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# COM Outlook Fall 2011

College of Osteopathic Medicine

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Fall 2011

# COM Outlook

Nova Southeastern University College of Osteopathic Medicine

**GREAT  
News for  
Graduate  
Medical  
Education!**

**Florida Hospitals Gain Additional  
Residency Positions, Including  
NSU-COM Affiliates**



## Dean's Message

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

I'm proud to report that the entering class of 2011 was selected from the largest applicant pool we've ever had, which encompassed 4,817 primary AACOMAS applications and 3,628 secondary applications for our 230 student slots. In fact, we're already on track to surpass these figures in 2012 as we're already running nine percent ahead of last year's pace as of August 5, with over 2,500 submitted primary applications.

Although there are many challenges facing the health care industry, the future is bright when it comes to medicine. Because there is a significant shortage of physicians in all specialties, with primary care being the most dramatic, the opportunities available to current medical students once they graduate and enter the discipline of their choice should be better than they've ever been.

When I attended our White Coat Ceremony in August, it was stirring to see the energy and excitement the incoming students exhibited. It reminded me of when I went to medical school, and how thrilled I was to see my dream beginning to come to fruition. However, when I addressed the incoming students during the White Coat Ceremony, I discussed the privilege they had of attending medical school; not the right to attend it. It's an important distinction because students don't have the right to a medical school education. Rather, it's a privilege that's granted by society, with the responsibility of the school being to ensure that all its graduates are prepared to care for their patients competently—and with dignity and compassion.

As I stated, it's a privilege to be able to go to medical school, to participate in a residency program, and to ultimately practice medicine. Unlike many other careers, all these privileges can be withdrawn if a physician-in-training or practicing physician fails to demonstrate the various skills or behaviors needed to effectively care for a patient. That's an important lesson for all medical students to learn early on in their education. This is not a contract between a customer and a vendor; it's a contract to provide an education, of which the student has the privilege of participating in—and the responsibility to do it well.

Although it's important for the incoming students to understand their responsibilities and the restrictive conditions that apply when it comes to pursuing such a noble profession, it's equally important for us as faculty members and administrators to recognize their commitment and the sacrifices they are making to serve society. The desire and effort these students demonstrate while simply pursuing a chance to attend medical school are both commendable and exhaustive.

Consider the numerous steps they have to undertake just to get into medical school, which include taking the proper prerequisites and obtaining the required grades in their undergraduate college education, earning a competitive MCAT score, preparing for onsite interviews, and absorbing the often-exorbitant financial costs that accompany these interviews, such as airfare to and from the school and hotel stays. After all this, those fortunate enough to earn the privilege of being accepted into medical school will dedicate the next four years of their lives to the rigorous educational process—and graduate knowing they have a significant amount of loan debt to repay.

That's why it's important to all people, for the sake of their own health in regard to the quality of care that can be rendered by future physicians, to ensure the government continues to support residency programs while also ensuring that medical school loan programs are not punitive, such as having the loan interest accumulate from their first year of medical school to the completion of their residencies.

It is wrong to create additional and unnecessary obstacles for someone trying to achieve a medical school education, which is why we work so hard here at NSU's College of Osteopathic Medicine to make certain we don't extinguish the enthusiasm they display as incoming students. In my opinion, it's extremely counterproductive to purposely squelch that excitement. We should feed and nurture it so it becomes an even greater part of who that medical student is.

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### NOVA SOUTHEASTERN UNIVERSITY

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### COLLEGE OF OSTEOPATHIC MEDICINE

**Anthony J. Silvagni, D.O., Pharm.D., M.Sc.**  
Dean

### EDITOR-IN-CHIEF AND GRAPHIC DESIGNER

**Scott Colton, B.A., APR**  
Director of Medical Communications

### EDITORIAL CONTACT

**Scott Colton**  
(954) 262-5147 (phone)  
(954) 262-3887 (fax)  
[scottc@nova.edu](mailto:scottc@nova.edu)

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In a world filled with mysteries, it's quite interesting to unearth the way careers are chosen. For some, the professional path is often predestined from birth, such as when physicians begat physicians and lawyers begat lawyers. Sometimes, however, heritage has nothing to do with the profession a person pursues.

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When a promising career as an offensive linesman in the National Football League was cut short due to injury, Dr. Claude Jones resurrected himself in a most improbable way by becoming an esteemed osteopathic physician.

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Nova Southeastern University is accredited by the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (1866 Southern Lane, Decatur, Georgia, 30033-4097; telephone number: 404-679-4501) to award associate's, bachelor's, master's, educational specialist, and doctoral degrees.

Nova Southeastern University admits students of any race, color, sex, age, nondisqualifying disability, religion or creed, sexual orientation, or national or ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school, and does not discriminate in administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship and loan programs, and athletic and other school-administered programs.





## HPD Chancellor's Communiqué



Fred Lippman, R.Ph., Ed.D.

When the new academic year commenced for the various colleges comprising the Health Professions Division this past summer, I experienced a true sense of happiness when I attended the numerous orientation and white coat ceremonies and saw all the bright new faces in front of me that will one day be providing health care services throughout the United States and across the globe.

During these various ceremonies, the qualities that struck me most about the incoming students were their communicative capabilities and the dramatic desire they exhibited in regard to becoming health care professionals. I am proud to report that this tangible commitment to their education and future careers was evidenced throughout our various HPD colleges and programs during these orientation exercises.

I know how committed they are based on the conversations I've had with them. I've also spoken with many of their parents and loved ones, who offered laudatory words about the various orientation and white coat ceremonies they attended and the way they were carried out with dignity. For most of the attendees, it was their first view of what we at the NSU Health Professions Division believe professional attitude is all about. However, I also saw in the eyes of the student body, and particularly their parents and significant others, what I view as the pressures created by the economic morass that is so prevalent in the United States today.

That's why I'm happy to report that Nova Southeastern University and its Health Professions Division are in fine fiscal shape. I've offered the following assessment to many of the people who have spoken to me about NSU, which is that thanks to the administration of this university, from the board of trustees and president and CEO to the deans and the multiple people in charge of creating and overseeing the budgets, we are a finely-tuned economic engine.

Like any large university or business entity, we have our share of inherent problems. But in a state and nation dealing with a prolonged economic downturn that is about to enter its fourth year, it's comforting to know NSU is strong and stable. The reason I'm focusing on these issues is because they speak to the tremendous commitment that has been showcased at all university levels.

During a recent NSU President's Council meeting, I listened to Dr. George Hanbury communicate the fact that because of the efforts of the various deans, vice presidents, administrators, and functionaries that are involved with the operation of the university, we have managed to remain fiscally prudent. As a result, we are successfully surviving the economic downturn and have been able to offer assurance to all our stakeholders—from staff and faculty members to the people we serve,

our students—that we are a very secure, economically fit institution. Whether we're administrators or faculty and staff members, the bottom line is we are here to serve the needs of our educational partners, who happen to be our students.

Based on the topics I just discussed, it's comforting to know we have the strength, resolve, and resources to provide the students with the best education possible. It's also a privilege to know we are providing them with as much knowledge and mentorship as we possibly can through a group of dedicated faculty and staff members.

Just as it is our goal to make our students feel nurtured and safe, the same is true for our faculty and staff members, who should also feel "safe" in this very large economic not-for-profit venture called Nova Southeastern University that is being directed by the type of individuals who are leading it—namely our exceptional executive administration and forward-thinking board of trustees.

### **White Coat Ceremony: Class of 2015 Joins Osteopathic Family**

*On August 7, the class of 2015 was officially welcomed into the osteopathic profession at the 31<sup>st</sup> Annual White Coat Ceremony, which was held at NSU's University Center. For the 230-plus students comprising the class of 2015, the White Coat Ceremony served as an auspicious experience that officially marked their entry into the medical profession.*

*In the presence of family, guests, and faculty members, the students were welcomed into the medical community by leaders of the osteopathic profession and ceremonially "cloaked" with their white coats. By establishing this meaningful ritual at the beginning of medical school, the intent is to make students aware of their responsibilities from the first day of training and convey the message that doctors should "care" as well as "cure."*



*OMS-II students enjoy a moment of levity during the White Coat Ceremony.*



# Master's Program in Disaster and Emergency Preparedness Established

*NSU-COM adds progressive academic offering that provides degree tracks in maritime safety, cyber security, law enforcement / criminal justice, and public health*

**O**n August 2, NSU-COM received university approval to establish its Master of Science in Disaster and Emergency Preparedness 36 credit-hour degree program, which is anticipated to commence in January 2012.

The program content, which will be offered in an all-online format, will incorporate interactive video and include an onsite meeting at the beginning of the students' enrollment. An additional onsite meeting will be coordinated near the program's conclusion to allow students to present their selected track practicum project and have it evaluated.

"The new M.S. in Disaster and Emergency Preparedness degree is the only such interdisciplinary graduate-level program of its kind in Florida," said Cecilia Rokusek, Ed.D., R.D., professor of family medicine/public health and executive director of education, planning, and research. "This new degree will help to prepare future leaders in one of the world's fastest-growing job fields. It is expected that the need for emergency preparedness leaders at the local, state, national, and international levels will continue to grow through 2030.

"This new and emerging academic discipline is well suited for Nova given the leadership role in curriculum development that the Institute for Disaster and Emergency Preparedness within the College of Osteopathic Medicine has demonstrated over the past 10 years," she added. "The program has outstanding faculty members from the college, the university at large, and across the United States. This innovative hybrid online degree requires that students also integrate a required on-campus learning component to bring them together and to also better connect them to the university and community."

The new degree 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 emergency and disaster preparedness. The degree will allow students from a variety of disciplines to specialize in one of several tracks, which is why a community research practicum at the local, state, federal, or international level will be a key component of the program. Four degree tracks are offered: maritime safety and security, cyber security, law enforcement/criminal justice, and public health. In addition to the required biostatistics course and selected track practicum, students can choose from an extensive mix of core and elective courses that includes:



- *Executive Leadership and Administration*
- *Security Management in a Global Society*
- *Bioterrorism and All-Hazards Preparedness*
- *Agro-Terrorism and Food System Disasters*
- *Risk Assessment and Mitigation*
- *Weapons of Mass Threat and Communicable Diseases*
- *Psychosocial Dimensions of Disaster*
- *Risk and Crisis Communications*
- *Emergency Preparedness for Special Needs Populations*
- *Maritime Safety and Security Leadership*
- *Telecommunications and Computer Networking*
- *Information Security Management*
- *Interagency Disaster Communication*
- *Community Disaster Preparedness*
- *Environmental and Occupational Health*
- *Epidemiological and Occupational Health*

Graduates will develop skills in leadership as well as disaster and emergency management and will be prepared to become leaders in the field of disaster and emergency preparedness in both the government and private sectors.

For additional information, please contact Kelley Davis, Ph.D., academic program director, at (954) 262-1663 or Maria Alonso, program administrator for the Institute for Disaster and Emergency Preparedness, at (954) 262-1850.

# Timely CPR Training Helps NSU Physician Assistant Student Save Grandfather's Life

Call it divine intervention or simple synchronicity. How else do you explain the circumstances surrounding the lifesaving procedure NSU physician assistant student Michelle Casares was able to perform on her grandfather just days after completing her Advanced Cardiac Life Support (ACLS) training through NSU-COM's Department of Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Education and Training?

What began as a routine July morning quickly turned dire when her grandfather, who has a history of heart problems, suddenly shut his eyes and stopped speaking while she was preparing breakfast. "He didn't go fully unconscious at first," stated Casares in an interview she gave to the Key Biscayne newspaper *The Islander News*.

Instinctively, Casares dialed 911. But as she was receiving instructions from the dispatcher, her grandfather collapsed. Calling on the ACLS training she had just learned in class, she sprang into action. "You think you wouldn't be able to do

it—that you'd get emotional and freak out," explained Casares of performing a life-saving CPR procedure on a loved one. "The truth is you're full of adrenaline. You utilize your adrenaline and training, and you just act."

Fortunately, Casares' story has a happy ending. Her resuscitation attempts proved successful, and her grandfather made a quick and full recovery. "He was a textbook cardiac arrest, but had I not had that training just the week before, I may not have been able to pick up on it so fast," she said. "I may not even have recognized it as cardiac arrest."

When news of Casares' medical heroics reached Kevin Nugent, REMT-P, program director of the Department of EMS Education and Training, he was understandably proud that the training she received through his department helped save a life. "Although incidents like this have been rare, they are the driving force that keep me so excited about teaching such skills to indi-

viduals," Nugent stated. "That's why I live by the motto, 'What you learn today may save someone's life.'"



Michelle Casares with her grateful grandfather, Ram Melwani.

## OMS-III Emily Young Wins AOA Presidential Memorial Leadership Award



In July, OMS-III Emily Young, M.A.T., received one of the American Osteopathic Association's (AOA) most prestigious student awards when she was named the

recipient of the AOA Presidential Memorial Leadership Award. The accolade, which is accompanied by a \$5,000 cash award, honors and recognizes an osteopathic medical student who is committed to the principles of osteopathic medicine and who has made great strides toward becoming one of the top leaders within the osteopathic profession.

In addition to serving as an NSU-COM predoctoral research fellow, Young has amassed an impressive extracurricular resume that includes creating a 35-page Preparing for the Boards packet and presenting it to over 200 first- and second-year medical students to help them prepare for their exam studies.

She also formed and led a coalition of student leaders to partner with the March of Dimes and bring three educational events to NSU and served as the NSU Medical Students for Choice chapter

student coordinator, increasing membership by over 300 percent from the previous year. She also designed a new medical records system for the Lutheran Services of Florida's Lippman Youth Shelter and trained each of the 20 staff members to use the system. Because of her humanitarian efforts, the shelter was able to increase efficiency and avoid being shut down.

Young will officially receive her award in late October during the AOA's 116<sup>th</sup> Osteopathic Medical Conference and Exposition, which will take place in Orlando, Florida.

In addition, she will travel to Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, in December to present her research fellowship project with the Centers for Disease Control entitled "Lymphatic Filariasis: Treating a Neglected Tropical Disease in the United States" and accept the highly competitive American Society of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene's 2011 Annual Meeting Travel Award.



## **Florida Hospitals Gain Additional Residency Positions, Including NSU-COM Affiliates**

Thanks to legislation drafted by U.S. senators Bill Nelson of Florida and Harry Reid of Nevada and approved by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS), 16 Florida hospitals—including several that are members of NSU-COM’s Consortium for Excellence in Medical Education (CEME)—are gaining 325 new medical residency positions effective July 1, 2012.

According to Senator Nelson, whose legislation enabled the hiring of the extra residents, Florida was awarded more positions than any other state in the country.

The CMS, which is a branch of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, redistributed Medicare funding for residency slots to areas where physicians are most needed. Each teaching hospital has a cap on the number of residents it can claim for Medicare funding. Consequently, since some hospitals around the country had been operating under their cap and funding was going unused, even as states like Florida suffered from severe physician shortages, the redistribution legislation was enacted. While 16 Florida hospitals gained slots, about a half dozen saw some of their positions eliminated.

