – while her father spent 70 years working as a barber before retiring at the age of 88.

Plotting Her Career Course

"I was very active in high school and participated in everything from band, theater, and debate to serving on the editorial board of the school newspaper," said Dr. Rokusek, who graduated as salutatorian and received science awards in both chemistry and biology as a senior. "What I always wanted to be was a family practice physician, so that was my plan at the time. But my mother told me that becoming a physician would be a hard life for a woman because this was in the mid 1960s before the



GLOBETROTTING: GREAT WALL OF CHINA, NORTH KOREA, AND GUAM

women's movement had really blossomed. She wanted me to become a teacher because she thought I would be a really good one, but that's not what I wanted to do."

After graduating from Tabor High School, Dr. Rokusek carefully considered an array of attractive scholarship opportunities before settling on Mount Marty College in her birthplace of Yankton, South Dakota. "I wanted to stay local because I was an only child and was very close to my parents, although I did live in a dorm to fully enjoy the college experience," explained Dr. Rokusek, who received a full four-year theater scholarship from Mount Marty.

However, during her second year of college, Dr. Rokusek's academic adviser called her into her office to discuss an intriguing opportunity. "She said, 'We're not going to take your scholarship away, but we really feel you have a stronger aptitude in science.' So I began getting into chemistry, which I sort of liked, especially biochemistry," Dr. Rokusek recalled. "Then a wonderful professor by the name of Dr. Soojae Zeon called me in regarding a new program being established in dietetics."

With the help of an additional \$1,000 scholarship from the American Dietetic Association, Dr. Rokusek

was accepted into the inaugural dietetic program and went on to graduate from Mount Marty College in 1975. Interestingly, because of her diverse interests, her Bachelor of Arts degree included a double major in Home Economics/Dietetics and Oral Communication and a double minor in Biology and Chemistry. "I graduated magna sum laude and had a lot of options," said Dr. Rokusek of her academic viability. "I knew I liked working in the field of nutrition; in fact, I thought I was going to be the next Betty Crocker."

After assessing her postgraduate opportunities, Dr. Rokusek set her sights on attending the University of Nebraska, where she intended to earn her master's and Ph.D. degrees in Human Nutrition after receiving an all-expenses-paid regents' fellowship. However, after completing her master's degree and commencing work on her Ph.D, an administrator from her alma mater contacted her with an enticing proposal.

Piloting a Shift to Higher Education Administration

As it turned out, because her former mentor Dr. Zeon had recently left Mount Marty to relocate to Seoul, South Korea, the college was in dire need of someone to replace her before

the next semester began the following month; hence the surprise job opportunity. Although Dr. Rokusek decided to accept the one-year position to teach in the dietetics and nutrition program, she fully expected to return to her Ph.D. studies at the University of Nebraska. However, as is the case with even the best-laid plans, they often go astray.

"I really enjoyed teaching and wound up spending five years serving as department chair of the accredited dietetic program from 1976 through 1981," said Dr. Rokusek, who became the recipient of a generous offer from the Mount Marty administration once she decided to remain at the college. "The administration said to me, 'We know we interrupted your studies, so if you want to get a doctorate we will pay for it, but it will have to be at the University of South Dakota.' At that time, the university had no Ph.D. program in nutrition, so I opted to pursue an Ed.D. in Higher Educational Administration, which I obtained in 1983. I was fortunate because my academic adviser for my doctorate was the former president, Dr. I.D. Weeks, of the University of South Dakota. He served in that role for over 30 years and was a great mentor and adviser."

After leaving Mount Marty College in 1981, Dr. Rokusek spent the next 12 years working at the University of

South Dakota in a variety of capacities that included serving as executive director of the Interdisciplinary Center for Developmental Disabilities at the university's medical school and culminated with her appointment as the school's assistant vice president for health affairs. In her role as vice president in 1989, Dr. Rokusek developed and secured state and private funding to establish the first academic programs in occupational and physical therapy in South Dakota, which she considers to be one of her finest accomplishments. "Prior to this, there were only five slots available each in occupational and physical therapy in North Dakota for South Dakota students," she explained. "This was a real victory that made an incredible difference in the state."

As the 1980s slowly melded into the 1990s, Dr. Rokusek began to sense she was ready for a career and locational shakeup. "By 1993, I was pondering whether I wanted to stay in South Dakota or go beyond, so I identified three areas where I would like to live, which were Chicago, Illinois, Seattle, Washington, and Boston, Massachusetts," she explained. "Illinois came through first with two offers — one from the University of Illinois in Chicago and one from Governors State University in University Park — so that's where I went."

Continuing her move up the professional ladder, Dr. Rokusek accepted the position as dean of Governors State University's College of Health Professions. During her six-year stint at Governors State, she masterminded many enhancements that included the development of new occupational and physical therapy graduate programs as well as the procurement of state funding for a new human anatomy lab. In 1998, her growing stature in the academic realm was recognized in a major way when a local newspaper named her as one of the "Top 10 Most Powerful and Influential Women for 1998 in Illinois."

In the late 1990s, another geographical change was precipitated when Dr. Rokusek's parents decided they no longer wanted to contend with the harsh South Dakota winters and elected to relocate to Fort Myers, Florida, which is where a close cousin happened to live. Realizing she wanted to be close to her parents as they approached the advanced age of 90, Dr. Rokusek accepted a position as dean of Florida Gulf Coast University's College of Health Professions in 1999, which later transitioned into her becoming vice president of academic affairs.

Fortunately, the move to Florida would prove to be a propitious decision both personally and professionally.

