

Winter 1-1-2009

COM Outlook Winter 2009

College of Osteopathic Medicine

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NOVA SOUTHEASTERN UNIVERSITY

COM Outlook

College of Osteopathic Medicine

Winter 2009

Volume 10, Number 1

WHO'S WATCHING THE BABY?

A Comprehensive Look at the OB/GYN Crisis



ALSO IN THIS ISSUE...Profiles of Dr. Daniel Shaw and the Keel Brothers...Health Policy Fellowship...Alumni Reception in Las Vegas

Dean's Message



Anthony J. Silvagni, D.O., Pharm.D.

In July 2008, I reached a significant professional milestone when I celebrated my 10th anniversary as dean of NSU's College of Osteopathic Medicine. As I look back over the past decade, I can honestly say it has been the most exciting and fulfilling time of my professional career. I came here with a dream of helping this unique institution maximize its tremendous potential.

Fortunately, thanks to the outstanding support of HPD and university administration and the vision and collegiality of those involved with the college, our growth and success have exceeded anything I could have imagined when I initially joined NSU-COM.

As I reflect on the past decade, it truly is amazing to observe what we as a college have been able to accomplish. Over the past 10 years, we've more than doubled our number of full-time faculty, increased the number of students we accept in each class from 150 to 230, and augmented the number of available residency slots from 267 to 463. In addition, we've more than doubled the number of residency programs we're affiliated with from 20 in 2000 to our current count of 44 programs located at 17 affiliated institutions.

Similarly, we've augmented the number of hospitals we're affiliated with that provide clinical training to our third- and fourth-year students to 23 in a 13 core-campus system and altered these rotations to include more curricula input as well as formal examinations. We have incorporated actual courses into the third- and fourth-year clinical rotations, which is an enhancement that has worked extremely well because we can readily communicate with the students through our Web-based and compressed-video learning capabilities.

Because of space limitations, it would be impossible for me to mention everything we've accomplished over the past decade, so here is a partial list that includes the

- creation of fellowships in correctional medicine, geriatrics, forensic pathology, predoctoral research, and sports medicine
- development of the nation's first—and still only—osteopathic preventive medicine residency program
- development of the Master of Science in Medical Education
- establishment of the Consortium for Excellence in Medical Education
- emphasis on local/international medical outreach efforts
- explosion of donations to the Alumni Association Fund
- expansion of departments such as geriatrics and OPP
- implementation of OSCE curriculum
- establishment of the Center for Bioterrorism and All-

Hazards Preparedness

- creation of the award-winning *COM Outlook*
- increased faculty involvement in various levels of organized medicine
- growing percentage of students who obtain their first-choice residency
- creation of the Dean's Alumni Advisory Council
- sustained excellence of the AHEC Program
- growth of clinical research
- establishment of the research-based Behavioral Health Promotion Program
- incorporation of the M.P.H. Program under the NSU-COM umbrella and its subsequent growth
- development of various dual-degree programs, such as the D.O./D.M.D. and D.O./M.H.L.
- establishment of the Florida Coastal Geriatric Resources, Education, and Training Center (GREAT GEC)
- marked increase in faculty- and student-driven research
- establishment of the Master of Science in Biomedical Informatics program
- creation of academical societies
- increased participation in the Alumni Association
- augmentation of continuing medical education programs
- development of a sports medicine division and clinic
- growth and availability of our electronic library
- establishment of residencies in pediatrics, orthopedic surgery, sports medicine, and geriatrics

In terms of accomplishment, I would be remiss if I didn't take the time to mention our incredible students, who have brought so much acclaim to the college and university through their efforts. Whether it's winning awards for their research or donating their time to participate in numerous local and international medical outreach endeavors, our students continue to bring much pride to the college and ensure that the future of the osteopathic medical profession is indeed bright.

However, what I'm perhaps most proud of is that even with all the enhancements we've made over the past decade, we're still meeting the original mission that was set forth by our esteemed founder, Dr. Morton Terry, when he established the college in 1979. Dr. Terry's goal was "to produce well-trained primary care physicians to meet the health care needs of Florida and neighboring states, particularly in rural and other medically underserved communities." As our college has progressed, we have not departed from his mission. We have not walked away from who we are; we have simply become better at who we are.

It has certainly been an exciting and productive 10 years, and I look forward to continuing this trend as I embark on my second decade as dean of NSU's College of Osteopathic Medicine.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Anthony J. Silvagni, D.O." The signature is fluid and cursive.