Four of the 16 Florida hospitals receiving additional residency spots are NSU-COM CEME partners: Broward General Medical Center in Fort Lauderdale (46 new positions), Palmetto General Hospital in Hialeah (57 new positions), Miami Children’s Hospital in Miami Beach (14 new positions), and Mount Sinai Medical Center in Miami (1 new position).

“Florida desperately needs more doctors,” explained Senator Nelson. “This will help patients who must go to the emergency room, and it will allow hospitals in Florida to continue to train some of the best and brightest. By expanding the number of physician residency training positions, it will help alleviate physician shortages in Florida because physicians tend to remain in areas where they complete their training.”

According to Joseph De Gaetano, D.O., M.S. Ed, FAAFP, FACOFP, NSU-COM associate dean for clinical curriculum and graduate medical education, “Our efforts in assisting our affiliated hospitals to attain

these newly funded positions will work to expand osteopathic graduate medical education opportunities not only for NSU-COM students but osteopathic medical students nationally.”

Hospitals from across the United States applied for 1,354 slots available nationwide. The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services evaluated each application based on detailed criteria such as whether or not a hospital would use the slot, whether the hospital had a rural training system, if the hospital predominantly serves Medicare patients, and whether residents focus on primary care. Below are the Florida hospitals that gained slots:

<b>Hospital</b>	<b>City</b>	<b>Slots</b>
Tallahassee Memorial	Tallahassee	78
Florida Hospital	Orlando	69
<b>Palmetto General</b>	<b>Hialeah</b>	<b>57</b>
<b>Broward General</b>	<b>Fort Lauderdale</b>	<b>46</b>
Halifax Med. Center	Daytona Beach	18
Wellington Regional	West Palm Beach	18
Jackson Memorial	Miami	15
CCF Hospital	Weston	15
Northside Hospital	St. Petersburg	14
<b>Miami Children’s</b>	<b>Miami</b>	<b>14</b>
Mayo Clinic Florida	Jacksonville	11
Orlando Health	Orlando	9
University of Miami	Miami	7
Sacred Heart	Pensacola	6
<b>Mount Sinai</b>	<b>Miami Beach</b>	<b>1</b>
University of Miami Hospital/Clinics	Miami	1



## Anderson, Burns Academical Societies Tie for First-Place Honors

When it came to points accrued at the conclusion of the first year of the Foundations and Applications of Clinical Reasoning course in May 2011, two academical societies stood above the rest: William G. Anderson, D.O., and Louisa Burns, D.O.

As part of the course, the first-year students participated in interactive activities within their societies and received points for these sessions, which were awarded based on the activity involved. The societies earned points by being the first to complete a crossword puzzle related to a medical condition, provide correct answers to review questions, or supply the appropriate responses to *Jeopardy*-style questions.

To congratulate the winning societies and showcase appreciation for their hard work and accomplishments, a pizza party was coordinated in early September. “We would like to express our sincerest gratitude to our colleagues in the College of Medical Sciences as well as the College of Osteopathic Medicine,” said course directors Hilda De



Burns Society

Gaetano, D.O., FACOP, FAAP, associate professor of pediatrics, and Jill Ross, D.O., assistant professor of family medicine. “It truly was a collaborative effort that made the course such a success.”

## OMS-IV Lindsay LaCorte Inducted into Omega Beta Iota



OMS-IV Lindsay LaCorte was inducted into Omega Beta Iota, the national osteopathic political action honor society,

during the organization’s annual induction ceremony held in conjunction with the AOA’s D.O. Day on the Hill event in Washington, D.C., in April.

Omega Beta Iota was founded in 2007 to emphasize the importance of the work osteopathic medical students and physicians do for the U.S. political system. Its goal is to provide a level of prestigious distinction as a reward for the political initiative and involvement of osteopathic medical students and professionals.

Osteopathic physicians, medical students, and supporters have been politically active since the profession’s inception. “As present and future osteopathic physicians, we benefit from their accomplishments, and must make

a conscious effort to appreciate the dedication of time and effort made by early osteopathic physicians by remaining politically active,” LaCorte explained. “Our political battles as members of the osteopathic profession remain unfinished. We are currently engaged in important struggles for improved health care for all Americans, proper physician reimbursements, and international recognition of the osteopathic profession.”

For details regarding membership, please contact LaCorte at [llacorte@nova.edu](mailto:llacorte@nova.edu), Christopher Perry, Omega Beta Iota national director, at [perry.christopher.m@gmail.com](mailto:perry.christopher.m@gmail.com), or Phil Eskew, Omega Beta Iota national membership chair, at [politicalaffairs@studentdo.com](mailto:politicalaffairs@studentdo.com).

## Health Professions Division Library Adds Global Health Database



The Health Professions Division (HPD) Library now subscribes to a new electronic database called Global Health, which is the only bibliographic, abstracting, and indexing database dedicated to public health research and practice.

The database indexes over 5,000 journals, plus reports, books, and conferences, and contains over 1.2 million scientific records from 1973 to the present. Publications from over 158 countries in 50 languages are abstracted, and all relevant non-English language papers are translated to give access to research not available through any other database.

The database’s open serials policy and coverage of international and grey literature means that 60 percent of the material contained in Global Health is unique to the database. Everything from proceedings, patents, theses, electronic-only publications, and other difficult-to-obtain sources are included. The Global Health link can be found on the HPD Library Database list in the OVID portal, which also has MANTIS (comprehensive citations and abstracts from all peer-reviewed osteopathic journals).

## Lakeside Medical Center Welcomes New Family Medicine Residents



Pictured at the June 27 reception (from left) are: Nikerson Geneve, D.O., family medicine residency program director and director of medical education for Lakeside Medical Center; Dr. Anthony J. Silvagni; Ronald J. Wiewora, M.D., M.P.H., interim chief executive officer and chief medical officer for the Health Care District of Palm Beach County; Effie C. Grear, Ed.D., chair of the Glades Healthcare Foundation Board of Directors and commissioner of the Health Care District of Palm Beach County Board of Directors; and Dr. James Howell. (Photo courtesy of John Ricksen Photography.)

Lakeside Medical Center in Belle Glade, Florida, which is a member of NSU-COM's Consortium for Excellence in Medical Education, welcomed 10 residents from across the country to its new family medicine residency program at a reception held at the hospital on June 27. Two 2011 NSU-COM graduates are participating in the Lakeside Medical Center Family Medicine Residency Program: Omar Mubaidin, D.O., and Tracy Romanello, D.O.

Lakeside Medical Center was accredited earlier this year by the American Osteopathic Association to offer the new program at a time when Palm Beach County, and particularly the rural area of the county known as the "Glades," is seeing a critical shortage of primary care physicians. The program is funded by a \$900,000 grant from Florida's Agency for Health Care Administration and will train 15 residents over three years.

Lakeside Medical Center, Palm Beach County's only public hospital,

is a 70-bed, all-private-room facility owned and operated by the Health Care District of Palm Beach County. James Howell, M.D., M.P.H., NSU-COM professor of public health and assistant dean of professional relations, who chairs the board that governs Lakeside Medical Center, shared the vision of the new residency program as another step in the hospital's mission to be the source of medical care in the Glades.

The Lakeside Family Medicine Residency Program curriculum includes rotations in emergency medicine, critical care, community medicine, general surgery, OB/GYN, and pediatrics. While Lakeside Medical Center serves as the primary clinical training site, the program partners with academic and community organizations, including Nova Southeastern University, the Palm Beach County Health Department, Florida Community Health Centers, and the West Palm Beach Veterans Affairs Medical Center.

## NEWS BRIEFS

During the **NSU-COM Strategic Planning Retreat** held in June, the college's mission statement was revised as follows: *The mission of the College of Osteopathic Medicine is to provide learner-centered education, both nationally and internationally, for osteopathic medical students, postgraduate trainees, 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.*

In July, **Nova Southeastern University** was rated as one of the top 20 colleges in the nation committed to community service by *BestCollegesOnline*, coming in at number 18. "It's great to be recognized for all the service we do in the community," said NSU President George L. Hanbury II, Ph.D. "We participate in myriad community service projects ranging from protecting local marine life and hosting health care assessments to hosting nonprofit fund-raising walks and runs on our main campus."

The college recently created the **Division of Cardiothoracic Surgery**, which is housed within the Department of Surgery. Romauldo J. Segurola, Jr., M.D., clinical assistant professor of surgery, will serve as division chair under the direction of David Thomas, M.D., J.D., professor and chair of the Department of Surgery.

**NSU-COM** is one of just three medical schools in the nation to offer both American Osteopathic Association (AOA) and American Medical Association (AMA) continuing medical education (CME) program credits to its faculty members, alumni, and community physicians. The college's CME programs are overseen by the NSU Health Professions Division's Office of Continuing Medical Education, which is dually accredited by both the AOA and AMA. The HPD Office of Continuing Medical Education, together with its Council on Continuing Medical Education, carefully monitors the planning, implementation, and evaluation of all CME program-granted accreditation. NSU-HPD is also the only dually accredited provider nationwide to offer joint sponsorship to non-accredited sponsors.

The college's **Master of Science in Biomedical Informatics** program continues to experience significant growth in enrollment numbers. In 2009, 59 students were enrolled in the program; as of September 6, 2011, the number had mushroomed to 153.



## NEWS BRIEFS



**Marcelino Oliva, Jr., D.O.**, who served as NSU-COM's ombudsman and as a longtime member of the NSU Health Professions Division Board of Governors, passed away in July following a yearlong battle with multiple myeloma. During his distinguished career, Dr. Oliva worked tirelessly to help make osteopathic medicine recognized as a premier profession in Florida and throughout the United States. Some of his career highlights include serving as president of the Florida Osteopathic Medical Association in 1974-75 and president of the American Osteopathic Association in 1988.

**OMS-II Britani Martinez**, who serves as a Region V director of the American Medical Student Association, received the Legacy of Leadership Award, which recognizes outstanding student leaders for their excellent communication, innovation, and professional integrity.

**OMS-IV Mara Bozza** was recognized by the American Osteopathic Foundation (AOF) Board of Directors with a \$2,000 Welch Scholars Grant, which is presented annually to students who were selected by their colleges and approved by the American Osteopathic Foundation. Students are chosen based on their financial need, academic achievement, participation in extracurricular activities, and commitment to osteopathic medicine.

**Carrie Jo Prather, D.O.**, who recently completed her internal medicine residency training through the NSU-COM/Palmetto General Hospital Internal Medicine Residency Program in Hialeah, Florida, was spotlighted in an article entitled "Young Hospitalists Say 'No Way' to Office Practice" in a recent issue of *Elsevier Global Medical News*.

The college's **Office of Education, Planning, and Research** has a newly redesigned Web page outlining the courses offered and programs available through its various project areas. The information can be accessed at [www.nova.edu/idep/](http://www.nova.edu/idep/).



**OMS-II Holly Munson** was awarded a \$1,000 scholarship during the Broward Coalition on Aging 2011 Scholarship and Wings of Angels Ceremony held July 14. Munson, who received the award based on her devotion and passion for working with the elderly, has displayed her dedication through multiple acts of community service and advocacy for the elderly as well as through her previous employment as a certified nursing assistant within a skilled nursing facility.

## Lippmann, Westafer Receive Inaugural Morris Public Health Scholarships



OMS-II Carisa Lippmann (*left*) and OMS-III Lauren Westafer (*bottom left*) were the inaugural recipients of two new annual public health scholarships

bestowed to NSU-COM students thanks to the generosity of Marie Morris—the widow of Morton Morris, D.O., J.D., FAOAO, who served as executive dean for professional



affairs at the NSU Health Professions Division prior to his death in May 2008.

Westafer received the Judy Mor-

ris, M.D., Scholarship in Public Health, which is accompanied by a \$500 cash award. To be eligible for the scholarship, nominees must be NSU-COM students or have already achieved their D.O. degree, showcase high academic achievement, be currently enrolled in the college's Master of Public Health Program, and demonstrate financial need. The Judy Morris, M.D., Scholarship in Public Health is being funded through a \$25,000 endowment.

Lippmann was awarded the Morton Morris, D.O., J.D., Scholarship in Public Health, which is accompanied by a \$1,000 cash allocation. Eligibility criteria are similar to the aforementioned scholarship. The Morton Morris, D.O., J.D., Scholarship in Public Health is being funded through a \$36,484 endowment.

## NSU-COM Launches Critical Care Fellowship at Palmetto General



The College of Osteopathic Medicine, in collaboration with Palmetto General Hospital in Hialeah, has launched a new critical care fellowship. The two-year program, officially named the NSU-COM/Palmetto General Hospital Critical Care Fellowship, has been ap-

proved by the American Osteopathic Association for two positions and will commence on July 1, 2012. Alex Morizio, M.D., has been appointed the founding program director.

"This is an important new program that will help serve the critical care needs of South

Florida and beyond with culturally competent and caring physician experts," said Robert Hasty, D.O., FACOI, assistant professor of internal medicine and director of the NSU-COM Internal Medicine Residency Program at Palmetto General Hospital.



## **PEEDS Program Receives March of Dimes Support**

*By OMS-II Angelina Somoracki and OMS-III Emily Young*

**F**lorida is a state that stands out for many reasons—the sunshine, the delicious oranges, the white beaches—and for its higher-than-national rate of premature and preterm births. The anticipated rate of premature or preterm births, according to Healthy People 2010, is 7.6 percent of all live births. Due to many causes, such as a lack of prenatal care and the popularity of elective cesarean sections, 13.8 percent of live births in Florida are premature or preterm (14.1 percent in Broward County). Thanks to a generous award from the March of Dimes, NSU-COM students are taking significant steps to increase awareness among future physicians about this very complex issue.

The PEEDS (Prematurity Exposure and Education on Development for Students) community project began to take shape in 2010 when Patricia Kodish from the March of Dimes reached out to members from five NSU-COM student organizations and interest groups to form the March of Dimes Student Coalition. Together, the American Medical Women's Association (AMWA), Medical Students for Choice (MSFC), Pediatrics Club (PEDS), American College of Osteopathic Family Physicians (ACOFP), and Student Association of Obstetrics and Gynecology (SAOG) began to address the student population's need for greater awareness regarding issues of premature and preterm birth. The clubs worked together to distribute materials during last November's Prematurity Awareness Day, organize a presentation on the importance of genetic testing and counseling, and coordinate a video presentation and guest lecture by Kodish and Jennifer Marguaret from the March of Dimes.

Seeing that the student population needed further exposure and continuing education on the wide range of topics for which March of Dimes advocates, OMS-III and predoctoral research fellow Emily Young decided to write a grant proposal to the March of Dimes in February 2011. Her proposal included a description of the program

she envisioned—a lecture series focused on the topics most relevant for medical students, as well as a guided tour of the Broward General Medical Center's neonatal intensive care unit (NICU) for all the participants. Her proposal was rated the highest in all evaluation categories out of all the Community Award program proposals to the March of Dimes Florida Chapter. As a result, NSU-COM was granted \$3,000 to move forward with this initiative.