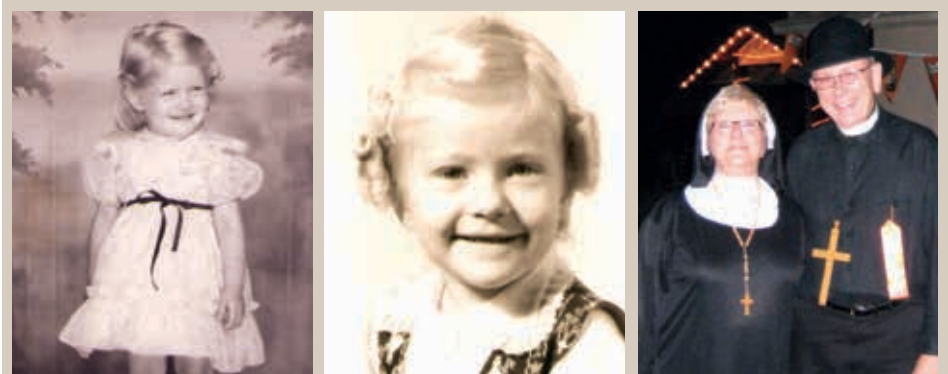
Love Blooms as NSU Looms

Love has a way of sneaking up on people when they least expect it, which is exactly what happened to Dr. Rokusek in 2001 when a random phone call morphed into a life-altering experience. Although she was happily ensconced at Florida Gulf Coast

University, she continued to proudly embrace her Czech and Slovak heritage by being active in a number of cultural activities, including the Ms. Slovak USA Pageant headquartered in Wilber, Nebraska.

One day, a gentleman by the name of Bob Petrik contacted her office in Fort Myers as part of an informational quest. What should have been a fairly quick dialogue exchange evolved into an extended conversation that ultimately led to a genuine happy ending. "We talked for almost an hour," she said. "And the rest, as they say, is history."

In 2002, a similar situation occurred on the professional front when Dr. Rokusek attended a grants meeting in Washington, D.C. "I was chairing a 12-person grants panel where one of the reviewers just happened to be Dr. Leonard Levy, who serves as NSU-COM's associate dean for education, planning, and research," she said. "During a break, we introduced ourselves and made plans to do dinner, where he discussed his desire to obtain additional grants for the



Pictured (clockwise from left) are two portraits of Dr. Rokusek as a young child; dressed up for Halloween with her longtime partner, Bob Petrik; the happy couple; a meet-and-greet with Madeleine Albright, the former U.S. secretary of state; meeting retired Republican Senator Bob Dole.





college. I said, 'Well, if I can ever help you in any way, just let me know.'"

Dr. Levy wisely took Dr. Rokusek up on her offer, which resulted in her working several days a month at NSU-COM as a grants consultant from 2003 through 2005. But by this time, Dr. Rokusek realized she was ready for yet another life change when her parents died in 2004 at the ages of 96 and 90 within nine days of each other, making her recognize she needed to return to the Midwest to be closer to her extended family and aging aunts and uncles. This decision resulted in her leaving Florida to become dean of Winona State University's College of Education in Winona, Minnesota, in July 2005.

Nevertheless, her deep connections to a man named Bob Petrik and a college called NSU-COM were soon to entice her back to South Florida for good. Amazingly, the two major grant proposals she had worked on with Dr. Levy had come to fruition, resulting in over \$5 million in funding from the Health Resources and Services Administration to establish a center for all-hazards education and develop a curriculum focusing on all-hazards preparedness for health professions' students.

"I had not been at Winona that long when I received a message—which I still have saved on my phone—from Dr. Anthony J. Silvagni that said, 'You're not going to believe

what I have to tell you, call me.' When I called him back, the first thing he said was, 'Are you sitting down?' she recalled. "I told him yes, so he proceeded to tell me the good news and ask if I would be willing to come to NSU-COM full-time to develop the new center and its curriculum."

Dr. Rokusek, who was enjoying her life in Minnesota immensely, was now being courted on two fronts thanks to the heightened contact from Petrik, who was still living in South Florida. "Bob was calling me every night, but I didn't give it much thought because although we had developed a nice relationship and gone on several trips together, I knew he was a confirmed bachelor," she explained. "But one night he said, 'I have been thinking about it, and I want you to come and spend the rest of your life with me in Florida.' After hearing that, how could I resist? I realized at that moment he was my true soul mate and the love of my life."

Enhancing NSU-COM's Esteem

Since becoming a full-time NSU-COM faculty member and administrator in September 2006, Dr. Rokusek has played a key role in establishing, refining, and redirecting new programs, centers, and institutes that have played a key role in burnishing NSU-COM's esteem on local, state, national, and global levels. This fact also is reflected in the various job titles

she currently holds, which range from executive director of the college's Florida Coastal Geriatric Resources, Education, and Training Center (GREAT GEC) to project manager of the Institute for Disaster and Emergency Preparedness (IDEP) and director of the Center for Interprofessional Education and Practice.

One of her most significant contributions was assisting in the establishment of the Center for Bioterrorism and All-Hazards Preparedness, which was renamed the Institute for Disaster and Emergency Preparedness several years ago to better reflect what the institute does and the nature of the field. In its current incarnation, the multifaceted IDEP serves as a regional and national resource center focused on interdisciplinary training, information dissemination, and technical assistance related to all-hazards preparedness in a global society.

Another pet project was the creation of the college's Geriatric Education Center, known as the GREAT GEC, in September 2007, which is one of 43 federally funded centers located throughout the United States. Currently, the center provides health professions' educators, students, and community practitioners with numerous opportunities to learn more about providing interprofessional health care to older adults and their families. In fact, all GREAT GEC activities are designed to enhance the ability of health care professionals to deliver interprofessional geriatric and culturally appropriate care in a variety of community-based environments. In 2010, the GREAT GEC aligned with the Lifelong Learning Institute that Dr. Rokusek oversees working closely with its director, Linda Maurice.

A similar success story that occurred thanks to Dr. Rokusek's careful ministrations was the creation of the college's Master of Science in Disaster and Emergency Preparedness 36 credit-hour degree program, which came to fruition in 2012. The program,



which is interdisciplinary in nature, is designed to provide students with the requisite theoretical knowledge and applied skills needed to work in the rapidly growing interdisciplinary field of disaster and emergency preparedness. "The M.S. in Disaster and Emergency Preparedness is a true testament to the outstanding work of the faculty and staff members in the institute and to their commitment in making NSU-COM one of the leaders in disaster and emergency education and community-based research in the field," she stated.