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

Throughout the years, I've frequently discussed the changing paradigm of the health care delivery system that exists in the United States. This is an especially timely topic now that a new administration is about to take control of the White House.

Over the past decade, health care consumers have become acutely aware of the difficulties they face when it comes to the issue

of access of care. Even individuals who are covered under some sort of health insurance program are often anxious and confused due to the overriding restrictions private insurance carriers, Medicare, and Medicaid have imposed upon the country's health care practitioners, which prevent them from providing patients with the care they so vitally need.

As a result, what you have is an extremely frustrated and confused health care consumer population that is longing for change. This confusion, along with the interests of the general public, corporations, organized labor, and others in regard to the availability of health care, is going to result in a major change in our health care system within the next few years. I personally believe we're going to have some sort of universal health care system that will be administered by the private sector through major insurance entities (e.g., United Healthcare, Blue Cross and Blue Shield, Kaiser Permanente). These insurance providers will become the managers—the agents for the federal government if you will—to administer a universal health care program that will provide coverage for all individuals in our country.

Currently, over 50 million Americans are uninsured—and that number is projected to rise significantly in the near future due to the escalating unemployment rate. As we all know, the uninsured population needs to receive health care. Unfortunately, under the current system, the health care services they receive are the most costly because they end up in the system at the highest level of morbidity. Consequently, those of us who have insurance are indirectly paying for the uninsured through rising premium costs.

People understandably want to know why their health insurance premiums are skyrocketing annually. But it's basically the same situation that applies to our homeowners' insurance costs when a hurricane hits South Florida and all premium rates rise even though many policyholders didn't have any property damage; it's because you're paying for everyone else's damage, even though nothing may have happened to you. This may seem like an overly simplistic way to explain our current health care scenario, but that's just the way it is.

That's why I believe we're going to have a national health product that is going to be mandated by the U.S. Congress and will be bid on by the private sector, which means you are not eliminating the profit motive. In addition, there will be negotiations with all the various professional organizations and advocacy groups such as AARP. Medicare costs are going up, and retirees are having a tough time paying for Medicare Part B. I also think there will be a change implemented that will allow the federal government to negotiate lower purchasing costs for Medicare Part D with the pharmaceutical companies concerning prescription drugs for the general public as it already does for the U.S. armed forces and V.A. hospitals.

As I mentioned earlier, everybody is already paying for everybody else's health care in the United States. People like to blame others—especially the poor—for their health care costs. But the fact is it's all about numbers. The bottom line is the greater the number of people that are insured, the cheaper the cost per unit is going to be. The goal is to insure all children in the United States as well as provide coverage to all adults who are unable to afford it on their own or receive it through their employers. Under this scenario, the numbers will become so large that there is an actuarial hope that the insurance we all carry will not increase in cost. When you add over 50 million people to the rolls and start to apply certain standards of health in relation to prevention and wellness, you will minimize the use of emergency rooms as their primary care entry into the system. You will also inhibit them from using the highest cost of health care by the fact that you prevent a good deal of hypertension and obesity and diagnose ailments such as cancer, diabetes, and coronary vascular disease earlier through regular screenings.

There are some very interesting health care program permutations being offered to Congress at the present time. That's why I feel there will be a collegial and bipartisan communication process that will result in a universal type of health care system. There's even talk of bringing all the Medicaid programs under this proposed universal health care umbrella.

It certainly appears to me that the nation is demanding some sort of restructured health care program. I am looking at this situation from a realistic point of view and not through a crystal ball. When all is said and done, the elements of health care reform will be predominantly emanating from the U.S. Congress in association and agreement with the White House.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Fred Lippman Ed.D." The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.



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CEME Spotlight: Broward General Medical Center

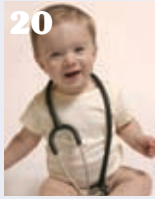
Established in 1938, Broward General Medical Center (BGMC), a subsidiary of Broward Health, is the largest hospital in Broward County. As a result of the services provided in emergency medicine, pediatrics, and adult medicine, BGMC maintains a reputation as a full-service health care facility.



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Keel Brothers Aim for Individuality, Embrace Similarity

Being identical twins can be both a blessing and curse. Just ask fourth-year students Bradley and Christopher Keel, who were born three minutes apart and have spent the past 29 years trying to establish their individualism in a world that frequently sees them as one brain inhabiting two bodies.