Because Young began her third-year clinical rotations over the summer, OMS-II students Angelina Somoracki and Allison Amore have taken on the rewarding task of turning this program into a reality. Since early July, Somoracki and Amore have worked hard to schedule highly qualified guest speakers, prepare supplementary educational materials, and organize a schedule of Broward General NICU tours for participating students. The fall 2011 PEEDS project's educational agenda offers extensive education on prematurity issues through a variety of means, including panel discussions, interactive kits, and personal experiences in the NICU.

In addition, pre- and post-assessment of participants' knowledge will be administered to ensure the program has been effective at meeting its goals. Each participant will receive an award of completion at the close of this grant-funded initiative in November 2011, and interested students will have the opportunity to present some of what they have learned to their peers at scheduled lunch lectures during the winter 2012 semester. Overall, the PEEDS program aims to reach and educate over 200 medical students.

The March of Dimes Student Coalition is supporting this initiative, with the presidents of these five clubs (*Brittany Stutzman*-PEDS, *Kacie Bhushan* and *Katie Meyer*-SAOG, *Kat Beditz* and *Julie Bemski*-MSFC, *George Grey*-ACOFP, and *Jamie Mazzurco*-AMWA), who will help to execute the two dinner lectures and supervise the NICU tours.



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## SOMA Starts Academic Year on a High Note with Osteoblast

The NSU-COM chapter of the Student Osteopathic Medical Association (SOMA) started the academic year strong with the annual Osteoblast celebration. At Osteoblast, which was held in early August, SOMA hosted over 150 members of the incoming OMS-I class, OMS-II leaders, and faculty members at a sit-down dinner and provided an opportunity for the first-year students to hear about all the great student groups and leadership opportunities available at the college. Incoming students were also exposed to osteopathic manipulative medicine, as Dr. David Boesler and OPP fellows Randall Davis, Tara Nowakhtar, and Meighan O'Connor demonstrated and explained facets of osteopathic medicine to the attendees.

Osteoblast also provided SOMA the momentum to have a very successful recruitment week, with the association recruiting over 200 members.

This past August, SOMA members were allowed to sit in on a closed-door health care roundtable



Article by OMS-II Mark Liwanag

*Osteoblast offers incoming students a range of educational and social interactions.*

meeting with Congresswoman Debbie Wasserman Schultz. At the meeting, SOMA members listened to the voices of various health care industry leaders and observed firsthand how concerns from doctors, nurses, lawyers, and other health care providers were accounted for in the political process.

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## Student Activities Range from Fun and “Flashy” to Informative



Article by OMS-II Francesca Okolie

### Club Week Flash Mob

So you're walking through the halls of the Terry Building humming the latest Kanye West and Justin Bieber collaboration. The clock strikes noon, and suddenly, your body begins to feel strange. It starts slowly at first. Your knees vibrate and your hands are undulating by your side. You're sweating with fear, wondering what's happening. However, you look around, and everyone else is doing it, too – a spin here, a pop and lock there, then a kick. What's even more peculiar is the synchronized way in which everyone seems to be engaging in this most unusual behavior.

What's going on? If you guessed a simple case of flash mob fever, the craze that's taking over America, you are correct. Even more amazing is the fact that on August 9 at approximately 12:20 p.m., a group of brave second-year students brought the fever to the HPD during Club Week.

### Relationships Panel

While there really aren't any television shows depicting the stressful, complicated, and busy lives of medical students, most of us heard enough rumors and met enough people to reach the conclusion our romantic lives would suffer on the road to “doctordom.”

For some students, the best solution for success in medical school was to begin the year single, while for others, continuing their local or long-distance relationships. Whether married, a parent, engaged, or in an undefined situation, nearly everyone struggled to balance his or her personal life with the rigors of academic curriculum. That being said, all was not lost. This

year, the Student National Medical Association (SNMA) and Student Advocates Association (SAA) wanted incoming first-year students to know just that.

At the Relationships in Medical School Panel held August 29, six OMS-2s provided great perspective on romance, family, and medical school based on their own very diverse backgrounds. Moderated by Dr. Marti Echols, the discussion panel sought to give a little something to everyone.

The panelists didn't claim to be experts in their particular situations, but honestly explained what challenges they faced and what decisions they ultimately made. Audience members participated in the conversation, offering steps they were currently taking to make things work and what they also feared. The environment was casual and open, which made for a great hour of discussion. Given the success of the event, both the SNMA and the SAA plan to host a Relationships in Medical School: Part Two Panel next semester.



**OMS-IV Roberto Castillo, M.H.S.**, received a peer-reviewed poster award for his project entitled “International Trauma Teleconference: Evaluating Trauma Care and Facilitating Quality Improvement” at the American Telemedicine Association 16<sup>th</sup> Annual International Meeting and Exposition held last May in Tampa, Florida. His research study also

was presented at the European Congress for Trauma and Emergency Surgery in Milan, Italy, this past April as an oral presentation.



**Kenneth E. Johnson, D.O., FACOG**, associate professor and chair of the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology and director of NSU’s Women’s Health Center, had his coauthored article entitled “Using One Question to Identify Women at Risk for an Alcohol-Exposed Pregnancy” accepted for publication in the winter 2011 issue of the

*American College of Osteopathic Obstetricians & Gynecologists Newsletter*.

**Merrill Krolick, D.O.**, clinical assistant professor of internal medicine and program director of the Largo Medical Center Interventional Cardiology Fellowship, recently became the first certified user of the new Exoseal vascular closure device in the United States and is the first physician in Florida to use the new Diamond-back Predator cutter for peripheral atherectomy. He is also one of 20 doctors to be involved in a clinical research trial involving drug-coated balloons for peripheral interventions, serving as the trial’s principal investigator.



**Deborah Mulligan, M.D., FAAP, FACEP**, clinical professor of pediatrics and director of the NSU-HPD Institute for Child Health Policy, and **Kevin Nugent, REMT-P**, program director of the Department of Emergency Medical Services Education and Training, coauthored an article that appeared in the September 2011 issue of *The Journal of Pediatrics*. The article was entitled “Using Tele-Education to Train Civilian Physicians in an Area of Active Conflict: Certifying Iraqi Physicians in Pediatric Advanced Life Support from the United States.”



**Alina M. Perez, J.D., M.P.H., LCSW**, who was promoted from assistant to associate professor in July, presented a session on “Culture, Hospice, and Minorities: Are Current Policies Negatively Impacting Hispanics and African Americans’ Access to End of Life Care?” at the 32<sup>nd</sup> International Congress of Law and Mental Health held July 17-23 in Berlin, Germany.



**Arif M. Rana, Ph.D., M.Ed.**, assistant professor of biomedical informatics, coauthored a paper entitled “Biomedical Informatics Data Modeling of the 911 Call Center at Newark, New Jersey, USA” that was presented at the International Conference on Parallel, Distributed Computing Technologies and Applications held September 23-25 in

Tirunelveli, Tamil Nadu, India. Dr. Rana’s research analyzed the arrival/departure statistical modeling of the 911 Call Center (911CC) patients. The work was used in developing network simulations to further design a fast-wired/wireless network so 911CC patients can receive quick and adequate medical care. In addition, Dr. Rana was awarded the Lean Six Sigma Yellow Belt Certification from the Hudson Center of Entrepreneurship and Executive Education at NSU’s H. Wayne Huizenga School of Business and Entrepreneurship on August 17. The goal of Lean Six Sigma is to train individuals in the philosophy and methodology in quality management by improving workflow processes, minimizing waste and resources, and delivering better results and outcomes.



**Cecilia Rokusek, Ed.D., R.D.**, professor of family medicine/public health and executive director of education, planning, and research, presented two seminars on “Continuity of Operations Planning for Community Health Centers” for the Florida Association of Community Health Care Centers, with one taking place in Miami in May and the

other in Orlando in June. Dr. Rokusek also penned an article on “Florida Foods” for the Banska Bystrica, Slovakia, monthly city newsletter—at the request of the city’s mayor—that is distributed to over 80,000 residents. In addition, she was quoted in a July 7 *Sun-Sentinel* article entitled “Three Ways to Cut \$2,400 When Paychecks Aren’t Keeping Up with Costs” and in an August 23 article entitled “Irene Tracks Toward Florida, Carolinas” in *The Epoch Times*. On the international front, she attended the International Society of Czechoslovak Arts and Sciences Board of Directors meeting in New York City on June 3. In her role as vice president of this group, she spoke to the members about student exchanges in medicine between the United States and Slovakia and discussed opportunities for the international expansion of the osteopathic philosophy.

**Carl Sadowsky, M.D.**, clinical associate professor of internal medicine and director of research at the Premiere Research Institute at Palm Beach Neurology, coauthored a paper entitled “Use of Florbetapir for Imaging B Amyloid Pathology” that received the de Leon Prize in Neuroimaging best paper award from the Alzheimer’s Association at its International Conference on Alzheimer’s Disease held July 16-21 in Paris, France. The paper was originally published in the *Journal of the American Medical Association*. Dr. Sadowsky also serves as the principal investigator of the Alzheimer’s Disease Neuroimaging Initiative research trial sponsored by the National Institute of Aging.



## Dr. Silvagni: Fulbright Senior Specialist Scholar



**Anthony J. Silvagni, D.O., Pharm.D., M.Sc., FACOPF dist.**, NSU-COM dean, was selected to serve as a Fulbright senior specialist scholar. The Fulbright Specialists Program, created in 2000 to complement the traditional Fulbright Scholar Program, promotes linkages between U.S. academics and professionals and their counterparts at universities abroad. The program is designed to award grants to qualified U.S. faculty and professionals, in select disciplines, to engage in short-term collaborative projects at higher education institutions in over 100 countries worldwide. International travel costs and an honorarium are funded by the U.S. Department of State Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, while participating host universities cover grantee in-country expenses or provide in-kind services.

Dr. Silvagni is the third NSU-COM administrator to be accorded this honor. In 2009, Leonard Levy, D.P.M., M.P.H., professor and associate dean of education, planning, and research, and Naushira Pandya, M.D., CMD, professor and chair of the Department of Geriatrics, were chosen for this honor. Drs. Levy and Pandya traveled to Slovakia to serve as Fulbright senior specialist scholars at Comenius University Faculty of Medicine in Bratislava, which is where Dr. Silvagni will be doing his Fulbright work this fall.

Dr. Silvagni is the third NSU-COM administrator to be accorded this honor. In 2009, Leonard Levy, D.P.M., M.P.H., professor and associate dean of education, planning, and research, and Naushira Pandya, M.D., CMD, professor and chair of the Department of Geriatrics, were chosen for this honor. Drs. Levy and Pandya traveled to Slovakia to serve as Fulbright senior specialist scholars at Comenius University Faculty of Medicine in Bratislava, which is where Dr. Silvagni will be doing his Fulbright work this fall.

## FSACOPF Presentations



Several full-time NSU-COM faculty members made presentations at the 31<sup>st</sup> Annual Florida Society of the American College of Osteopathic Family Physicians Convention and Family Medicine Update held July 27-31 in Orlando:

**Hilda De Gaetano, D.O.**,

**FACOP, FAAP** – “Latest Approaches for the Pediatric Patient”

**Robert Hasty, D.O., FACOI** – “The Latest Advances in Electronic Health/Medical Records Technologies,” “Stroke Prevention and Non-Vascular Atrial Fibrillation,” and “Professional and Medical Ethics Education”

**Dennis Penzell, D.O.** – “Tobacco Addiction Update: Connecting Patients to Tobacco Cessation Services”

**Anthony J. Silvagni, D.O., Pharm.D., M.Sc., FACOPF dist.** – “Florida Mandatory Lecture on Federal and State Laws Related to the Prescribing of Controlled Substances”

**Pictured above** at the convention (clockwise from left) are second-year students Danlu Wang, Anna Lowell, Natasha Dasig, and Charles Bender, D.O., a volunteer preceptor in the college’s Interdisciplinary Generalist Curriculum program.

## Submitted Grant Proposals

### “Institute for Medical Educator Development (MED)”

Submitted by **Cecilia Rokusek, Ed.D., R.D.**, to the Health Resources and Services Administration

**Requested amount: \$1.1 million**

### “Residency Training in Family Medicine”

Submitted by **Joseph De Gaetano, D.O., M.S. Ed, FAAFP, FACOPF**, to the Health Resources and Services Administration

**Requested amount: \$1.044 million**

### “Collegium of Primary Care Medicine”

Submitted by **Elaine Wallace, D.O., M.S.**, to the Health Resources and Services Administration

**Requested amount: \$799,998**

### “TOUCH: Transforming Our Community’s Health”

Submitted by the Broward Regional Health Planning Council, for whom **T. Lucas Hollar, Ph.D.**,

**Nicole Cook, Ph.D., M.P.A.**, and **Cyril Blavo, D.O., M.P.H.** and **T.M.**, will oversee the development, monitoring, and implementation of the core evaluation plan, to the

*Centers for Disease Control and Prevention*

**Requested amount: \$496,044**

### “Overcoming Barriers to Clinical Decision Support Tools: A Collaborative Approach”

Submitted by **Nicole Cook, Ph.D., M.P.A.**, and **T. Lucas Hollar, Ph.D.**, to the *Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality*

**Requested amount: \$300,000**

### “AHEC Tobacco Use Prevention Program”

Submitted by **Steven Zucker, D.M.D., M.Ed.**, to the *Florida Department of Health*

**Requested amount: \$155,606**

### “Educating Caregivers to Improve Sleep Problems in Patients with Dementia”

Submitted by **Nicole Cook, Ph.D., M.P.A.**, **Raymond Ownby, M.D., Ph.D., M.Ed., M.B.A.**, and **Linda Maurice**, to the *Retirement Research Foundation*

**Requested amount: \$139,162**

## New Grant Awards

### “HOPWA SPNS Project R01 Evaluation”

Received by **T. Lucas Hollar, Ph.D.**, from *Broward House, Inc.*

**Amount: \$30,000**

### “Health Information Technology Implementation”

Received by **Nicole Cook, Ph.D., M.P.A.**, from *Health Choice Network, Inc.*

**Amount: \$23,995**

### “An Analysis of Factors Which Predict Success on Clinical Skills Exams”

Received by **Marti Echols, Ph.D.**, from the *American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine*

**Amount: \$5,000**

# Melnick Memories: Looking Back...at Our Department Heads

Arnold Melnick, D.O., M.Sc., FACOP - Founding Dean of SECOM



Snapshots. What wonderful memories they stimulate. Look at an old wedding picture, or a class reunion, or a childhood club. And there you sit, pointing out this one and that one, or what one of them did that you still remember.

So it pays to look at a snapshot now and then. This includes reviewing the first faculty members of Southeastern College of Osteopathic Medicine (SECOM), none of whom is still in that role due to retirement, death, or administrative changes. Let me give you that snapshot of the initial faculty members and the founding department heads of SECOM, and let's look at it before the snapshot fades, for it is 30 years old.