One other educational aspect that took root under her guidance was the Center for Interprofessional Education and Practice, which was established to support interprofessional learning and collaborative practice at NSU's Health Professions Division and other related programs across campus. Ultimately, the center's goal is to enhance patient-centered and community-oriented care through providing students as well as faculty and staff members with opportunities to purposefully and collaboratively learn and work together.

According to Dr. Rokusek, who was appointed as Slovak Honorary Consul for Florida in 2008 by the Slovak Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Slovak President Ivan Gaspárovic, her diverse and far-ranging responsibilities are not just mundane tasks – they're professional passions. "My major role as assistant dean in the Office of Education, Planning, and Research is to consistently monitor federal and state funding sources and

seek out opportunities that match our priorities," she explained.

"But it's also important for me and others to help instill a culture of research and grant writing throughout the college," added Dr. Rokusek, who helped establish an integral NSU-COM international linkage at Comenius University Faculty of Medicine in Bratislava, Slovakia. "When I started here in 2006, the Office of Education, Planning, and Research had only 3 employees, including myself. Since then, we've grown to include 19 employees. It's an ongoing process, but step by step, we're getting there. There is almost infinite potential at NSU to develop new programs and new research initiatives. I applaud the support for research given by Dr. Silvagni and am eager to help carry out NSU President Dr. George Hanbury's Vision 2020, which includes a real focus on research expansion in all areas."

Although Dr. Rokusek enjoys all aspects of her NSU-COM career, she does have her favorites. "If I could do just two things, they would be serving as director of our Center for Interprofessional Education and Practice and spending more time working with our GREAT GEC," she admitted. "I worked on this project when I was a consultant for NSU-COM nearly a decade ago, and it took us four tries to secure the geriatric grant, so it's a real passion project for me."

As she looks toward the future, Dr. Rokusek has several professional aspirations she would like to pur-

sue before she retires; however, one stands above the rest. "I would love to see us develop an interprofessional center for geriatrics education and research," she stated. "We are definitely positioned to pursue it because we have all the health disciplines right here on campus. I always say that NSU and our college are so full of potential but that there are not enough hours in the day to do everything we want to do, which is why we have to prioritize. It's a matter of finding that balance between keeping the energy alive without getting burned out."

Throughout a career brimming with personal and professional accomplishments, Dr. Rokusek can proudly reflect on her past, knowing she's made her parents proud, lived life on her terms, and been supportive of others. "My parents were a real driving force in my life because they were exemplars of hard work and dedication," she explained. "They always lived life to the fullest, so I always try to do the same by working hard and trying to positively touch the lives of people. They also instilled in me a great love for my culture, which is why it gives me great joy to celebrate who I am and then translate that into both my work and personal life.

"My mother always said, 'Work to make a positive difference in the world and always try to leave a piece of symbolic immortality behind you,'" she added. "I strive to do that every day, especially for our students, as they are our future."

Alumni Corner - Activities, Accomplishments, and Awards

John T. Bailey, D.O. ('86), a self-employed psychiatrist, was reappointed by Florida Governor Rick Scott to the Medicaid Pharmaceutical and Therapeutics Committee.



Camille Bentley, D.O., M.P.H., FACOPF

('92) was appointed as a full professor in the Rocky Vista University (RVU) College of Osteopathic Medicine's Department of Primary Care in July and is serving as chair of the Global and Community Medicine Department. She also organizes and participates in several international medical outreach programs yearly to sites such as Kenya, Nepal, Guatemala, and Peru for the college, which is located in Parker, Colorado.

Jessica L. Brown, D.O., M.P.H., FAAP ('04), a second-year pediatric pulmonary fellow at the University of Alabama at Birmingham, received an American Association Foundation Seed Grant for her project entitled "A Comparison of Two Methodologies for Determining Required CPAP Pressures for Children with Obstructive Sleep Apnea Syndrome (OSAS)."

Bob Cambridge, D.O., M.P.H. ('08) authored a book entitled *Pocket Guide to the American Board of Emergency Medicine In-Training Exam* that was published by Cambridge University Press and is the first review book to focus on the in-training exam all emergency medicine residents must take. Dr. Cambridge, who serves as the assistant program director for research at the San Antonio Military Medical Center Emergency Medicine Residency Program,

is currently deployed with the U.S. Air Force in Afghanistan, where he is the EMS director for a role III medical facility in the eastern province.



Mark Ciaglia, D.O. ('04) recently opened his own hand-surgery practice called the Wood-

lands Center for Special Surgery in The Woodlands, Texas. In addition, he was featured on the local TV program *Great Day Houston* to discuss hand-surgery issues.



Tyler Cymet, D.O. ('88), associate vice president of medical education for the American

Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine and member of the NSU-COM Dean's Leadership Council, received the Maryland State Medical Society's Dr. Henry P. and M. Page Laughlin 2013 Distinguished Editorial Award for his service on the *Maryland Medicine* Editorial Board and his work with *Maryland Medicine - The Maryland Medical Journal*.



Joanna Drowos, D.O., M.P.H., M.B.A. ('04) was recently appointed interim asso-

ciate chair of the Department of Integrated Medical Science at the Charles E. Schmidt College of Medicine at Florida Atlantic University and also serves as director for the third-year Community and Preventive Medicine Clerkship. In addition, she was selected to attend the Ameri-

can Association of Medical Colleges Early Career Women Faculty Professional Development Seminar held July 13-16 in Denver, Colorado.



Christopher Durando, D.O. ('01), who is board-

certified in internal medicine, has joined the staff at Internal Medicine Associates of Fort Myers, which is a multispecialty practice in Fort Myers, Florida, comprising more than 40 physicians.

Michelle A. Ferreira, D.O. ('06), who is a board certified neurologist and movement disorder specialist with special interest in Parkinson's Disease, recently accepted a staff position at Neurology Offices of South Florida in Boca Raton.

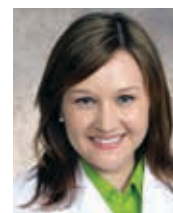


Greta Dowling Flaherty, D.O. ('10) joined the Floyd Primary Care Network in Rome,

Georgia, which is where she recently completed her family medicine residency training.