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Who's Watching the Baby? A Look at the OB-GYN Crisis

Declining reimbursement rates combined with skyrocketing malpractice costs and a public propensity toward litigious action have led many OB/GYNs to radically alter the way they practice, especially in Florida based on surveys that show a drastic reduction in the total number of practicing OB/GYNs.



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Health Policy Fellowship Grooms Osteopathic Leaders

Since its establishment in 1994, the Health Policy Fellowship program has graduated 147 osteopathic physicians or individuals with a professional connection to osteopathic medicine who have a desire to assume leadership roles in the profession and attain positions of influence in health policy.



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Psychologist Dr. Daniel Shaw Analyzes His Life

As a child growing up in North Miami, Florida, pursuing a career in psychology was not a thought that even remotely flickered across the professional radar screen of Dr. Daniel Shaw, who has been affiliated with NSU-COM for over two productive and professionally fulfilling decades.



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Alumni Reunion in Las Vegas Dazzles Attendees

As part of the American Osteopathic Association's 113th Annual Convention and Scientific Seminar, which took place October 26-November 1 in Las Vegas, Nevada, NSU-COM held several alumni events, including an exciting evening reception at the Mirage Hotel and Casino Secret Garden and Dolphin Habitat.

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Notice of Accreditation/Nondiscrimination

Nova Southeastern University admits students of any age, race, color, sexual orientation, pregnancy status, religion or creed, nondisqualifying disability, and national or ethnic origin. 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.



The NSU-COM Area Health Education Centers (AHEC) Program recently hosted a planning meeting of program directors comprising the Florida AHEC Network. In addition to NSU, representatives from the AHEC programs of the University of Miami, University of Florida, Florida State University, and the University of South Florida attended the meeting. Steven Zucker, D.M.D., M.Ed., NSU-COM associate dean for community affairs and AHEC program director, currently serves as president of the Florida AHEC Network.

COMmunications

- **OMS-II Michael Ree** coauthored an article entitled "Sodium Bicarbonate Vs. Sodium Chloride for the Prevention of Contrast Medium-Induced Nephropathy in Patients Undergoing Coronary Angiography" that was featured in the September 2008 issue of *JAMA*, which is the *Journal of the American Medical Association*.
- **OMS-IV Elena Timoshkin** and **Mark Sandhouse, D.O.**, interim chair of the Department of Osteopathic Principles and Practice, coauthored an article entitled "Retrospective Study of Cranial Strain Pattern Prevalence in a Healthy Population" that was published in the November 2008 issue of the *Journal of the American Osteopathic Association*.
- **Mae Taylor**, assistant to the vice dean, who is pursuing her master's degree in marine biology from NSU's Oceanographic Center, recently coauthored an article entitled "Live Release of a Bigeye Sand Tiger (*Odontaspis noronhai*) in the Western North Atlantic" in the November 2008 issue of the *Bulletin of Marine Science*.
- **NSU's Student Medical Center** was featured in a news segment about student medical insurance that appeared on *MoneyTalksNews.com*.
- In October, **Fred Lippman, R.Ph., Ed.D.**, chancellor of the Health Professions Division, was named as the 2008 Humanitarian of the Year by the Town of Davie's Emergency Assistance Service Effort (EASE) Foundation, which annually honors a Broward County citizen who is renowned for doing outstanding philanthropic work and encouraging others to participate in charitable endeavors. The foundation, which was established in 1988, works to aid qualified residents of Davie, on a one-time basis, that are in need of temporary emergency assistance.

Progress in Portugal



Pictured (from left) are: Dr. Salvador Trigo; Margaret Wilkinson, Ph.D., assistant dean for preclinical education; Dr. Anthony J. Silvagni; Mrs. Salvador Trigo; Nadine Trigo; and Dr. Pedro Reis.

In October, representatives from the Universidade Fernando Pessoa in Portugal met with NSU-COM administrators to discuss an affiliation between the two institutions that will involve developing versions of the College of Osteopathic Medicine's master of public health and master of biomedical informatics programs at Universidade Fernando Pessoa. In addition, a program from NSU's Fischler School of Education and Human Services will be developed in Portugal.

Medical Explorers' Participants Learn Suturing Techniques

The Student National Medical Association and Sigma Sigma Phi recently coordinated a suture clinic for the Medical Explorers program, which allowed high school students interested in pursuing medical careers to learn how to suture through demonstrations provided by Dr. David Thomas and NSU-COM students. "The most rewarding thing about the Medical Explorers program is that we have had the opportunity to provide exposure to the medical profession to several high school students who would not have had the opportunity otherwise," said OMS-II Candace White, who serves as the SNMA's Medical Explorers' chairperson. "Many have told me how this program has given them a lifelong goal to strive for—a career in medicine. Now that puts a smile on my face."