## **ANATOMY**

*Frances H. Higginbotham, Ph.D.*

## **ANESTHESIOLOGY**

*Eli Singer, D.O.*

## **BIOCHEMISTRY**

*Kenneth H. Woodside, Ph.D.*

## **COMMUNITY MEDICINE**

*Murray Zedeck, D.O., FAOCR*

## **DERMATOLOGY**

*David Horowitz, D.O., FAOCD*

## **EMERGENCY MEDICINE**

*Barry Feingold, D.O.*

## **FAMILY MEDICINE**

*Matthew A. Terry, D.O.*

## **INTERNAL MEDICINE**

*Ronald B. Kaufman, D.O., FACOI*

## **MEDICAL COMMUNICATIONS**

*Robert A. Klobnak, B.A.*

## **MICROBIOLOGY**

*Harold E. Laubach, Ph.D.*

## **NEUROLOGY**

*Arthur B. Surloff, D.O.*

## **OBSTETRICS AND GYNECOLOGY**

*Daniel R. Barkus, D.O.*

## **OPHTHALMOLOGY**

*Edward D. Hersh, D.O., FOCOO*

## **OSTEOPATHIC PRINCIPLES AND PRACTICE**

*James J. McCormick, D.O.*

## **OTORHINOLARYNGOLOGY**

*Roderick C. Salach, D.O., FOCOO*

## **PATHOLOGY**

*Donald C. Bergmann, D.O., FCAP*

## **PEDIATRICS (Acting)**

*Donald Marcus, D.O.*

## **PHYSIOLOGY AND PHARMACOLOGY**

*H. Jay Lyons, Ph.D.*

## **PSYCHIATRY**

*David M. Masters, D.O.*

## **RADIOLOGY**

*Daniel M. Finkelstein, D.O.*

## **SURGERY**

*Wynne A. Steinsnyder, D.O., FACOS*



1985 SECOM Yearbook

Concentrate with me on one face in that snapshot: Daniel Barkus. Danny was appointed chairman of obstetrics and gynecology when our school opened in 1981. He served continuously until his death last year at the age of 77. Not only did he serve—and serve well—during that time, he personally taught almost all of the OB-GYN courses through those 30 years. I knew Danny from our Philadelphia days, and he was always considerate, compassionate, and caring. His teaching impressed and inspired more than a generation of our students. He was a fine gentleman. And he set an almost unbeatable record of service as a department head.

All our faculty members were pioneers, willing to serve in an unknown situation. Mostly, they worked without salary or compensation. Some of them performed two jobs at the school. All were dedicated to building a new—and better—osteopathic college.

We owe them a debt of gratitude. Without them, starting this new school would have been a much harder job.

So, we look at this old snapshot. We acknowledge our indebtedness. And to each of them, survivors or departed colleagues, we say a heartfelt “thank you!”





**Dr. Anderson-Worts**

**Paula Anderson-Worts, D.O., M.P.H.**, associate professor of family medicine/public health and program director of the NSU-COM/Broward Health Family Practice Residency, was recognized as one of *Black Health* magazine's 25 most influential African American doctors in South Florida on July 23 at a ceremony held at the Westin Diplomat Resort & Spa in Hollywood, Florida.



**Dr. Bruno**

**William E. Bruno, Jr., M.D., FAAP**, clinical associate professor of pediatrics and president of the Broward County Pediatric Society, was named vice chairman of the Drug Utilization Review Board and Prescribing Pattern Review Panel for Florida Medicaid on July 30.



**Dr. Celestine**

**Delia Celestine, Ed.D., M.P.H.**, assistant professor of public

health and director of graduate medical education, recently received her Ed.D. degree in Health Care Education from NSU's Fischler School of Education and Human Services.



**Dr. De Gaetano**

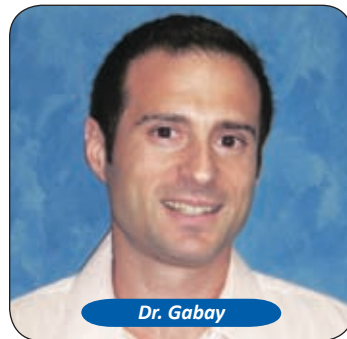
**Joseph De Gaetano, D.O., M.S. Ed, FFAFP, FAFOP**, professor of family medicine and associate dean of clinical and graduate medical education, received the Educator of the Year Award during the 31<sup>st</sup> Annual Florida Society of the American College of Osteopathic Family Physicians Convention and Family Medicine Update held July 27-31 in Orlando. The award honors an individual who has significantly enhanced the academic credibility of osteopathic family medicine in the state of Florida through a sustained, long-term commitment to osteopathic family medicine in academic settings.



**Dr. Favreau**

**Tracy Favreau, D.O.**, assistant professor and chair of the Division of Dermatology, participated in a one-hour *Sun-Sentinel* online program entitled "The Bald Truth: Online Live Health Chat About Hair Loss" on July 22. During the online chat, which also was featured on the

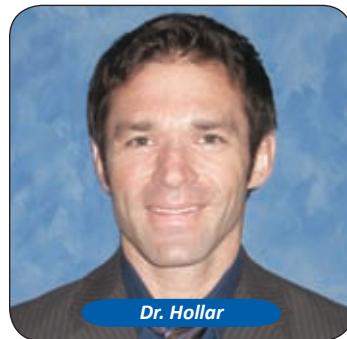
*Los Angeles Times* Web site, Dr. Favreau answered numerous questions and helped to clarify myths surrounding hair loss and treatment in men and women.



**Dr. Gabay**

**Mark Gabay, D.O., FAAP, FACOP**, assistant professor of pediatrics and program director of the NSU-COM/Miami Children's Hospital Pediatric Residency Program, was elected to serve a three-year term on the American Osteopathic Board of Pediatrics beginning in 2012.

**Deborah Gracia, D.O.**, clinical assistant professor of internal medicine and program director of the Larkin Community Hospital Internal Medicine Residency Program, was named as one of South Florida's 25 Most Influential and Prominent Women in Business by *Legacy* magazine, which is an independent supplement to *The Miami Herald*.



**Dr. Hollar**

**T. Lucas Hollar, Ph.D.**, assistant professor of public health, was selected as one of the 12 members of the Health Policy Fellowship Class of 2011-12. The fellowship is offered by the New York Institute of Technology/New York College of Osteopathic Medicine and the Ohio

University College of Osteopathic Medicine in collaboration with the American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine (AACOM), the American Osteopathic Association (AOA), and the government relations offices of the AOA and AACOM. Fellowship graduates join a cadre of health policy experts from which the osteopathic profession can draw to staff committees and task forces at the federal and state levels, testify on issues relevant to osteopathic medicine/education, and develop policy positions.



**Dr. Johnson**

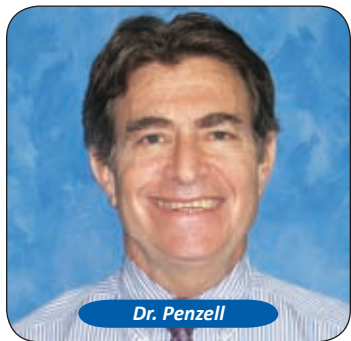
**Kenneth Johnson, D.O., FACOOG**, associate professor and chair of the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology and director of NSU's Women's Health Center, was the featured expert in an article entitled "Pregnancy Myths: Separating Fact from Fiction" that appeared on the First 5 LA Web site. First 5 LA is a unique child-advocacy organization created by California voters to invest tobacco tax revenues in programs for improving the lives of children in Los Angeles County.

**Frederick Lewis, D.O.**, clinical assistant professor of psychiatry, recently accepted the position of vice president of psychiatry/scientific affairs in the therapeutic expertise group at PRA, a leading clinical research organization located in Raleigh, North Carolina. Dr. Lewis will provide medical and scientific support for PRA project teams and guidance to clients in all aspects of clinical drug development.



Dr. Pandya

**Naushira Pandya, M.D., CMD**, professor and chair of the Department of Geriatrics, was quoted in the August 23 issue of *The Miami Herald* in an article entitled “Medicare May Pay for STD Screenings for Seniors.”



Dr. Penzell

**Dennis Penzell, D.O.**, associate professor of internal medicine, was recognized for his assistance and support in regard to the activation of the electronic prescribing (ePrescribing) system that was implemented for all attending physicians in the various medical clinics housed in the Sanford L. Ziff Health Care Center.



Dr. Russo

**Stephen Russo, Ph.D.**, NSU-COM director of sport psychology in the Sports Medicine Clinic and assistant professor in the NSU Center for Psychological Studies, was quoted in an

August 2 *Sun-Sentinel* article entitled “Year-Round Play Can Lead to Burnout if Not Careful.”

**Richard Rozencwaig, M.D.**, clinical assistant professor of surgery, was recently recertified as a Diplomate of the American Board of Orthopaedic Surgery (ABOS) and received his ABOS Subspecialty Certificate in Orthopaedic Sports Medicine. He also serves as a founding board member of the Silver Knight Alumni Legacy Network, which includes *The Miami Herald* Silver Knight Awards—one of the nation’s most highly regarded student awards programs.

**Hartley Schwartzberg, D.O.**, clinical professor of internal medicine, has been named interim chair of the Division of Dermatology.

**Julie Dahl-Smith, D.O.**, who serves as director of medical education and program director of the family practice residency at Georgia Health Sciences University-Medical College of Georgia—a component of NSU-COM’s Consortium for Excellence in Medical Education—received the Thomas A. Sappington Award from the Medical College of Georgia. The award is presented to the faculty member who best serves as a family physician role model and demonstrates strong faculty leadership abilities and dedication to the family medicine concept, while also demonstrating high moral standards in his/her personal and professional life.

**Joel D. Stein, D.O., FFAO, FAOASM, FACOFP**, clinical associate professor of family medicine, was named residency director for the integrated family practice/neuromusculoskeletal medicine and neuromusculoskeletal medicine+1 positions at Larkin Community Hospital in South Miami, Florida.

## Rural/Underserved and AHEC Training Programs Gain Funding



A recent funding development has enabled the college’s Department of Community Affairs, which is overseen by Steven Zucker, D.M.D., M.Ed., associate dean for community affairs and AHEC Program director, to greatly expand its wide range of community-based training and service activities throughout its South and Central Florida service area.

During the past state legislation session, NSU received a **\$1.95 million** appropriation from the Florida Legislature for funding of the new Rural and Underserved Training Program, which will enhance longstanding health workforce development efforts and successes in training, recruiting, and retaining health providers for rural and underserved areas. This multidisciplinary initiative includes the HPD programs of osteopathic medicine, dental medicine, pharmacy, and nursing.

The Department of Community Affairs has made substantial progress in the planning and development of its new NSU Rural and Underserved Training Program. In fact, preliminary program projections for the current fiscal year already include a number of highlights. For example, over 900 students and residents from over 30 participating osteopathic medicine, dental medicine, pharmacy, and nursing training programs will participate in nearly 200,000 hours of clinical training at underserved and rural sites. This training will take place at over 100 sites in underserved and rural communities in 23 Florida counties, including in nearly 60 federally qualified community health centers and county health departments throughout the region.

A component of the Rural and Underserved Training Program will also include the establishment of new affiliations with Lakeside Medical Center, St. Vincent’s Medical Center, Larkin Community Hospital, Miami Children’s Hospital, and Mount Sinai Medical Center to support the training of family medicine, internal medicine, pediatrics, and psychiatry residents in underserved communities. Through these partnerships, increased residency training rotations will take place in numerous community health centers and other clinical sites that serve the medically needy or rural populations.

In other funding news, the college’s Area Health Education Centers (AHEC) Program also received **\$2 million** for its Tobacco Training and Cessation Program, which is funded through the Florida Department of Health for the current fiscal year. Through this effort, the AHEC Program will continue to develop training programs on tobacco for health professions students and community practitioners as well as bring tobacco cessation services to its large service region. In addition, the program was just awarded **\$200,258** for its federal renewal application for the Model State-Supported AHEC Projects Grant.

Cumulative funding for the current project year is over **\$4.1 million**, which is about a 25 increase from last year.



# CEME Spotlight



*The Floyd Family Medicine Residency Program, which has been a member of NSU-COM's Consortium for Excellence in Medical Education since July 2006, was established in 1976 and became dually accredited in 2006.*

**E**stablished in 1942, the Floyd family of health care services is now in its seventh decade of serving the families of Rome, Floyd County, and surrounding communities in Northwest Georgia and Northeast Alabama.

Central to this care is **Floyd Medical Center (FMC)**, a 304-bed full-service, acute care hospital, regional referral center, and Level II Trauma Center covering over 40 medical specialties and including intensive care, neonatal intensive care, and pediatric intermediate care. A not-for-profit health care provider, Floyd operates Floyd Behavioral Health Center, the Floyd Primary Care network, which includes 22 physician offices and six urgent care centers, Heyman HospiceCare, Floyd Outpatient Surgery Center, and Floyd Physical Therapy and Rehab, which provides outpatient rehabilitation services and athletic training. In addition, Floyd is home to a three-year family medicine residency program, which trains 24 doctors annually.

With more than 2,400 employees, Floyd is the region's largest employer, and the organization's annual payroll is more than \$115 million. These health care professionals are

supported by a volunteer force of more than 250. Floyd's primary service area includes Floyd, Chattooga, and Polk counties. Within this three-county area, Floyd is the market share leader with nearly 50 percent of the patient volume.

Located on the Floyd Medical Center campus is the 330 Physicians Center, which houses FMC administrative offices, primary care offices, and the Floyd Outpatient Surgery Center. Also on campus is the Tony E. Warren, M.D. Cancer Center, which houses The Breast Center at Floyd and numerous Harbin Clinic oncology, hematology, and radiology practices and The Specialty Hospital, a 45-bed long-term acute care hospital.

Floyd is uniquely positioned to provide the full circle of care, including the following medical specialties:

- *Alcohol and Chemical Dependency*
- *Bariatric Medicine - Surgery and Aftercare*
- *Behavioral Health*
- *Cardiac Catheterization*
- *Cardiology*



- *Diabetes Care*
- *Diagnostic Radiology*
- *Echocardiography*
- *Emergency Care*
- *Family Medicine*
- *Gynecology*
- *Hospice*
- *Hospitalist*
- *Hyperbarics and Wound Care*
- *Intensive Care*
- *Interventional Cardiology*
- *IV Therapy*
- *Laboratory Services*
- *Neonatal Intensive Care*
- *Trauma Care*
- *Maternity*
- *Neurology*
- *Neuropsychology*
- *Neurosurgery*
- *Neonatal Care - Intermediate and Intensive*
- *Occupational Medicine*
- *Oncology*
- *Orthopedics*
- *Pediatrics*
- *Pediatric Intermediate Care*
- *Pharmacy - Inpatient and Outpatient*
- *Radiology*
- *Rehabilitation Services - Inpatient and Outpatient*
- *Sleep Disorders*
- *Surgery - Inpatient and Outpatient*
- *Urgent Care*
- *Vascular Surgery*

The Floyd Family Medicine Residency Program, which has been a member of NSU-COM's Consortium for Excellence in Medical Education since July 2006, was established in 1976 and became dually accredited in 2006. The program is approved for eight residents per class and is the only residency program at Floyd. The program provides the full spectrum of family medicine in an environment where residents and medical students are a valued part of an award-winning, nationally recognized health care team. As a result, both residents and graduates repeatedly point to Floyd's family atmosphere, the camaraderie between residents, and the excellent benefits.