Lisa Gwynn, D.O., M.B.A. ('98), assistant professor of pediatrics at the University of Miami (UM) and medical director of the UM Pediatric Mobile Clinic, was featured on WFTV Univision 23 and in *The Wall Street Journal* for the launch of the mobile clinic's Telehealth services. This innovative technology will bring specialty care to children in underserved communities throughout Miami-Dade County.

Jessica E. Hilst, D.O. ('10) was recently selected for the Training in Policy Studies



Fellowship by NYIT/NYCOM. Ten residents are selected annually for the fellowship,

which allows them to join a cadre of health policy experts that may serve on committees and taskforces at the federal and state levels, testify on issues relevant to osteopathic medicine/education, and develop policy positions.



Darren Hoffberger, D.O. ('98) was elected chief of the medical staff at Broward

Health North by the hospital's medical staff. Dr. Hoffberger, a pulmonary specialist who has been active at Broward Health North since 2004, is board certified in pulmonary diseases, critical care, and sleep medicine.

Edward Jones, D.O. ('05) and **John Kim, D.O.** ('05) are currently in Afghanistan serving as majors in the U.S. Army. Dr. Jones is a Special Forces group battalion surgeon specializing in family medicine, while Dr. Kim, a general surgeon, is serving as a forward surgical team commander.



Lloyd G. Logue, D.O. ('98) is nearing the end of his second year as medical staff chief at Bay

Medical Center Sacred Heart Health System in Panama City, Florida, and continues to serve as president of Bay Radiology Associates, PLLC.

Patrick Kenney, D.O. ('08) recently joined the medical



staff at Midland Medical Center, which is located in Oakland Park, Florida, and focuses on primary health care services as well as special health care and preventative services for HIV, hepatitis, and GLBT patients. After receiving his D.O. degree, Dr. Kenney completed his internship and internal medicine residency training at Broward Health Medical Center in Fort Lauderdale before relocating to Tampa to complete his infectious disease and tropical medicine subspecialty fellowship training at the University of South Florida Morsani College of Medicine at Tampa General Hospital. Dr. Kenney is board certified in internal medicine by the American Osteopathic Board of Internal Medicine and board eligible in infectious disease.



Michael J. MacDonald, D.O., M.P.H., M.B.A., FAOCOPM ('90) was selected as the Naval Reserve Flight Surgeon of the Year and awarded the Navy Commendation Medal. He is a captain in the Navy Reserve and currently serves as the flight surgeon for Patrol Squadron 62 based out of Naval Air Station Jacksonville in Florida. In his civilian life, Dr. MacDonald is board certified in occupational medicine and aerospace medicine and is the co-medical director for Health First Occupational Medicine in Melbourne, Florida.

Jose Paz, D.O. ('11), who recently began his third year of internal medicine residency training, was named chief academic resident in the



NSU-COM/ Palmetto General Hospital Internal Medicine Residency program in Hialeah, Florida.



Ronald Renuart, D.O. ('90), a three-term Florida House of Representatives member, was presented with the 2013 Florida Dental Association Legislator of the Year Award at the Florida National Dental Convention held June 13-15 in Kissimmee, Florida. Dr. Renuart practices internal medicine in Ponte Vedra Beach and is recognized as a leader in health policy in the Florida House of Representatives. He was acknowledged for his efforts during the 2013 legislative session.

Lior Shamai, D.O., M.P.H. ('06), a board certified cardiologist, is now employed at Owensboro Health Cardiology in Owensboro, Kentucky, and is also seeing patients at the Riverfront Medical Clinic in Tell City, Indiana.

Steven P. Stanos, D.O. ('95), director of corporate pain services at the Rehabilitation Institute of Chicago, was selected by the Mayday Fund to be a Mayday Fellow. Established by the Mayday Fund in 2004, the fellowship trains physicians, nurses, pharmacists, social workers, scientists, and legal scholars in the pain management community to more effectively communicate their work and raise awareness of and improve the treatment of acute and chronic pain.

Richard R. Thacker, D.O., FACOI ('92), who is a past



president of the Florida Osteopathic Medical Association (FOMA), was reelected to the American Osteopathic Association's (AOA) Board of Trustees for a three-year term. On August 3, he participated as a speaker during the grand opening ceremony of the Alabama College of Osteopathic Medicine in Dothan, Alabama, representing both the AOA and FOMA.

J. Brian Thornburg, D.O., M.S.M., FAAP ('00) was selected as one of the most innovative pediatricians in the country by *Parents Magazine* and will be featured in the magazine's November issue, along with six other pediatricians who are "making a difference." Dr. Thornburg also received a \$1,000 check to be donated to the charity of his choice—The Children's Advocacy Center of Collier County, which is a facility for victims of child and sexual abuse.

Woodwin Weeks, D.O. ('10) joined the medical staff of Colquitt Regional Medical Center in his hometown of Moultrie, Georgia, in July, and

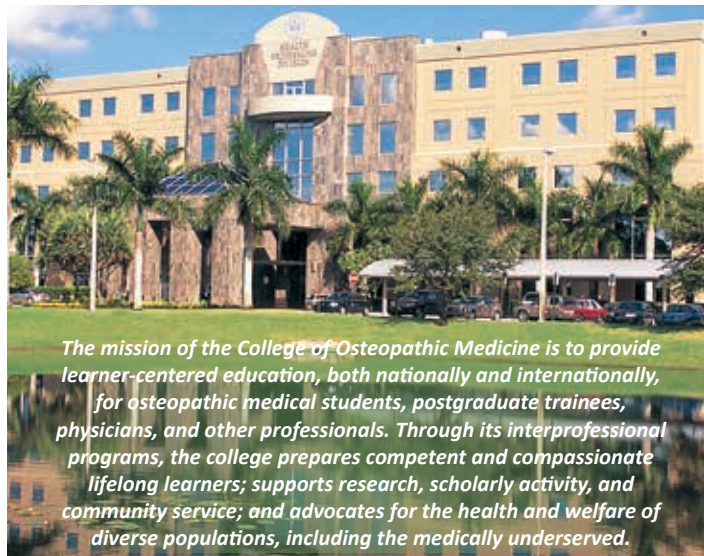
is practicing family medicine at the Kirk Clinic.