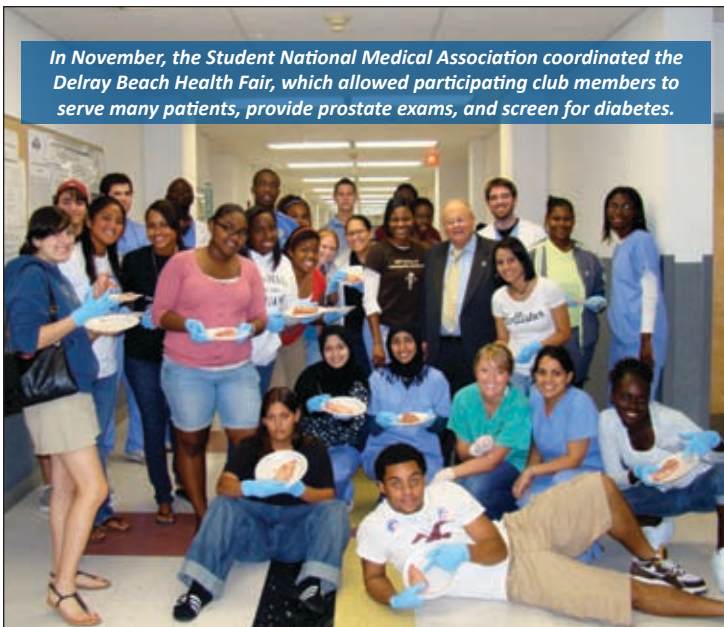
Dr. Marc Morganstine

NSU-COM recently received a monetary gift totaling over \$48,000 from Marc Morganstine, D.O., vice president of medical education at Palmetto General Hospital, and Julian Blitz, D.O., a retired family practice physician who worked in Broward County. Drs. Blitz and Morganstine also served as directors of Midwinter Seminars—a nonprofit organization that ran continuing medical education (CME) programs. The money was donated to allow the college to continue providing CME services, especially those that assist Broward County Osteopathic Medical Association members.

Dr. Geake Honored



On November 12, the Rural Medicine Club hosted an event honoring John Geake, D.O., (seated, bottom row) for his years of service to the rural and underserved residents of Florida. Dr. Geake, who graduated from NSU-COM in 1993, continually gives back to the college by serving as a clinical preceptor, volunteering at the annual REACH Fair, and staying active in the Alumni Association.



In November, the Student National Medical Association coordinated the Delray Beach Health Fair, which allowed participating club members to serve many patients, provide prostate exams, and screen for diabetes.

GEC Open House Attracts Diverse Crowd



THE GREAT GEC Open House ceremony was a proud day for those who played a major role in the center's establishment and resultant success. Pictured (from left) are: Sona Hromulak, M.Sc., M.B.A., administrative program manager, GREAT GEC; Cecilia Rokusek, Ed.D., R.D., executive director, GREAT GEC; Jessica De Leon, Ph.D., assistant project manager, GREAT GEC; Dr. Naushira Pandya; Leonard Levy, D.P.M., M.P.H., assistant dean of education, planning, and research, and Dr. Anthony J. Silvagni.

On December 5, faculty and staff of the NSU-COM Florida Coastal Geriatric Resources, Education, and Training Center (GREAT GEC) hosted an open house for NSU faculty, staff, and students and GEC consortium members as well as community members and dignitaries from the state of Florida. The day began with a geriatric grand rounds presentation by Douglas Beach, Ph.D., secretary of the Florida Department of Elder Affairs, who spoke to an overflow crowd. During his presentation, Dr. Beach outlined the current status of elderly affairs in Florida and discussed the challenges the state faces with current budget deficits to support Medicare and long-term care.

Following Dr. Beach's presentation, the GREAT GEC, which was established in 2007, held a festive ribbon-cutting ceremony for its newly remodeled center. Over 100 guests attended the special event, which began with the official ribbon cutting by Dr. Anthony J. Silvagni and Dr. Beach (below left). Naushira Pandya, M.D., CMD, who serves as the center's project director, hosted the open house along with GREAT GEC interdisciplinary faculty and staff from throughout the Health Professions Division.