Rotation opportunities provide students with a variety of family medicine clinical experiences that include holistic

care, goals, and practice objectives to help students with future career decisions. Since the program is not a core site for NSU-COM, the number of students varies from year to year. Four NSU-COM students completed a family medicine rotation at the program last year; two NSU-COM alumni are currently second-year residents in the program.

First-year residents rotate through various clinical services in the hospital, learning the fundamentals of inpatient management and acquiring an abundance of procedural experience. During the second year, residents spend more time in ambulatory medicine while supervising interns in their daily in-hospital activities. The third year is spent refining experiences from the previous two years. Outpatient experience during the first, second, and third year includes care of patients in the Family Medicine Residency Center, which operates as a multi-physician primary care practice. This newly renovated center contains 22 exam rooms, 2 procedure rooms, 2 OMT rooms, and a conference center used for training, seminars, and conferences.

The night-float system allows residents to cover the hospital and to take admissions when they are well rested, and avoids excessive work hours. During their first two years, residents provide call coverage for the weekends in 12-hour shifts for the first year and one 24-hour shift in the second year. Third-year residents take home call and rarely have to come into the hospital while on call. The night-float rotations occur for three half-months during the first and second years of residency and are covered by an intern and an upper-level resident.

The program has two OMT rooms with electric adjustable tables at the clinic to be utilized by both the OMT clinic and normal patient office visits. The program encourages its residents to practice the full scope of osteopathic family medicine. The OMT clinic consists of one-on-one study with the program's osteopathic residency director/DME that involves treating patients from the clinic. The program also includes a full OMT curriculum that comprises didactic and hands-on experience.

Over the years, Floyd Medical Center has earned numerous accolades. These include being named a Breast Imaging Center of Excellence by the American College of Radiology and the National Quality Measures for Breast Centers Program, receiving the American Heart Association/American Stroke Association's Get With The Guidelines® Stroke Gold Plus Quality Award, and earning the Healthcare Management Council Top Quality Award.

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*Since 2005, COM Outlook has featured informative spotlights on the various organizations that comprise the Consortium for Excellence in Medical Education (CEME). The accomplishments and contributions of this interactive network are indeed merit worthy because each participating institution provides exceptional postdoctoral training opportunities throughout Florida and the southeastern United States.*



# NSU Overview: A Tradition

## Treatment for Autism-Related Severe Behavioral Disorders Available at NSU



Dr. F. Charles "Bud" Mace

Some of the most heart-breaking and life-changing news parents can hear is that their child has autism, that their child suffers from severe behavioral disorders, and that there are limited or no services available in the community to treat their child.

The need for more direct services, professional development, and research led to the creation of the **Autism Institute** at Nova Southeastern University earlier this year,

and the implementation of a severe behavior disorders service (SBDS) to open this fall that will be the first short-term, intensive day-treatment program in South Florida. The SBDS will serve the community as a clinical laboratory and will be an integral site for training NSU doctoral students in clinical and school psychology to use the latest scientifically validated treatments for behavior disorders. It will also serve as a site for innovative clinical research.

Individuals with autism and related neuro-developmental disorders can often exhibit a wide variety of severely challenging behaviors such as physical aggression, self-injury, tantrums, and noncompliance because they process information in their brains differently than others. The SBDS program will provide cutting-edge behavioral health care in an onsite day treatment program dedicated to treating children who display severe behavior disorders that place them at risk for hospitalization and long-term residential placement.

Project director **F. Charles "Bud" Mace, Ph.D.**, who also serves as professor of psychology at NSU's Center for Psychological Studies and Unicorn Children's Foundation endowed chair, has been awarded a five-year multisite research grant from the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development to study factors that improve the long-term effectiveness of behavioral treatments for these disorders.

## NSU Receives Seized Corals from U.S. Agencies



**NSU's Oceanographic Center** recently received hundreds of seized coral skeletons, illegally poached in the Solomon Islands, from the U.S. Customs and Border Protection and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Scientists from the Oceanographic Center's National Coral Reef Institute (NCRI) will be examining 22 pallets of confiscated corals for research, educational, and outreach purposes.

Last July, Customs and Border Protection (CBP) agents, working in cooperation with U.S. Fish and Wildlife law enforcement special agents, seized one shipping container worth of corals from the Solomon Islands in the Port of Tampa. An examination of the contents revealed the shipment violated both the Endangered Species Act, which protects federally listed endangered and threatened species, and the Lacey Act.

The shipments also violated the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora that ensures international trade in wild plant or animal specimens does not threaten their survival. As a result of these violations, the pallets of coral, valued in the \$500,000 to \$1 million range, were seized.

The stony coral skeleton specimens will be useful for research, education, and outreach. A selection will be put on display throughout NSU and elsewhere to provide information on the economic importance, biological/ecological value of corals and coral reefs, and the many threats occurring to endangered coral reefs today.



# of Growth and Achievement

## Alvin Sherman Library Turns 10



Ten years may have passed since **NSU's Alvin Sherman Library, Research, and Information Technology Center** opened its doors, but the facility's goal remains the same: to provide top-notch service to the university and the surrounding community. And for the past decade, the library's done just that through its high-caliber staff and collections of research materials, specialized databases, popular books, magazines and journals, CDs, DVDs, special programs, author readings, workshops, exhibits, and more.

When it opened on December 8, 2001, the spacious, high-tech library became one of the only in the nation to boast a joint-use agreement. This agreement between NSU and the Broward County Board of County Commissioners allows the library to be open to the public, and create the perfect balance between a "bustling community hub" and a student-friendly "study central."

## Florida Senate President Gives Keynote Address at Commencement



**Mike Haridopolos**, the 86<sup>th</sup> president of the Florida Senate, was the keynote speaker at an NSU commencement ceremony held August 28. More than 600 students from NSU's College of Allied Health and Nursing programs received their degrees during a ceremony at the BankAtlantic Center in Sunrise. The college graduated students from the nursing,

occupational therapy, anesthesiologist assistant, vascular sonography, audiology, physician assistant, health science, and cardiovascular sonography programs.

The commencement ceremony also marked the first-ever graduating classes of physician assistant students from NSU's Jacksonville Student Educational Center and anesthesiologist assistant students from NSU's Tampa Student Educational Center.

The College of Allied Health and Nursing is the largest provider of entry-level physician assistant (P.A.) education and the second-largest provider of entry-level Doctor of Audiology (Au.D.) education in the United States. It also launched the first anesthesiologist assistant (A.A.) program in Florida and the fifth in the nation. The college is also the largest provider of entry-level A.A. education in the country.

The college, which has an enrollment of more than 3,000 students, is also one of the most significant providers of nursing education in the Southeast. It also boasts three high-tech simulation labs in Fort Lauderdale, Miami, and Fort Myers that use robotic patient simulators placed in hospital wards-like classrooms to mimic real patient conditions in a hospital setting.

## Travisano Begins Role as Senior Vice President and COO



**Jacqueline A. Travisano, M.B.A., CPA**, has been named NSU senior vice president and chief operating officer. In her new role, Travisano will be responsible for overall direction, management, and effective administrative operations of the university to support NSU's mission and help fulfill its vision. As such, NSU's offices of finance, human resources, enrollment and student services, internal audit, in-

formation technology, facilities management, public safety, business services, and university relations will report to her.

Prior to joining NSU, Travisano was the vice president for business affairs and chief financial officer at St. John's University in Queens, New York. Like NSU, St. John's is a private, not-for-profit university. Prior to St. John's, Travisano had previously served as vice president for finance and operations at Carlow University and associate vice president for finance and administration at Chatham University, both located in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.



# LEADING WITH THE HEART: Medical Outreach Efforts in Haiti and Jamaica

*In March, 17 NSU-COM students joined forces with a disaster relief organization to provide supplies and health care education to impoverished Haitians.*

*In June, the college coordinated its 11<sup>th</sup> annual medical outreach excursion to Jamaica, serving over 2,500 patients.*





# Haiti Expedition Invigorates Students

By OMS-I Michael Jones

Sitting on a wooden bench precariously fitted to a Toyota pickup, shaking and shivering in the tropical down-pour, bouncing down the side of a slick mountain road, I looked at my colleagues that were huddled around me. The occasional dim light of a passing car illuminated their widely grinning faces, which were from time to time interrupted with collective grimaces of pain as we hit potholes and momentarily became airborne before landing harshly upon the wooden slats that served as seats. We were in Haiti.

Our medical outreach trip to Haiti, which took place March 12-19, began months earlier when we decided to do our work through a disaster relief organization known as European Disaster Volunteers (EDV). We were told we would be going to a small rural town known as Fonds-des-Nègres. We spent the months leading up to our weeklong excursion securing supplies and receiving many generous donations from both students and local hospitals and clinics.

The kindness shown by the community was overwhelming; however, I didn't realize the extent of our cargo until several hours after we had landed in Haiti. It was at this time that we spread out all the antibiotics, children's vitamins, and various other medical supplies across a table. The bounty spilled over and was two or more feet high at the middle.

It was upon witnessing the generosity provided by those concerned for the health of the Haitian people that we all felt a greater sense of purpose. The state of Haiti when we arrived was sobering. We were told that only two percent of the rubble had been cleaned up. Driving through Port-Au-Prince, we came upon vast tent cities located off the sides of the roads. With so little news coming from Haiti, many of us had wrongly assumed the situation was better.

After the plane had touched down in Port-Au-Prince and we had disembarked, we got our first look at the country. The breezeway from the airport to the parking lot is a 100-yard concrete walkway shadowing one of the main streets, and the only thing separating the two is an eight-foot chain-link fence. As we walked along, throngs of children, teenagers, and adults scooted alongside of us asking for money or otherwise trying to get our attention. It was disorientating to say the least.

The next two days would be spent in preparation and in travel from Port-Au-Prince to Fonds-des-Nègres. After one day of rest and preparation, we woke early in the morning to a bus pulling up outside of the EDV compound. This bus looked exactly like one I had ridden as a child except for one fact; it was covered in art painstakingly spray painted on. Most phrases centered on Jesus. "Jesus is love" was prominent in electric colors across the side. I thought this was exceedingly odd; however, in several hours we all came to realize it was actually the status quo in car decoration.

Our ride out of Port-Au-Prince was punctuated by dusty views of vast tent cities, a general lack of any type of suspension system, and some of the most terrifying driving most of us had ever seen. Conversation among us would fade as we passed buildings crumpled against one another, thick slabs of concrete cracked cleanly down the center. In some instances, we saw that tents had been anchored off of the

derelict buildings. The mood turned somber as the drive through Port-Au-Prince continued. It was the enormity of the situation that struck us. After an hour, the city scene began to break away. The shattered buildings and blue United Nations tents gave way to lush grass and swaying palm trees, while the markets became beautiful blue ocean and near crystal-white beaches as our drive meandered along the coastline. The amount of



people thinned out as we drove further into Haiti.

After a drive that took the better part of half the day, we arrived in Fonds-des-Nègres. Our driver, while trying to park at our destination, wildly swung the bus around and partially destroyed some bit of concrete structure. He paid no mind and backed the bus off the narrow two-lane highway and parked. We quickly unloaded, thankful to stretch our muscles. We would be staying on property donated by a local man who supported our work. In reality, we slept on the grounds of the property in tents as the house was not finished.

We were introduced to the amenities of home away from home. The shower was simply plywood on the ground surrounded by a blue tarp duct-taped to a tree. The water came from a nearby well from which you had to pull the water and drop in bleach. We were also instructed that we should not





drink the water as our hosts had provided a large quantity of bottled water for us, and that we should not eat local fruit.

With these things in mind, OMS-II Umair Kahn and I decided to get a little Frisbee action in before it got too dark. We found a small harvested cane field behind the house and began to play. Within 10 minutes,

we had six local kids playing with us. Eventually, their father showed up and, happy to see us playing with his kids, launched into a one-minute creole dialogue with us, which ended when he ran suddenly into some nearby thick undergrowth. Puzzled, Umair and I stared at each other when the Haitian man suddenly returned with some odd-looking fruit, which when squeezed produced a lumpy white-looking mushed fruit. “Manje,” he said, which meant eat.

We had been told not to eat the fruit. So against our better judgment, we partook of the proverbial forbidden fruit, which was delicious. To our surprise, neither of us has dropped dead as of this writing. Umair gave away his Frisbee, and we walked back to the house just in time to leave for the church service our group had been invited to. Apparently, the church service was the best way to get word out about our medical aid mission. The church was right across the road from us, and we could already hear the women’s choir singing.

As the crowd in the church grew, the people came up in groups and sang. We were struck at once by their beautiful voices and their happy countenances. Even amid such hardship, these people were genuinely happy. For me, it was both an excellent welcome and a religious experience to see these people celebrating at their church. It was then time for us to turn in for the night and prepare for our first day of clinic the next day. Many of us slept fitfully on the rocky ground, with the occasional deep roar of a passing truck on the highway a mere 10 feet away. Morning was announced by grunting pigs, clucking chickens, and bleat-



ing goats. We stumbled into our scrubs and ate a breakfast of warm milk and Corn Flakes.

Although the coordination of the medical side of the clinic was important, most of us were first-year students. The real purpose was to educate and empower the community. When the adults would arrive with their children, they would be given an hour of presentations on how to keep their children healthy. Everything from malnutrition to ringworm was discussed. Through these lectures, we taught the parents that being healthy was not dependent on medical outreach trips to their area. Rather, it was a tangible thing that through simple steps they could accomplish. After they attended the lectures, the children were given deworming pills, and if they showed signs of malnutrition, they also received a pack of children’s vitamins. Over the course of three days, our group of 17 medical students, a physician, two nurses, and a pharmacist—plus EDV staff to handle paperwork—saw around 650 children at the clinic.

Our lectures were given through three hired translators who worked tirelessly, their voices hoarse by the end of the day. Meanwhile, working in the clinic, we would be exhausted, sweating in the tropical heat of Haiti. But every night when we returned to our tents to sleep, it would be



with knowing smiles and talk of the amazing children we had met. Our nights would go late with excited talk of the next day. Our mornings came early as we rushed to set up our clinic in time for the first lesson. Often, children would clamber up to the windows, peering inside at us as we went about our work.

Most of us came to this trip as strangers, but we left the best of friends. We all changed in some way during the trip. Perhaps it was the knowledge of knowing we were improving the community in a way we could see, or perhaps it was just the joy on the children’s faces; but there is something about our week in Haiti that made it very special to us in a way we find hard to describe.

There is no doubt in my mind that many of us will return to Haiti before our fourth year of medical school. There is something about doing medical aid work that makes you smile, lightens your heart, and gives you the warm fuzzies. When I look back on our experience, I often wonder who learned more—the people of Fonds-des-Nègres—or us.



# Assisting the Underserved in Jamaica

By OMS-II Charee' N. Howard, M.Sc.  
President, Student National Medical Association

Although the NSU Health Professions Division houses a diverse array of disciplines, rarely do the students gain insight into and get an opportunity to experience collaborative efforts within the patient-care setting, which is what makes the annual medical outreach trip to Jamaica so rewarding.