Michael C. Weiss, D.O., FAOAO ('86), who was appointed to GE Healthcare's Pain Management Advisory Board, serves as chairman of surgery and director of the Laser Spine Institute's Spine Fellowship Training Program—the world's largest provider of minimally invasive spine surgery. In addition, he recently committed a \$5,000 scholarship in his name to a current NSU-COM student.



Todd Zusmer, D.O. ('96), who was elected to the South Carolina Osteopathic Medical Society Board of Trustees in April 2013, also became president of the Edward Via College of Osteopathic Medicine (VCOM) - Carolinas Campus Faculty Senate and is serving as a member of the VCOM - Virginia Campus Faculty Senate. Dr. Zusmer currently serves as director of procedural skills at VCOM's Carolinas Campus.



The mission of the College of Osteopathic Medicine is to provide learner-centered education, both nationally and internationally, for osteopathic medical students, postgraduate trainees, physicians, and other professionals. Through its interprofessional programs, the college prepares competent and compassionate lifelong learners; supports research, scholarly activity, and community service; and advocates for the health and welfare of diverse populations, including the medically underserved.



PHYSICIAN BY DAY...BROADWAY DAZZLE BY NIGHT

Dr. Michael Jackowitz Juggles Converse Careers

By Scott Colton, B.A., APR

COM/HPD Director of Medical Communications and Public Relations

Deciding on a career track is a natural process most people undergo as they shed their childhood fantasies and begin focusing on the pursuit of a pragmatic professional path. For others, however, settling on just one occupational option is simply too restrictive for their fertile brains to endure.

Such was the case with Michael Jackowitz, D.O., CPT, a 1990 NSU-COM alumnus who resolutely crafted a way to mesh his divergent vocational passions – profound love of the theater and intense interest in medicine. “Growing up, I always had these two parallel interests,” said Dr. Jackowitz, who was born in Miami, Florida, but relocated to

Orlando in 1973 when his father accepted a job as a lawyer for the Disney Corporation.

“I acted in plays all the way through high school and played the lead in musicals such as *The Sound of Music*, *Carousel*, and *Fiddler on the Roof*,” he added. “I was heavily involved in the performing arts and simultaneously getting A’s in all my math and sciences classes. When I was nine, I produced my first play without realizing what I was doing. I convinced kids in the neighborhood to put on the show, which I wrote, directed, and videotaped.”

Even as he transitioned from high school to college, Dr. Jackowitz continued pursuing his dual-career trajec-

tory when he attended Emory University in Atlanta, Georgia. "I would be backstage waiting to go on in a show while I was studying for my organic chemistry final," he said. "Everybody seemed to think it was quite interesting that I was pursuing these diverse interests at the same time."

Looming on the immediate horizon, however, were two life-altering epiphanies that would propel his life in directions even he couldn't have portended.

Coming Out...Weighing Options

While attending Emory University, Dr. Jackowitz continued to perform in plays, believing he had the talent required to make it as an entertainer in the cutthroat world of theater. Suddenly, however, an icy dose of reality shook him to his core while concurrently providing him with a meaningful moment of clarity. "When I was younger, I had the lead role in every show. But when I got to college, that was no longer the case," said Dr. Jackowitz, who was shattered when he failed to win the lead role of Tevye in the university's production of *Fiddler on the Roof*.

Although he earned a secondary cast assignment, Dr. Jackowitz knew he had learned a very valuable lesson while working alongside the lead actor. "I realized I did not possess the acting talent needed to be successful," he admitted. "He was a real actor who was truly talented. I was good, but I knew I wasn't in the same league at all. I was really devastated, but it was a valuable lesson many people don't learn until much later in life. In retrospect, it taught me I didn't need to be on stage in order to fulfill my passion for theater."

The feelings of desolation he initially experienced were also compounded by a tumultuous inner struggle that had been simmering for years—and was about to break free. "I came out of the closet when I was in college, which occurred at a time when I was very anxious about what my life was going to be like," admitted Dr. Jackowitz, who now faced the nerve-wracking task of revealing his sexual preference to his parents. "When I was in high school and college, I thought I was the only gay person in the world. It was a different world, a different community, and a different time



Examining an X-ray at SECOM.



Enjoying a jovial SECOM moment.



Dr. Jackowitz and Daniel Radcliffe.



With Glee star Darren Criss.



Dr. Jackowitz and Brooke Shields.

back in the 1980s. My folks did not take it very well, although my dad dealt with the news better than my mom did. I was the golden child, so it went very quickly from 'Yay, Michael's coming home' to 'Oh my God, Michael's coming home.'"

Fortunately, Dr. Jackowitz's coming-out experience ultimately resulted in an extremely life-affirming outcome. After initially struggling to cope with her son's forthright disclosure, Dr. Jackowitz's mother—in a selfless show of love—relied on a combination of therapy and self-help materials to not only accept his homosexuality, but embrace it in the most extraordinary way. "My mom ended up going back to school to become a psychologist," he explained. "She has since written a book called *The Rest of the Way* based on our experiences and opened a psychology practice in Orlando that is helping gays and lesbians deal with their various issues. In fact, a significant portion of her practice involves working with parents who just found out their kids are gay."

In 1985, the future physician/producer made a fateful decision. "Once I realized I lacked the acting ability needed to make it in the business, I took a class in theater administration, which proved to be a pivotal moment for me," he stated. "I asked myself, 'Am I a premed student applying to medical school as I have been preparing for my whole life, or do I pursue a theater career?' I realized I was too scared to be in the theater world at that time because I didn't think it was a reputable career."

SECOM...Medicine...Producing

With his theater plans on hold for the foreseeable future, Dr. Jackowitz refocused his efforts on attending medical school—a process that was hastened thanks to his uncle's connections at a relatively new college in North Miami Beach. "My uncle told me about Southeastern College of Osteopathic Medicine (SECOM), which sounded really interesting," he explained. "I thought it would be great to go back home and attend medical school, so I applied to SECOM and was accepted."