NSU-COM Partners with Law Center

NSU-COM, in partnership with the Consortium for Excellence in Medical Education (CEME) and NSU's Shepard Broad Law Center, has developed a series of seminars that focus on legal topics that are of high content value to residents in training as well as physicians in active practice. The series content is taken directly from the law school's highly successful Master of Science in Health Law degree program, which is designed to provide health care professionals with a greater understanding of the law and how it relates to health care. Topics covered in the series include

- who can legally make decisions for patients
- the parameters of informed consent
- end-of-life issues
- employment contracts and covenants
- basics of administrative law
- choosing a business structure for your medical practice

The series is currently presented to COM full-time faculty, CEME residents, and COM/CEME clinical faculty via live presentation, compressed-video transmission, and DVD. The series is an example of CEME's ongoing efforts to provide faculty and resident development in topics that are unique and not readily available in most continuing education venues. CEME and COM administration is very thankful to the faculty members of NSU's Shepard Broad Law Center for their participation in this timely project.

COMmunications

■ **OMS-II Lindsay LaCorte** presented her research project titled "Prevalence of Metabolic Syndrome and Other CVD Risk Factors in Rural Versus Urban Regions of Ecuador" at the American Public Health Association 136th Annual Meeting and Exposition last October in San Diego, California. LaCorte and coauthors Roger Alvarez and Alberto Caban-Martinez, M.P.H., who are both fourth-year students, utilized data that was collected during the college's March 2008 medical outreach excursion to Ecuador.

■ **Lynne Cawley, M.Sc.**, director of alumni affairs, was reelected to a two-year term as chair of the Alumni and Development Council of the American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine.

AMSA Commemorates National Primary Care Week

By *OMS-II Heather Ruff, AMSA Vice President*



The college's American Medical Student Association (AMSA) chapter worked in conjunction with many other student groups to celebrate National Primary Care Week in October 2008. The weeklong series of events began on October 6 with the NSU-COM chapter of the American College of Osteopathic Family Physicians sponsoring a talk by Ralph Wood, D.O., who chairs the Department of Family Medicine.

The week's keynote event, sponsored by AMSA, was held on October 7 when Gloria Wilder, M.D., M.P.H., came from Washington, D.C., to talk to us about her experiences as a pediatrician working in underserved areas of Washington. Dr. Gloria (as she likes to be called) served as director of community pediatrics at Georgetown University Medical Center and chair of mobile health programs at Children's National Medical Center.

NSU students, faculty, and staff were joined by other health care professionals from our community to hear Dr. Gloria speak and enjoy snacks provided by various other student groups such as the Peds Club, AMWA, CMDA, HOMSA, MSFC, Rural Medicine, SGA, SNMA, SOAR, and SOMA. The room was packed as Dr. Gloria gave an emotionally stirring talk about her path to becoming a physician who specializes in serving the underprivileged population of Washington D.C.

Her presentation was peppered with humor and optimism for the future of health care in America despite the bleak conditions faced by many in underserved communities. This AMSA event was made possible by generous support from some of its prestigious cofounders, the NSU-COM Alumni Association, and the college's Area Health Education Centers (AHEC) Program.

We rounded out National Primary Care Week with two presentations on October 9. The NSU-COM chapter of the Student Association of Obstetrics and Gynecology sponsored a talk with Kenneth Johnson, D.O., associate professor of OB/GYN and public health, who discussed the importance of OB/GYN practitioners as primary care providers. In addition, the Student Osteopathic Internal Medicine Association sponsored a talk by Robert Hasty, D.O., assistant professor of internal medicine, and Natasha Bray, D.O., assistant professor of internal medicine. Drs. Hasty and Bray spoke about their experiences in internal medicine, the importance of primary care, and some of the reasons they enjoy working in a primary care environment.

Palmetto General Hospital Receives Recognition

Palmetto General Hospital in Hialeah, Florida, which is a member of NSU-COM's Consortium for Excellence in Medical Education, received a number of prestigious accolades over the past year. These include

- being designated as a Center of Excellence by the American College of Surgeons (ACS) and accredited as a Level 1b facility by the American Surgery Center Network Accreditation Program of the ACS

- receiving the 2008 HealthGrades Maternity Care Excellence Award, earning a five-star rating for clinical excellence, and being ranked among the top five percent of hospitals in the nation for maternity care services for the sixth consecutive year

- earning the 2008 American Heart Association (AHA) Get With The Guidelines Silver Performance Achievement Award, which is presented to hospitals that have demonstrated for at least one year that 85 percent of its coronary patients (without contraindications) are discharged following the AHA's recommended treatment guidelines