From June 8 through June 17, students from the dental, occupational therapy, optometry, osteopathic medicine, and pharmacy programs, a number of faculty members, as well as various other volunteers, ventured to Jamaica for the 11<sup>th</sup> year to deliver service to underserved communities. Dr. Paula Anderson-Worts, a pioneer organizer of the trip and adviser to the Student National Medical Association (SNMA), led the initiative with assistance from colleagues.

Between Kingston, the capital of Jamaica, and St. Mary, one of Jamaica's smallest parishes, we were able to serve over 2,500 patients with the assistance of 6 student physicians and 12 attending physicians. Resources in developing countries are limited for various politico-socio reasons, so we were forced to improvise and work with whatever we had available, including makeshift examination rooms in a classroom, prisons, and churches.

Students were immediately charged with taking care of patients' needs by assessing chief complaints, taking a thorough history, performing physical exams, presenting differential diagnoses to attending physicians, and forming a working plan. Being first-year medical students, we could appreciate the Patient-Centered Medicine (PCM) course for providing a foundation for taking a history, writing a partial SOAP note, and performing some physical exams. However, taking focused histories was something we hadn't had



much exposure to, which presented a mental challenge. This was a task that commanded us to be more efficient when taking a history, and a challenge that we conquered by the end of our trip.

All the physicians were thrilled to expose us to gynecological and rectal exams, which we haven't learned in PCM yet, and challenged us to

perform them with their supervision. Dr. Anderson-Worts was proud to take advantage of teachable moments using osteopathic manipulative techniques. The most prevalent conditions or illnesses we observed and treated were hypertension, diabetes mellitus, tinea versicolor, benign prostate hyperplasia, urinary-tract infections, bacterial vaginosis, and *Candida albicans*. Unique cases detected and/or observed by students included a 16-year-old boy who had a grade 5 murmur, a carotid bruit with suspected heart complications that were negative, reduction of an extremely large inguinal hernia, and herpes simplex testicular lesions. We also informed a woman she was pregnant after collecting a urine sample and performing a pregnancy test.

The days were long and exhausting, but we quickly learned that teamwork ameliorated our work demands and that each discipline was able to rely on the other for assistance. The pharmacy students worked diligently to prepare concise formularies for us prior to the trip, which assisted us in prescribing the limited medications the pharmacy had available. The pharmacy team was thorough and very particular about how prescriptions were written, which forced medical students to immediately learn how to write prescriptions correctly, which is a valuable lesson indeed.

We often referred patients to the occupational therapy team for innumerable conditions, and the students were more than happy to continue care by assisting patients in adjusting to life with various ailments, no matter the age. We also referred patients to the optometry team, which was just as thorough and excited as the other teams. It was common practice for the dental team to take the blood pressure of patients before extracting teeth. If a patient's blood pressure was too high, which wasn't unusual, the dental team would refer the patients to us, the medical team. After triple





checking the blood pressure, we were charged with prescribing Clonidine and reassessing the blood pressure after 30 minutes to an hour to clear the patient for dental work. The professional camaraderie exhibited by all the disciplines was meritorious and demonstrated the significant roles that each discipline plays in delivering exceptional patient care.

The efforts of Dr. Anderson-Worts over the last 11 years have proven to be of great benefit not only to the people of Jamaica, but to the osteopathic medical profession as well. Recently, Dr. Anderson-Worts received full practicing rights in Jamaica, along with other NSU alumni such as Dr. Clarence Clarke, Dr. Kris Munoz, and Dr. Michelle Powell-Cole. In fact, it was Dr. Clarke and Dr. Stanford Williamson, while they were NSU-COM students, who encouraged Dr. Anderson-Worts to organize the medical outreach trip to Jamaica.

When asked about the grand achievement, she humbly acknowledged the many osteopathic physicians who “supported the trip over the years and helped to pave the way for this accomplishment” and specifically recognized Drs. Luzan Philpotts, Sandi Scott-Holman, Munoz, and Powell-Cole for their continued support of the medical outreach trip. Dr. Anderson-Worts also credits this milestone to Don Daly of CRI Communications since it was with his “guidance, encouragement, and insight into the process of addressing the Ministry of Health that we gained the issuance of practicing rights in Jamaica.”

The American Osteopathic Association has long been working on worldwide recognition of osteopathic physicians. However, while D.O.s have finally obtained full practicing rights in Jamaica, “There are some restrictions to the rights granted,” said Dr. Anderson-Worts. “The full practicing rights are contingent upon us having an allopathic physician registered to practice in Jamaica as a part of the

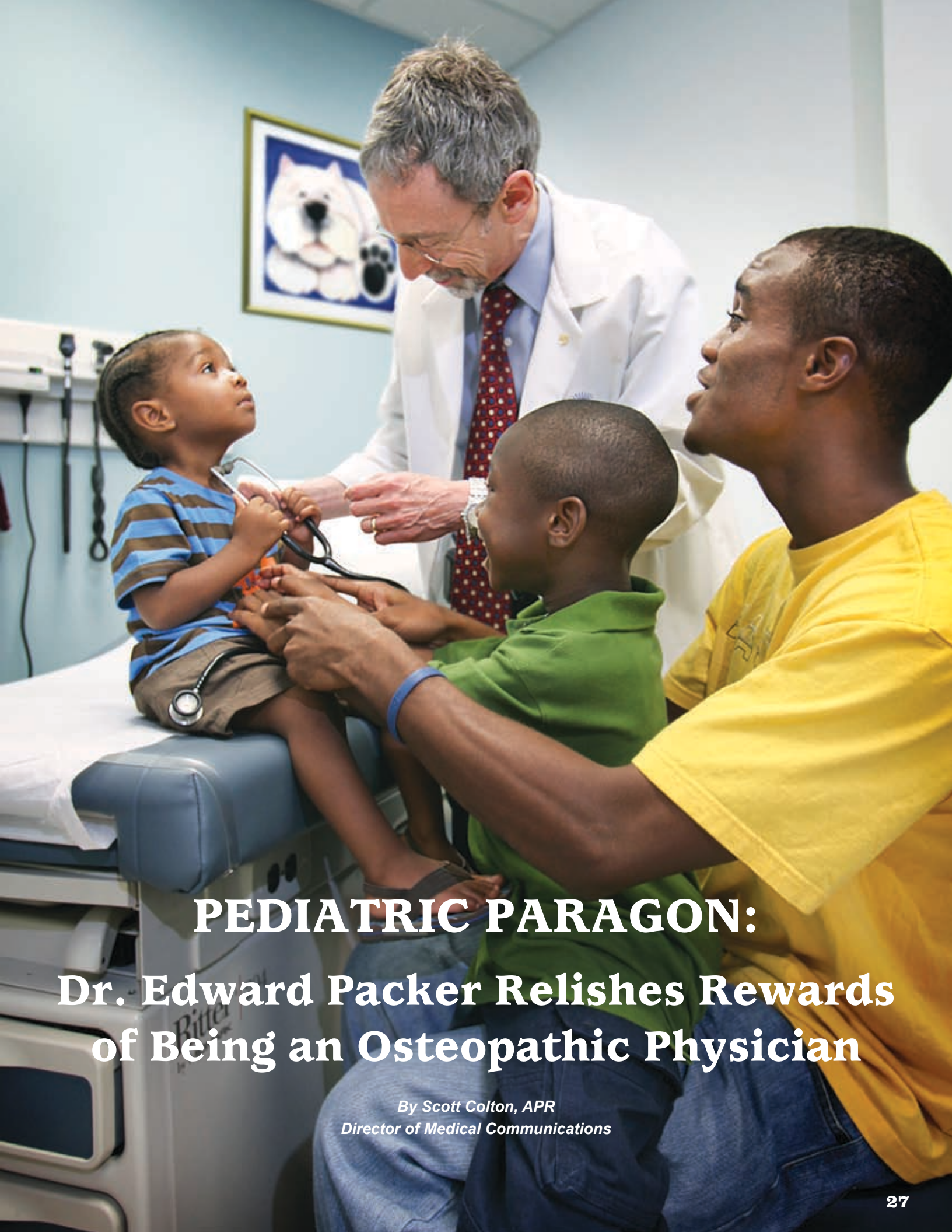
medical outreach team. Although we would love to have full practicing rights without this contingency, it definitely represents progress over the past 11 years of service.”

In conclusion, the medical outreach trip was a humbling experience for all of us. Though there were moments that could have easily been frustrating, we adopted the “no worry” mentality that’s immersed in Jamaican culture. Students were able to receive priceless clinical training, and attending physicians took advantage of all teachable moments. The most rewarding aspect of the trip for the osteopathic medical students was the gratitude expressed by patients.

According to OMS-II Emily Howell, “There were many great moments throughout my trip to Jamaica, but I would have to say the most rewarding aspect was how grateful the people of Jamaica were when they received the health care we provided,” she explained. “There were patients who literally waited all day to get the opportunity to be seen by a physician. After they received care, they were very appreciative, giving many thanks to all that helped. One lady in particular had dime-sized moles on her face and neck for years, and when she discovered we had the means to remove them, she was elated. After the procedure, the woman broke down in tears and began praying and blessing the volunteers who had assisted in the procedure. It touched my heart that I was able to slightly alter someone’s appearance and make such a huge difference in her self-confidence and the way she perceived herself.”

“I did not know what I would see on my first medical mission trip, but it exceeded any expectations I had,” said OMS-II Lena Virasch. “I gained firsthand clinical experience that will help me transition to rotations, and I learned about the culture and lifestyle of our patients. The trip renewed my excitement for working with patients and has given me a new perspective to return to the classroom.”





**PEDIATRIC PARAGON:  
Dr. Edward Packer Relishes Rewards  
of Being an Osteopathic Physician**

*By Scott Colton, APR  
Director of Medical Communications*





*In a world filled with mysteries, it's quite interesting to unearth the way careers are chosen by the **people** we know. For some, the professional path is often predestined from birth, such as when physicians begat physicians and lawyers begat lawyers.*

Sometimes, however, heritage has nothing to do with the profession a person pursues. That was certainly the case for Edward Packer, D.O., FAAP, FACOP, who serves as professor and chair of the college's Department of Pediatrics. "I always wanted to be a doctor," said Dr. Packer, who was born in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, but grew up in New Jersey. "At the age of three, my grandparents called me 'Dr. Salk' in reference to Dr. Jonas Salk, who discovered and developed the first safe and effective polio vaccine."

Although there wasn't a hint of medical lineage in his family tree, Dr. Packer's fascination with all things medical was inexplicably intrinsic. "I never saw myself as doing anything else," he explained. "No one in my family was in the medical field, so I can't tell you why it was such a passion for me from an early age. When I was a boy, my dad bought me a microscope, and I would go down to the lake and find interesting things to look at. But the best thing my dad ever got me was a contraption called the Visible Man, which is an anatomically accurate scaled-down version of a man that allows you to see all the bones and body structures.

When I was in elementary school, he also bought me some anatomy books, and we would sit and look at them together. I was totally fascinated with biology, medicine, science, and anatomy and wanted to learn everything there was to learn about these subjects."

#### **Paternal Pursuits Provide Career Direction**

As it turns out, Irving Packer — Dr. Packer's dad — would prove to be a pivotal figure in his son's life for many reasons. A true renaissance man, Irving Packer was an individual who never met a challenge he didn't relish conquering. After owning a store in Swedesboro, New Jersey, that sold everything from washing machines and carpeting to jewelry, he sold the business to a relative, relocated the family to nearby Haddon Township, and became an exceedingly successful real estate developer.

After retiring in his early 40s, Dr. Packer's dad could have easily taken it easy and led the good life, but working hard and making a difference in people's lives was a core component of his DNA. Consequently, when the superintendent of schools in Camden County, New Jersey, who was a friend, asked his dad to become a substitute teacher, he readily accepted. That decision would not only transform his life; it would radically alter his son's as well.

"My dad loved teaching," said Dr. Packer, who is the oldest of three brothers. "One night, he came home and excitedly told us about a class he had taught that day for a group of children with moderate intellectual disabilities. As we sat around the table, he told us he was going back to school to learn how to teach these types of children, which is exactly what he did."

After earning both a bachelor's and master's degree in Special Education, Dr. Packer's father was hired by the Barrington School District as its special education coordinator, where he was responsible for establishing and supervising about 20 classrooms for developmentally challenged students in the local schools. "When he was overseeing the Barrington School District regional program, he would often have families bring children to him for placement who could not get into the public school system," Dr. Packer stated. "Many of these children would come in with very serious behavioral disorders, including autism. Unfortunately, there was no program in the area for them to attend because they were too violent and had frequent behavioral outbursts that precluded them from attending public school."

Acting on pure emotion, Dr. Packer's dad decided to do something revolutionary in 1965 by selling all his worldly possessions, buying a 40-acre tract of land in Atco, New Jersey, and building a nonprofit school called Camp Happy Times for developmentally challenged children who could not attend public school. The catch? Not only would it serve as a school; it would also act as the Packer family's new home. "The bedrooms in the house also served as the classrooms," explained Dr. Packer, who was about 14 when this major life transition occurred. "Each morning, I had to put all my things away so I could transform the space from a bedroom to a classroom."

The school, which eventually changed names from Camp Happy Times to Archway, would go through several significant physical and programmatic expansions as the number of children attending skyrocketed from 16 to 600 over the span of about five years. "We had horses and other animals on the property for the kids to play with, so my brothers and I were responsible for taking care of them," said Dr. Packer, who credits his father for being at the forefront of how to educate children with autism and other developmental learning disabilities.

During this time, Dr. Packer would go to school during the week and then tend to the animals and other chores on the weekends and work as a camp counselor over the summers. However, because Archway was indeed a Packer labor of love, his mother went back to college to earn a degree so she could

teach one of the classes at Archway, while his dad went on to earn a doctorate in education.

### **Dr. Packer Meets D.O. Dynamo**

Because Archway was situated in a small town consisting primarily of farms and homes, there was only one physician in the region to care for the populace—a beloved general practitioner named Ronald Goldberg, D.O., who would soon become Dr. Packer's physician, friend, and trusted mentor. "I didn't even know what a D.O. was at the time," said Dr. Packer, who idolized Dr. Goldberg and hoped to become just like him one day. "He did everything from deliver babies to take out appendixes—and I was in awe of him. When he found out I was interested in becoming a doctor, he let me hang out with him at his office.

"He was a remarkable doctor, and everyone loved him," added Dr. Packer of Dr. Goldberg, who would go on to become president of the American College of Osteopathic Family Physicians. "He would make sure he saw every patient, which meant he sometimes worked until 3:00 a.m. I wanted to be just like Ronnie, which is why I decided to pursue a career in the osteopathic profession."

After earning a bachelor's degree in Microbiology and Public Health from Rutgers University, Dr. Packer was accepted into Dr. Goldberg's alma mater—Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine—with a master plan already in place as to what he would do once he graduated. "I was going to work with Ronnie," Dr. Packer stated emphatically. "His practice had grown to the point where he needed a second doctor, and that second doctor was going to be me. In fact, Ronnie was already trying to figure out how he was going to enlarge his office to accommodate me."