The next few years would fly by in a blur for Dr. Jackowitz, whose time was consumed with activities such as attend-



SECOM GRADUATION...FIRST PRODUCING OFFICE...LONDON PREMIERE

ing classes, studying, and teaching aerobics classes. “My life during this time was very interesting because I would get up early and go to class from literally 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., four days a week,” he said. “I would then dash to Bally Total Fitness, where I would teach one or two aerobics classes. Then I’d grab a quick bite to eat and race to the library to study from around 8:00 p.m. until midnight before heading home to bed. That was my life for about two years until I began my clinical rotations.”

As graduation approached in 1990, Dr. Jackowitz remained unsure of what his ultimate choice would be when it came to selecting a specific specialty. “I really didn’t know what I wanted to do because, to me, medical school was just one big vocabulary lesson,” he explained. “I felt like I was learning a language that didn’t begin to make total sense until I was doing my one-year internship at Northlake Regional Medical Center in Atlanta, Georgia. At that stage, I realized I really enjoyed primary care because I liked the idea of being the captain of the ship in terms of dealing with medical issues, which is why I applied to Beth Israel Medical Center in New York to do my internal medicine residency training.”

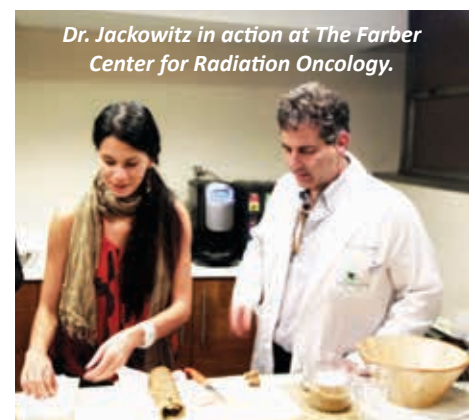
Over the previous six years, his life had been consumed with all things medical. But now that he was several years older and increasingly more self-assured, Dr. Jackowitz decided to tenuously reenter the theater realm. “It wasn’t until my second year of residency that I reintroduced myself to that world,” said Dr. Jackowitz, who completed his internal medicine residency in 1994. “I did a little research and discovered there was an organization in New York called The Directors Company, which was an organization that taught potential directors how to direct. It looked interesting, so I took the workshop and directed scenes from *Death of a Salesman*.”

In a thunderbolt of self-realization, Dr. Jackowitz immediately knew a career in directing was not where his destiny lay. “It was actually quite funny because one of the actors I had to direct was very difficult, so I definitely didn’t love the experience,” he admitted. “As I was talking to some of the people at the workshop, someone mentioned I should really consider becoming a producer instead of a director.”

Taking that advice to heart, Dr. Jackowitz then attended an intensive weekend workshop about producing at the Commercial Theater Institute, which he loved. “I remember buying a

bottle of champagne and going back to The Directors Company to thank the artistic director for turning me on to all of this,” he said. “While I was there the phone rang, and it was Hal Prince, the famed Broadway director and producer, who told the artistic director he had just received funding for a new project he wanted to house at The Directors Company. He then asked if there was somebody in the artistic director’s office who could serve as a liaison to his office. The artistic director put down the phone and whispered to me, ‘Do you want to be the musical theater liaison to a Hal Prince musical theater program?’ I said, ‘SURE,’ which is how it all started.

“I ended up working with all these great actors, composers, musicians, directors, and playwrights, including Stephen Schwartz (*Wicked*), Jason Robert Brown (*Bridges of Madison County*),



“I kind of imagined all of this happening when I was young; I imagined being this guy. I don’t mean to sound cocky in any way, but I envisioned the dual life of working in the theater and being a successful doctor, which is why I’m so content.”

and Andrew Lipka (*Big Fish*) for about three years, which opened up a whole new world to me,” he added. “I got to watch how Hal Prince instructed these amazing master classes that taught young directors how to create and direct new work. It was an invaluable learning experience that would soon lead to my first producing project.”

In 1995, a year after completing his residency, Dr. Jackowitz received an enticing phone call from a producer who said, “I’m producing a new show and wondered if you were interested in being one of the producers?” Although he had yet to produce any sort of professional play at this point, Dr. Jackowitz was indeed interested.

“It was for an Off-Broadway play called *The Food Chain*, which was written by the absolutely twisted and brilliant playwright Nicky Silver,” said Dr. Jackowitz, who was working as an in-house internist at St. Joseph’s Medical Center in Stamford, Connecticut during this time. “The producer let me read the script, which made me laugh out loud, so I called her and said, ‘I am very interested, let’s talk.’ I said, ‘Listen, I have to be honest. I really don’t know how to produce a show because I have never actually done it before.’”

The producer quickly allayed his fears by saying, “Don’t worry, I will show you the ropes. I will take you under my wing, introduce you to everybody, and take you to every marketing and ad-campaign meeting.” Then came the bombshell: “All you have to do is write me a check for \$50,000 and you can be an associate producer on the show.”

Initially flummoxed by her request, Dr. Jackowitz responded honestly, saying he didn’t have \$50,000

to spare. “She then asked me the seminal question of my career, which was, ‘Can you raise \$50,000?’ I didn’t know if I could, but she gave me 48 hours to make some phone calls, so I contacted several of my doctor friends and others and told them what I wanted to do,” he explained. “I asked if they would be interested in investing \$10,000 in an Off-Broadway play, and they said yes.”

Emboldened by his fund-raising success, Dr. Jackowitz called the producer back the next day and asked how much he would have to raise to be an above-the-title producer. “With a \$50,000 investment, I was going to earn an associate producer credit,” he stated. “So I asked her how much I would have to raise to have my name listed above the title. She said \$75,000, so I replied, ‘Put me down for \$75,000.’ I ended up being an above-the-title producer in an Off-Broadway play on the first show I ever did, which was a remarkable feeling.”

To his amazement, it was the biggest hit of the Off-Broadway season and ran for about a year. “I was on cloud nine and thought, ‘Wow, I can really do this; it’s a piece of cake.’ But

when I produced my second show, I learned that not every one you produce gets an above-the-fold *New York Times* Art and Leisure Sunday feature—and that *The New York Times* doesn’t always love your show,” he added. “It closed in six weeks, and I was devastated. I learned very quickly about the two extremes involved with being a New York producer.”

Dueling Careers... Maintaining Harmony

Over the 18 years that have passed since Dr. Jackowitz produced his first professional play, he has learned how to adeptly juggle his robust theater life and his thriving medical career. But that wasn’t always the case. “Early on it was easier, especially when I was working as a house doctor (now called a hospitalist) at St. Joseph’s Medical Center,” he explained. “I had two 24-hour shifts a week, so I would work extremely hard two days a week and was then able to focus the rest of my time on my theater projects, which was ideal. But once I went into full-time practice, it became a lot harder.”

He recalled one hellish week in 2000 that required him to conjure an



Dr. Jackowitz (top row center) at the premiere of Daddy Long Legs.

ever-evolving time management crisis plan. “My internal medicine practice partner at the time had asked if I could cover the practice for a week so he could go on vacation, and I said yes, but it happened to fall on the week I was in previews for a new play,” he said. “I remember it being one of the worst weeks of my life because I had to cover my patients, his patients, the beeper, be on call—and run back and forth to the theater for a new play I was producing that was opening in a week. It really was awful because I didn’t sleep a wink that week.”

Currently, Dr. Jackowitz is working about 30 hours a week as an internist at The Farber Center for Radiation Oncology in Tribeca, New York, which he calls an ideal fit for his dual-career lifestyle. “I am not on call and work no weekends, so it has made it possible for me to do all the things I love,” he stated. “It’s a great practice that houses the most beautiful radiation facility in the world. I work with two first-class radiation oncologists who really care about the patients, and over the past few years we have created an environment where patients come first. I love what I do with this practice and love what I do with my theater projects, so it’s a really balanced world.”

Although Dr. Jackowitz has been a successful producer for quite some time, the past few years have been especially rewarding on a range of levels. In 2010, he produced the premiere of Stephen Schwartz’ first opera—*Séance on a Wet Afternoon*—at Lincoln Center. In 2011, he was one of the producers involved with the 50th anniversary revival of *How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying*, a critical and commercial smash that starred *Harry Potter*’s Daniel Radcliffe and earned eight Tony Award nominations. The year 2012 brought even more glory, which included winning the coveted Drama Desk Award in the Best Review category for his work on *The Best Is Yet to Come*.

Balancing two thriving—and time-intensive—careers for over two decades hasn’t dimmed any of Dr. Jackowitz’s boundless verve; in fact, it seems as if he’s just getting started. “I feel great,” he admitted. “I feel like I have absolutely everything. People always say to me, ‘How can you be a doctor and a producer; how do you do that?’ I have a standard answer: You have to want it really badly, and I do.”

Apparently he does, judging by the full slate of projects he’s currently involved with, including a number of shows that are sprinkled across the globe. “One of the projects is called *Daddy Long Legs*, which is touring around the United States and across the world. It’s exciting because we’re actually in talks to bring it to Broadway next year,” said Dr. Jackowitz, who resides in Connecticut with Shawn, his husband of 18 years. “I’m also working with Broadway Across America on a new musical next year called *Tuck Everlasting*, which will be my next big project.”

Because he’s so passionate about what he does, Dr. Jackowitz formed

a company called Witz End Productions last year with a New York theater producer named Marvin Kahan and his former SECOM roommate and fellow 1990 alumnus, Jeffrey Grove, D.O. “The company is helping me take my vision to the next level,” he explained. “Witz End is giving me the opportunity to option my own properties and be the lead producer on these projects.”

With a life that seems to be in a state of perpetual motion, Dr. Jackowitz rarely takes the time to stop and reflect on all he’s accomplished. However, he candidly reveals his thoughts on a life he feels was preordained from birth. “I kind of imagined all of this happening when I was young; I imagined being this guy,” he admitted. “I don’t mean to sound cocky in any way, but I envisioned the dual life of working in the theater and being a successful doctor, which is why I’m so content. Sometimes, though, when I walk through Times Square, I remember what it felt like to walk that block as a tourist going to see shows...thrilling. And it still is.”

Dealing with the Celebrity Factor



Working with A-list celebrities may seem like a snazzy way to make a living—and it usually is. Yet even a cool customer like Dr. Jackowitz admits to being star struck, especially when he launched his producing career. “When I worked on my first play, *The Food Chain*, one of the lead producers said, ‘Michael, you’re too excited about the star factor. You’re going to be their boss, so you have to learn how to be their boss.’ It was a valuable lesson, and now I look at it in a different way,” he explained.

According to Dr. Jackowitz, his most enjoyable celebrity experience occurred when he worked with Daniel Radcliffe on *How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying*. “Daniel was a joy to work with because he’s an absolute professional in every way,” he said. “By the second day of rehearsal, he already knew everybody’s name. He also was the first one to arrive and the last to leave. He set the production’s tone, which was a wonderful experience because everyone from the top down mimicked his commitment. He was really amazing.”

Then there is the opposite extreme—the hard-to-please actor. “I have worked with some real divas in my time,” Dr. Jackowitz mused. “They definitely keep you on your toes.”

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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THREE-PEAT! NSU-COM Wins Deans' Challenge Cup at FSACOFP Convention



NSU-COM alumni joined faculty members, students, and guests at the 33rd Annual Florida Society of American College of Osteopathic Family Physicians (FSACOFP) Convention held July 31-August 4 in Orlando. Throughout the symposium, the Office of Alumni Affairs' exhibit booth offered information for visitors and served as a perfect meeting spot for students and alumni.

One of the most popular events during the convention is the annual Deans' Challenge Cup, which is a fun but fierce competition featuring Lake Erie College of Osteopathic Medicine and NSU-COM students. Some of the activities involved include participation in the yearly golf tournament, a sunrise fun run/walk, and attendance at the conference sessions. Events are held daily, with points being awarded for participation and competition scores. For the third consecutive year, NSU-COM emerged as the proud victor.