During his summers off from medical school, Dr. Packer returned home to teach science to the children at Archway, which he truly enjoyed. By this time, the school had metamorphosed into a massive and highly respected educational complex featuring numerous programs, including one that would drastically alter Dr. Packer's career path. Because the school had developed such an esteemed reputation, a new program was launched that allowed parents to send their developmentally challenged children to Archway for complex and comprehensive diagnostic testing with a medical cohort that



*Dr. Packer...adorable at age 3.*



*A bright pediatric career beckons.*



*Career happiness in 1985.*



*Wife Janie with furry friend, Harry.*



*Derek and Emily with Jackson.*





*Dr. Packer enjoys a moment of levity with his grandson, Jackson.*

included a psychologist, speech therapist, and occupational therapist as well as pediatricians from several children's hospitals in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

Sensing this would be a wonderful learning opportunity for his son, Dr. Packer's dad made a simple request on his behalf: Could his son spend time with the medical team and witness the work they were doing? After receiving an unequivocal yes from the health care professionals, Dr. Packer began observing the fascinating process of diagnosing and providing the appropriate treatments for developmentally challenged children. "I was so enthused," said Dr. Packer, whose middle brother is a practicing D.O. in Arizona. "This was the most interesting medicine I had ever seen, so I decided, between my first and second year of medical school, that I was going to become a pediatrician."

### **Pediatric Passion Runs Deep**

One particular case had a profound effect on Dr. Packer that further spurred his interest in pediatrics. "One day a child came to Archway who had a severe developmental speech problem as well a very unusual way of walking because of a condition known as athetosis, which involves repetitive, involuntary, slow, sinuous writhing movements," he explained. "As soon as the child walked into the room, the pediatrician took one look at him and

said, 'Oh, this child must have had severe jaundice as an infant.' Before he even examined the child, he had made his diagnosis, which I found to be pretty amazing."

Sure enough, after Dr. Packer and the pediatrician checked the child's file, they discovered the boy's parents were Jehovah's Witnesses and had refused to give him a blood transfusion, which would have prevented the child from acquiring athetosis. "It was remarkable to witness, and I knew I wanted to be able to do that as well."



**DID YOU KNOW?**  
*Dr. Packer is a passionate mandolin enthusiast.*

For Dr. Packer, the summer between his first and second year of medical school would prove to be memorable for a different, but equally as life-changing, reason. "In August 1973, I had the great fortune of meeting my wife, Janie, who was a teacher at my dad's school and had earned her master's degree in Special Education from the University of West Virginia," he said. "Within two weeks of meeting her I proposed, and we got married that December. It turned out to be the best decision I ever made because our marriage keeps getting better every year."

After informing his mentor, Dr. Goldberg, of his decision to forego family practice for pediatrics, Dr. Packer forged ahead with his medical education, graduating from PCOM in 1976 and then completing his rotating internship at John F. Kennedy Memorial Hospital in Stratford, New Jersey, and his pediatric residency training at Thomas Jefferson University School of Medicine Hospital in Philadelphia in 1980.

With his formal education completed, Dr. Packer, who was now the proud father of daughter Emily, decided to follow in his father's footsteps and do something unique. "I think I caught my father's illness





*Dr. Packer during a clinic meeting in 2006.*

in that I wanted to start something new, so I had the idea that I wanted to establish a pediatrics program at a hospital that didn't already have one," he explained. "So I contacted a baby formula company and asked if someone could provide me with areas in the country where the company was selling a lot of infant formula, but had a small number of pediatricians."

One of the states on the list was Arizona, which just so happened to be a favorite locale of his wife Janie, who had spent a year as an undergraduate at the University of Arizona. After doing some intensive research, they decided to relocate to Mesa, which is a suburb of Phoenix. What awaited them, however, amounted to pure culture shock. "At that time, Mesa was pretty rural," he said. "The roads weren't even paved, and most of the homes we looked at only had dirt floors."

Nevertheless, because they were young and intrepid, the Packers decided to make a go of it in Mesa, which had a tiny 20-bed hospital that had been established by three osteopathic physicians and was later bought by a large company based in California that already owned several dozen hospitals. "Mesa General Hospital was so small it honestly looked like you could back a truck up to it and drive it away," Dr. Packer joked. "The emergency room had two gurneys in it and a desk. It wasn't much of a place, but it was the only hospital in the region."

Fortunately for the Packers, Mesa was about to become a significant boon town, with major corporations such as General Motors, Intel, and Motorola purchasing land and building chip-processing plants and test sites. The company that owned the hospital realized the population in Mesa was about to explode, which would require that additional physicians, such as Dr. Packer, be recruited to care for the burgeoning population.

To accommodate the medical staff, which included Dr. Packer, an OB/GYN, a general surgeon, an internist, and an ears, nose, and throat specialist,

a small building adjacent to the hospital was used to house the required offices, which is how Dr. Packer became the founder and head pediatrician of his own practice named Canyon Pediatrics. "I was Canyon Pediatrics," said Dr. Packer, who would go on to become chair and founder of Mesa General Hospital's Department of Pediatrics in 1982 and develop a pediatric wing in the hospital to care for acute cases. "And my wife was my receptionist."

### **The Winding Road to NSU**

As Mesa boomed, with thousands of homes being built annually in the 1980s, Dr. Packer's practice grew along with it, as did his job responsibilities over the next two decades. In fact, by the time he left Canyon Pediatrics in 2001, his medical staff had expanded to nine, including three nurse practitioners.

After years of working long hours in his practice, Dr. Packer began to venture into other areas such as the academic realm, serving as clinical professor of pediatrics at the Arizona College of Osteopathic Medicine of Midwestern University and the College of Osteopathic Medicine of the Pacific. In 1997-99, he also served as co-chair of the American Medical Directors Association's subsection on children.



*Dr. Packer and his wife, Janie, enjoy a fun moment at the 2011 graduation dinner banquet with Dr. Natasha Bray and Scott Colton.*



According to Dr. Packer, life was idyllic for his family as the new millennium dawned. So what prompted his relocation to South Florida to accept a position as chair of NSU-COM's Department of Pediatrics in 2001? According to Dr. Packer, it all started when he received an unsolicited letter from a charismatic character named Dr. Anthony J. Silvagni, who happens to serve as dean of NSU's College of Osteopathic Medicine. "To this day, I still don't know how Dr. Silvagni heard about me," he stated. "I had never met him before; in fact, I didn't even know there was an osteopathic school in South Florida."

After reviewing the letter, which asked if he was interested in interviewing for the chair of pediatrics position, Dr. Packer promptly threw it away. "My wife and I were very happy with our lives and had no desire to change

anything," he admitted. "I loved my practice and enjoyed my academic pursuits. Plus, our daughter was about to graduate from college and get married, so life was good."

Intriguingly, when he went back to his office a few hours later, he had an unexpected urge to take the letter out of the garbage and reread it, which he did. After discussing the opportunity with Janie, who urged him to apply, Dr. Packer submitted the proper documentation even though he and Janie had no intention of ever relocating to Florida. "Janie knew I was interested in the academic side of medicine, so she thought it would be a good experience to at least go through the application process."

The rest, as they say, is history. After being invited to the campus to make a presentation to the faculty and meet with various administrators, Dr.

Packer immediately fell in love with the college as soon as he drove onto the campus. "When I walked out of the parking lot and up the walkway to the Terry Building, I was hit by this incredible energy," he explained. "I just couldn't get over it. After I did my presentation and met the faculty, I just knew I had to work here; it was my destiny."

Although it took some substantial convincing to get Janie to relocate to South Florida, both she and Dr. Packer now consider it to be one of the best decisions they ever made. "We have never regretted making this move," stated Dr. Packer, who has familial ties in South Florida with his youngest brother working as an attorney in Miami and his parents living in Boynton Beach. "I love everything about NSU, from the faculty members and students to the environment here."

## Dr. Packer: Making a Mark, Leaving a Legacy at NSU



Since taking over as chair of the Department of Pediatrics on May 1, 2001, Dr. Packer has played a key role in creating or enhancing various aca-

ademic and clinical pediatric programs at the college—and beyond. "When I started here, the pediatrics clinic was only open on a limited basis and had a very low patient volume," said Dr. Packer, who has received numerous accolades over the past decade, including the Arnold Melnick Child Advocacy Award in 2006 as well as several Golden Apple Awards. "Today, we have a thriving clinic that sees about 75 pediatric patients weekly and offers tremendous learning opportunities to our students."

Another achievement Dr. Packer is admittedly proud of involves the expansion of pediatrics into all aspects of the student-learning experience. "Over the years, pediatrics has been incorporated into everything from our Objective Structured

Clinical Examinations and simulated patient programs to our systems and physical diagnosis courses," he said. "I'm especially thrilled that we created a separate pediatric systems course two years ago."

Providing additional postgraduate pediatric training opportunities for students was yet another dream Dr. Packer hoped to see through to fruition, which he accomplished in 2003 with the creation of a residency program at Palms West Hospital in West Palm Beach, Florida. "This program was totally my baby," Dr. Packer proudly stated. "I created it, wrote the curriculum, and worked extremely hard on several curricular redrafts before the program was approved by the American Osteopathic Association. We currently have three third-year residents, two second-year residents, and eight first years."

Thanks to a mindset that is remarkably similar to his legendary father's progressive mentality, Dr. Packer has no intention of resting on his laurels now that he's surpassed his 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary as chair of NSU-COM's Department of Pediatrics. "One of my future goals is to create a center here at NSU for special-needs children

that would basically replicate the programming my father's school had," said Dr. Packer, who is the proud grandfather of a seven-year-old grandson and three-year-old granddaughter. "To help make this happen, I am working with Dr. Leonard Levy to try and obtain a grant because, as we all know, everything comes down to funding. I am going to try my best to make this project a reality because I think it will be a viable area of interest not just for our college, but as a joint project that will involve all the appropriate NSU programs and departments."

Taking a step back to reflect on the myriad accomplishments he's masterminded is not something Dr. Packer does often, mainly because he's always busy working toward his next achievement. "I take things pretty seriously and don't do anything causally," admitted Dr. Packer, whose nephew, David, is currently a first-year NSU-COM student. "But when I do look back, I realize how lucky I've been. I have a great family, married an incredible woman, and have been given amazing professional opportunities. My life so far has been an amazing journey."

# NSU-COM Alumni Association Executive Committee

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1998 - Michael Gervasi, D.O. ('87)  
1999 - Tamer Gozleveli, D.O. ('94)  
2000 - John Geake, D.O. ('93)  
2001 - Isidro Pujol, D.O. ('94)  
2002 - Jeffrey Grove, D.O. ('90)  
2003 - Glenn Moran, D.O. ('88)  
2004 - Kenneth Johnson, D.O. ('91)  
2005 - Steven Cimerberg, D.O. ('87)  
2006 - Ronald Renuart, D.O. ('90)  
2007 - Gregory James, D.O. ('88)  
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2009 - Ronald Tolchin, D.O. ('89)  
2010 - Daniel Carney, D.O. ('95)

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## Living Tribute Honorees

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2004 - Lori Dribin, Ph.D.  
2005 - Edye Groseclose, Ph.D.  
2006 - Howard Hada, Ph.D.  
2008 - Cyril Blavo, D.O.  
2009 - A. Alvin Greber, D.O.  
2010 - Harold Laubach, Ph.D.

## Celebration of Excellence Distinguished Alumni

1999 - Archie McLean, D.O. ('88)  
2000 - James Turner, D.O. ('88)  
2001 - Daniel McBath, D.O. ('90)  
2003 - Joel Rush, D.O. ('85)  
2004 - Jeffrey Grove, D.O. ('90)  
2005 - Gregory James, D.O. ('88)  
2006 - Glenn Moran, D.O. ('88)  
2007 - Ross Zafonte, D.O. ('85)  
2008 - Majdi Ashchi, D.O. ('89)  
2009 - Tyler Cymet, D.O. ('88)  
2010 - John Geake, D.O. ('93)  
2011 - Jacqueline Kraveka, D.O. ('94)

## ALUMNI IN THE NEWS

**Scott R. Bunker, D.O.** ('08), who is in the process of completing his anesthesiology residency at Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Washington, D.C., will be participating in a neuroanesthesia rotation at Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore, Maryland.

**Aaron C. Collins, D.O.** ('08) joined the Visalia Medical Clinic in Visalia, California, as a family medicine specialist in August. Dr. Collins recently graduated from the family medicine program at North Colorado Family Medicine and will take his board certification exam in October.

**Joanna Drowos, D.O., M.P.H., M.B.A.** ('04) was the recipient of the American Osteopathic Foundation's Emerging Leader Award, which recognizes an osteopathic physician who has established him or herself as an emerging leader within the osteopathic profession.

**Thomas L. Garcia, D.O.** ('08) recently completed his family medicine training at Floyd Medical Center in Rome, Georgia, and is practicing family medicine at Floyd Primary Care in Rockmart, Georgia.

**Michael W. Higgins, D.O.** ('96), who completed a spinal surgery fellowship at New York University/Hospital for Joint Disease, currently serves as chief of surgery at Brooksville Regional Hospital in Brooksville, Florida.

**William Kirsh, D.O., M.P.H.** ('85), chief medical officer at Sentry Data Systems, Inc. in Deerfield Beach, Florida, participated as a contributor and editor of the Healthcare Information and Management Systems Society (HIMSS) Revenue Cycle Task Force White Paper on "The Future of Revenue Cycle: Preparing for Near-Term Change" that was published in May 2011.

**Jason Koskinen, D.O.** ('04), who is board-certified in family medicine, recently joined Cape Regional Physicians Associates in Cape May, New Jersey. Dr. Koskinen completed his graduate medical education training at Malcolm Grow Medical Center at Andrews Air Force Base in Maryland and Eglin Air Force Base in Florida.

**Christos G. Mihos, D.O.** ('09), a second-year resident in the NSU-COM/Mount Sinai Medical Center Internal Medicine Residency Program, received the prestigious Klausner Award, which is presented annually at Mount Sinai to the resident or fellow that excels in research. Dr. Mihos will be doing his cardiology fellowship at Mount Sinai when he completes his residency in 2012, becoming the first resident from the osteopathic internal medicine residency to earn a fellowship position.

**Mark A. Newberry, D.O.** ('10) coauthored an article entitled "Can Laypersons Be Trained to Effectively Deliver Osteopathic Manual Therapy to Patients with HIV? A Pilot Study" that was published in the May 2011 issue of the *Journal of the American Osteopathic Association (JAOA)*.

**Brett Scotch, D.O.** ('99), a Hillsborough County Osteopathic Medical Society (HCOMS) board member, participated in an HCOMS-organized medical outreach trip to Treasure Beach, Jamaica, with a group of physicians, nurses, and medical students at a weeklong free medical clinic held July 16-23.

**Richard R. Thacker, D.O.** ('92) was recently elected third vice president of the American Osteopathic Association's Board of Trustees at the organization's annual House of Delegates meeting in Chicago, Illinois.

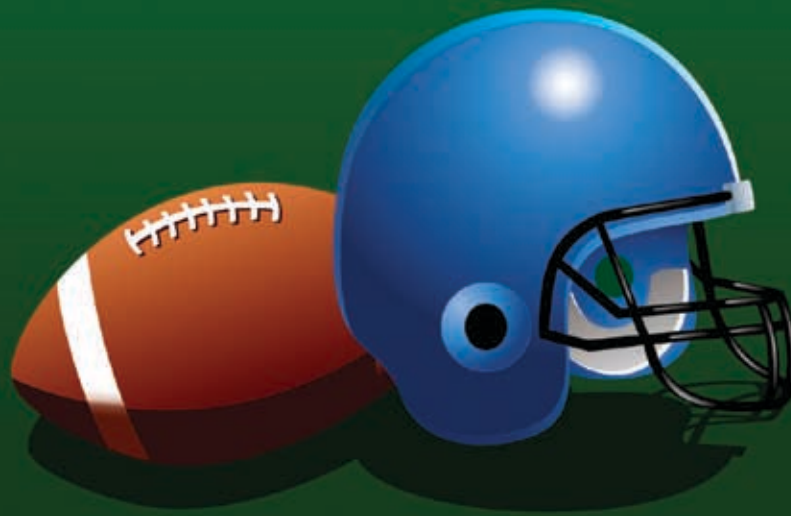


# NFL to Osteopathic Physician:



## Dr. Claude Jones Completes Incredible Metamorphosis

*By Scott Colton, APR  
Director of Medical Communications*



In a world frequently characterized by flux and frenzy, there are some people who manage to live in the same house for decades, work at the same job until retirement, and take solace in the symmetry of sameness that defines their existence. For these individuals, who generally abhor upheaval, life can best be described as an exercise in maintaining the status quo.

And then there are others who have to master the crucial art of survival in order to endure the ferocious winds of change that chaotically whip through their personal and professional lives. Such was the case with 2005 alumnus Claude Jones, D.O., M.P.H., who struggled mightily to transform himself from a star football player to an esteemed physician who now serves as medical executive director of the Lake County Health Department in Central Florida.

### **Athletic Prowess Leads to Gridiron Glory**

For Dr. Jones, who grew up in a far-from-trendy Fort Lauderdale neighborhood, becoming a physician was not a notion he gave any thought to as he watched his favorite college football team – the University of Miami Hurricanes (UM) – soar to greatness in the early 1980s. His childhood dream, like so many others before him, centered on translating his athletic abilities from his backyard to the lucrative playing fields of the National Football League (NFL).

“I used to watch football on TV all the time when I was growing up, especially the Miami Hurricanes,” said Dr. Jones, who became a standout offensive linesman at Fort Lauderdale’s Dillard High School. “It was always my dream to play for the Hurricanes, so I used to go into my backyard and put on pads and gloves and practice on an old mattress. I placed the mattress up against the wall and continually ran into it, pretending it was a player I was blocking.”

Exemplifying the cliché “practice makes perfect,” Dr. Jones soon became



*Dr. Jones in 2003, when he was a third-year NSU-COM student.*

a local hero thanks to his on-field exploits at Dillard, which soon caught the attention of a major coaching legend named Jimmy Johnson. “I had become a pretty good player by my senior year, so Mr. Johnson, who was then coach of the Miami Hurricanes, came to our home, talked to my mom, and said he wanted me to play for him.”

The following five years would prove to be heady times for Dr. Jones, who received a full football scholarship and earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Sociology during his tenure at the University of Miami. “It was a wonderful experience for me because I learned a lot about life,” said Dr. Jones, who played on three UM national championship teams in 1987, 1989, and 1991. “But it was also quite hard, trying to succeed both academically and athletically.”

Dr. Jones, who is quick to debunk the myth that most college athletes get a free academic ride while they are bringing their school national sports glory, said he toiled just as hard for

exams as he did for game day. “I’m sure there were some guys who got good grades because they had someone do their work for them, but it certainly wasn’t that way for me,” stated Dr. Jones, who met his future wife and became the proud father of two sons – Claude, Jr., and Evander – during his University of Miami playing career. “I had to fight my way through college. I would go to school in the morning, and then from noon until 9:00 at night it was all about football.”

Combining academics and athletics proved to be an often-grueling task, but Dr. Jones credits the experience for making him a better person. “A typical day would involve practicing, watching game films, doing conditioning drills, and then hitting the weight room,” said Dr. Jones, who served as an offensive linesman for the Hurricanes. “I didn’t get home most nights until around 10:00, but that’s where I learned discipline and how to keep going in stressful situations. It was rough because you had to find time to study on your own. I really had to dig deep and fight through fatigue because by the time I got home after football practice, the last thing I wanted to do







was open a book and study. I also had two babies at home at the time, so I had to balance school, football, and family.”

### **Trying Times Test Dr. Jones’ Spirit**

After graduating from the University of Miami, Dr. Jones made a seamless transition to the NFL in 1992, becoming a free agent with the New York Jets. Unfortunately, recurring ankle injuries, which required reconstructive surgery, eventually forced Dr. Jones to forego his NFL career after just two seasons. “I was advised to retire from football because the cartilage in my ankle had essentially worn away,” he explained. “But I still wanted to play, so I ended up going to the Canadian Football League (CFL) and playing for one year in Sacramento and another in Las Vegas.”

However, when U.S. teams were permanently eliminated from the CFL’s roster in 1995, Dr. Jones was left to ponder a future that included one severely cranky ankle and relatively few career options. Refusing to wallow in self-pity, Dr. Jones resettled in Fort Lauderdale with his wife and three children (which now included daughter Brittany, born in 1993) to pursue a teaching career.

After earning his certification, Dr. Jones made a triumphant return to his high school alma mater in 1996 to

teach world and American history. It may have seemed like a wise idea at the time, but Dr. Jones soon realized the passion he had for football had failed to translate to the classroom. “I was sitting at my desk one day when I started thinking to myself, ‘Is this really what I want to do with my life?’ I was still a young guy, and I just couldn’t see myself doing it 20 or 30 years down the road. I was always an ambitious person who wanted to do more, but I wasn’t quite sure what that something was.”

Fortunately, Dr. Jones would soon experience a life-altering epiphany, which occurred during a routine conversation with his doctor. “One day I was talking to my family doctor, Ervin Barr, who happened to be a D.O.,” he explained. “I was always asking him a lot of questions about diseases and drugs, so he said to me, ‘Claude, have you ever thought about going to medical school?’ It wasn’t something I had ever thought about before, so I said, ‘Gee, doc, I like a challenge, but I don’t know if I can do that.’ I had been out of school for many years and wasn’t sure I wanted to go back. So I discussed it with my wife and then spent a lot of time thinking about it before finally deciding to give it a shot.”

Showcasing the same trademark discipline that helped him succeed on the football field, Dr. Jones left his teaching position, enrolled in premed courses at nearby Broward Community College, and landed a lucrative job as a truck driver, where he worked the grueling graveyard shift. For the next three years, the concept of sleep became a distant memory as Dr. Jones struggled to attend classes, work nights, and devote attention to his family. “I wanted to succeed so badly; I was even at the point where I was sleeping in my car in front of the college, waiting for it to open,” he admitted.

When it came time to investigate possible medical school options, Dr. Jones applied to a number of institutions, including his alma mater—the University of Miami. However, he was resolute in his desire to matriculate at his optimal choice—NSU’s College of

Osteopathic Medicine. “I really wanted to go to a D.O. school because Dr. Barr had told me what the profession was all about,” he explained. “I didn’t know what a D.O. was at first, but after he told me about the incorporation of osteopathic principles and practice and the holistic approach, I knew that’s what I wanted to pursue. So I basically put all my eggs in one basket and turned down interviews at other colleges because I wanted to come to NSU-COM so badly.”

### **Family Crisis Leads to Emotional Meltdown**

In 1999, Dr. Jones’ medical school dream became a reality when he began attending NSU-COM. Unfortunately, his joy would prove to be short-lived. As he was finishing up his first year, Dr. Jones’ wife dropped a bombshell that would shatter his world and send him careening into an excruciating and seemingly unrelenting tailspin. “She came to me one day, out of the blue, and asked for a divorce,” recalled Dr. Jones, who was understandably stunned by her decision. “At first, I couldn’t understand why she was doing this to me and our kids, because we had talked about how hard it was going to be, how she was going to have to carry more of the load with me being back in school again—and she had agreed.

“Looking back, I think the pressure of carrying the load really got to her, and she just didn’t want to do it anymore,” he admitted. “It really crushed me because I went from having a family to having nothing, just like that. It just totally wiped me out. When we broke up, I had three kids to take care of—and \$15 in my pocket. So now I had to come up with a plan real quick. Do I stay in school and risk being able to make it through and not being able to take care of my kids? Or do I take some time off, get my head together, and then come back?”

While trying to deal with the enormity of his wife’s gut-wrenching decision, Dr. Jones’ life soon began spinning out of control as he plunged into a seemingly bottomless depression. Due to financial constraints, Dr. Jones



and his three kids were forced to move in with his mother as he struggled to maintain his sanity. "The first thing I did was take a leave of absence from NSU-COM in 2000," said Dr. Jones, who received ample support from the university throughout his emotionally trying ordeal. "I would often break down in tears because I just couldn't believe what had happened to my life."

For a proud man like Dr. Jones, who had always found a way to overcome life's often-cruel circumstances, this latest sucker punch seemed too crippling to conquer. "I didn't know what to do and became clinically depressed," stated Dr. Jones, who had endured the painful loss of his father when he was just 14. "I was driving around in circles one day, and I pulled over to the side of the road and just started crying for two hours. I felt like I was on a life raft in the middle of the ocean— isolated and alone. But I knew I had to figure out what I could do to help support my kids."

Although he had taken a temporary leave from the D.O. program, Dr. Jones remained enrolled in the college's Master of Public Health Program at the urging of its director, Dr. Cyril Blavo. "I talked to Dr. Blavo, and he convinced me to continue because he cared about me and knew how important it was for me to stay involved in school. So I continued on with the M.P.H. degree and graduated in 2001."

He also managed to swallow his male pride and seek therapy and assistance from the NSU community, which proved to be a pivotal step on his road to academic, emotional, and financial recovery. "At first you're in denial and you don't want to talk about it. You keep it within, which is the worst thing you could ever do," he explained. "Talking to people really helped me to cope."

### **Touchdown...Dr. Jones!**

In 2002, Dr. Jones ended his medical school sabbatical and returned to NSU-COM to begin his second year of study. Thankfully, with his personal life now in order, he thrived in his NSU-COM homecoming. "My grades

improved immediately," said Dr. Jones, who applied for and earned a three-year National Health Service Corps scholarship, which offset his tuition and provided him with a monthly support stipend. "I felt it was a time of real accomplishment for me."

After graduating from NSU-COM in 2005, Dr. Jones did a traditional rotating internship at Columbia Hospital in West Palm Beach, Florida. However, as he was about to transition into Columbia's internal medicine residency program, the enormity of what he was about to do struck him like a lightning bolt. "I think the biggest fear for me was the fact that, 'Now I'm a doctor, so everything I do from this point on has consequences because I am going to be responsible for the care of my patients and helping them get better.'

"It's almost a sense of starting over when you begin your residency program," added Dr. Jones, who is board certified in internal medicine and is a Diplomate of the American Osteopathic Board of Internal Medicine. "As an intern, you're still basically in a learning phase, and as you go along you gain more and more responsibility. But you have to learn fast because once you begin your residency, the expectation is that you already know everything. You're immediately taking calls, running codes, and doing admissions. It's basically trial by fire, which is actually a good thing because you can't sit back and just watch things happen; you have to be involved."

In addition to achieving professional progress, Dr. Jones soon found himself making huge strides from a personal perspective when he met an intriguing woman named Sabrina during his second year of residency training in 2007. "To make extra money, I worked part-time as an anatomy and physiology instructor at South University's College of Nursing campus in West Palm Beach," explained Dr. Jones, who fortuitously fell in love with one of his students—the aforementioned Sabrina, who he married in 2009.

Once he completed his residency training in 2008, Dr. Jones spent the

following three years repaying his commitment to the National Health Service Corps by working at an approved site in a high-need Health Professional Shortage Area called Community Health of South Florida, where he served as a public health physician. Never one to remain idle, Dr. Jones also burned the midnight oil by working as an addiction medicine physician at the Broward Addiction Recovery Center in Fort Lauderdale.

However, as he neared the conclusion of his National Health Service Corps commitment, Dr. Jones fixed his gaze firmly toward the future. "I really wanted to expand my possibilities, enhance my knowledge, and learn about the administrative side of medicine," said Dr. Jones, who did an extensive amount of research before tackling his next professional challenge—becoming medical executive director of the Lake County Health Department in Central Florida. In his new role, which commenced this past July, Dr. Jones is responsible for an array of tasks, ranging from directing the medical components of the county's public health programs to overseeing a 25-member staff of physicians and affiliated personnel.

"I look back and feel fortunate and blessed just to have the opportunity to do what I do every day, to help people get better and help communities," said Dr. Jones, who also monitors the revenues and expenditures of Lake County clinical sites and provides leadership to achieve fiscal goals. "It's a wonderful feeling. I have a true sense of gratitude for everyone who has helped me along the way. When you take the time to reflect on your life and look back at your struggles, you can understand why you went through the difficult times."

"In many ways, my life has been a fairytale," he admitted. "I have done things most people will never do, like going to the White House three times, meeting two presidents, winning three national titles, playing for the NFL, and earning both a D.O. and a master's degree. In spite of everything I've gone through, I'm still here."



# 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 **Ellen Rondino** in the Office of Alumni Affairs at (954) 262-1544.

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### Cumulative List (1999-2011)

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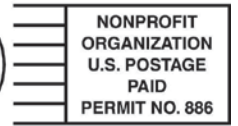
*Dr. Michael Weiss ('86)*

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Health Professions Division  
College of Osteopathic Medicine  
3200 South University Drive  
Fort Lauderdale, FL 33328-2018



## 2011-12 Calendar of Events

### **October 30 - November 3, 2011**

***AOA 116<sup>th</sup> Annual Osteopathic Medical Conference and Exposition***  
Orlando, Florida

### **December 2011**

***Medical Outreach Trips to Argentina, Bangladesh, Jamaica, and Peru***  
For additional information, please contact the International Medical Outreach Club (IMOC)  
at [nsuimoc@gmail.com](mailto:nsuimoc@gmail.com) or Dr. Robin Jacobs at [rjacobs@nova.edu](mailto:rjacobs@nova.edu).

### **February 10-12, 2012**

***16<sup>th</sup> Annual Alumni Reunion and CME Weekend***  
Hyatt Regency Pier Sixty-Six in Fort Lauderdale, Florida

### **February 23-26, 2012**

***109<sup>th</sup> Annual Florida Osteopathic Medical Association Convention***  
Hyatt Regency Bonaventure Conference Center & Spa in Weston, Florida