Other activities included a student bus trip to City Place at Universal Studios, which was sponsored by the NSU-COM Alumni Association, and an alumni/student reception that attracted about 85 attendees.

Proud D.O. Equipped with Osteopathic Fairy Dust

By Tracy Romanello, D.O., 2011 Alumna – Family Medicine Resident at Lakeside Medical Center



Yes, I admit it. I had (regrettably) undervalued a few of the tools I was given in medical school, mostly those applying to the art and science of osteopathic manipulative medicine (OMM). As shameful as it is for a D.O. to admit, OMM was a medical course I endured out of pure necessity. Although I did very well on written and practical exams, these were poor indicators of my true level of interest in the subject matter and overall confidence in my abilities.

To say it gently, I was less than completely enamored with osteopathic principles and practice. I still vividly remember one Thursday afternoon looking around the OMM Lab at my fellow students, many desperately trying to palpate a cranial rhythm impulse. Eyes closed, brows furrowed, they would say, “I think I feel flexion! Nope, lost it.”

It seemed to me there were two groups of students – the OMM devotees and the non devotees. The devotees always looked thrilled to be in OMM Lab, armed with enthusiastic smiles, gifted hands, and what I imagined to be some type of OMM *fairy dust* – a sprinkle of something magical that reinforced their OMM special powers. In contrast, we skeptical non devotees raised eyebrows, shrugged shoulders, and fudged our way through lab muttering terms like “ropy” or “boggy” at instructors. I had difficulties fully accepting the notion that I could aid or even cure patients through the use of my hands, plus, I lacked the finesse that came effortlessly to a select few of my peers.

I graduated in 2011, anxious to start the exciting profession of medicine as a family medicine resident at Lakeside Medical Center, and ready to leave the OMM days behind, as many clinicians I have shadowed over the years ultimately do. It didn’t take very long into my residency for me to realize that OMM would linger – evasive and sometimes even downright annoying – appearing and reappearing in lectures, board reviews, and conferences.

In July 2013, I had the opportunity to attend a mission trip to Haiti with the Gaskov Clerge Foundation, a trip that changed my life both personally and professionally. I fell madly in love with Haiti, almost instantly, as I first glimpsed the island from my small window seat on the airplane. There is something special, and in a way intangible, about the beauty of the people and the richness of the culture. I was blown away by how with so little resources, the people of Haiti make do.

On day one of work, the physicians were given a short list of pharmacy items and sent off with pats on the shoulder and smiles of encouragement to start making a difference. I saw patient after patient complaining of severe musculoskeletal issues. Never before had I witnessed so much neck and low-back pain. I kept frantically searching my list of medications for answers, only to find typed in plain black and white, the response: Ibuprofen and Acetaminophen. I knew I could and would not short-change these people, not with eyes softly pleading for any relief and faces edged with grimace by simple acts like





Proud OMM
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bending and walking. So there you have it. On day one of work is when I stepped out on the proverbial limb and reached deep into my pockets for what I hoped would be the OMM *fairy dust*.

My fellow resident and D.O. comrade, Dr. Sabine Elisee ('11), and our supervising attending, Dr. Marie Florent-Carre ('04), and I had been seeing patients on something similar to a massage table we used for writing notes and performing physical exams. I looked over at Sabine, also studying the medication list like it held some lost secret or a map to hidden treasure, and we agreed to abandon the drugs and start performing OMM wholeheartedly.

We could not have predicted how in that moment we were on the verge of a monumental development. What started off as one or two techniques grew by the end of the trip to a standalone small consulting practice, with actual referrals from other physicians and a line of patients specifically requesting OMM. The word on the streets was out; there were "special doctors" visiting Haiti that could make pain disappear without medication. It was amazing how much I actually remembered from a class I thought I had only peripherally tuned into, and how effortless performing OMM was once I actually ventured to begin.

Our M.D. colleagues working alongside us looked a lot like the non devotees from class, at least at first. It was hard to deny the

success our OMM achieved. Seeing the smiles on the patients' faces, watching a limp improve, or a shoulder with increased range of motion was all the encouragement we needed to invest more time and techniques. It was not until day four that I realized the significance of what we had established, as our M.D. counterparts formed lines and argued over who was next for treatment from fellow resident Omar Mubaidin, D.O. ('11) once all the patients were seen.

Not only was I changed by those days, I believe those around me were as well. Long-term members of the Gas-kov Clerge Foundation that have been traveling to Haiti for years were buzzing about investing in OMM tables and insisting that D.O.s always attend the mission trip going forward. Never had I felt better equipped or prouder to be a D.O. We knew we had stirred the pot, so to speak, when an M.D. attending said this about her D.O. colleague: "I can't wait to go back to ask him why he hasn't been doing OMM on our patients. That's a shame."

Just as the trip was closing and we were traveling back to the airport on an over-packed, cramped bus flying around curves and bouncing up and down on gravel roads rivaling even the best rollercoaster ride, my attending developed severe motion sickness. Hmm, why not stick with what works? I started OA decompression and myofascial release within the tight confines of the bus, all to the ooh's and aah's of fellow passengers, and now many converted devotees who thought I could fix just about anything with the right technique.

Reflecting back, I do realize what occurred in Haiti was extraordinary, both in time and in circumstance. Today's challenge is looking for ways to keep the magic alive here on U.S. soil and to avoid reverting back to my hoary ways of thinking. Finding ways to creatively incorporate OMM into today's clinical practice, which is so heavily dictated by time constraints and burdened with administrative duties, will be an ongoing challenge. I'm not too concerned, though: The OMM *fairy dust* is powerful.





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2014 Calendar of Events

February 7-8, 2014

Seventh Annual Interprofessional Geriatrics Training Institute

NSU Main Campus

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

51st Annual ACOFP Convention and Scientific Seminars

Philadelphia Marriott Downtown – Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Alumni Reception: TBD

April 2014

17th Annual NSU-COM Alumni Reunion and CME Weekend