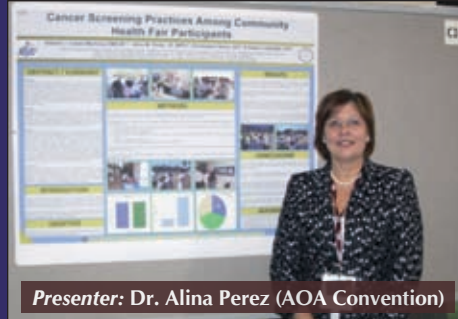
- receiving the 2008 Life Alliance Luminare Award for achieving the 75 percent conversion rate goal established by the U.S. secretary of health and human resources in the Gift of Life Donation Initiative



NSU-COM Rural Medicine Club members visited the Big Cypress Seminole Reservation on November 14, where the students toured the administrative building and received a history lesson about the Seminole Indians. The excursion also included lunch and an airboat tour of the Everglades, which allowed the students to get a close-up view of many animals and medicinal plants in the area.

AOA and AMA Poster Presentations

During the American Osteopathic Association 113th Annual Convention and Scientific Seminar last October in Las Vegas, Nevada, and the American Medical Association 6th Annual Joint Research Poster Symposium last November in Orlando, Florida, several students and faculty members coauthored and presented research posters.



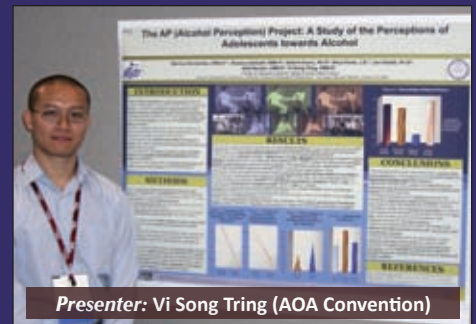
Presenter: Dr. Alina Perez (AOA Convention)

Title: "The AP (Alcohol Perception) Project: A Study of the Perceptions of Adolescents Towards Alcohol"

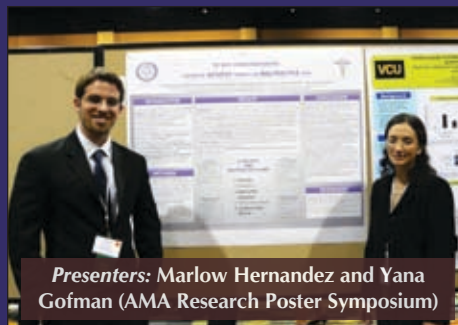
Coauthors: Kelli Burton (OMS-II), Shawna DeGraff (OMS-II), Marlow Hernandez (OMS-II), Vi Song Tring (OMS-II), Jon Dodds, Ph.D., Alina Perez, J.D., and Gabriel Suci, Ph.D.

Title: "Cancer Screening Practices Among Community Health Fair Participants"

Coauthors: Alberto Caban Martinez (OMS-IV), Susan Ledbetter, D.O., Alina Perez, J.D., and Christopher Siano, D.O.



Presenter: Vi Song Tring (AOA Convention)

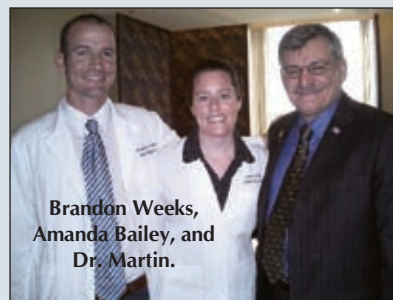


Presenters: Marlow Hernandez and Yana Gofman (AMA Research Poster Symposium)

Title: "The Most Common Misdiagnoses: A Review of Autopsy Findings and Malpractice Data"

Coauthors: Yana Gofman (OMS-II), Marlow Hernandez (OMS-II), Chad McDonald (OMS-II), Shawna Suchecki (OMS-II), and Wayne Schreier, Ph.D.

ACOFPP President Meets with Students



Brandon Weeks, Amanda Bailey, and Dr. Martin.

On November 5, NSU-COM's student chapter of the American College of Osteopathic Family Physicians (ACOFPP) had the pleasure of hosting Ronnie Martin, D.O., FACOFPP, who serves as president of the ACOFPP and spent five years as an NSU-COM administrator, for a campus visit. During a packed lunchtime meeting, Dr. Martin discussed a range of topics, including what the ACOFPP is doing for the future of family medicine and the improvements students can expect in graduate medical education.

"Dr. Martin also took time to pass on wisdom that will guide us through our careers," said OMS-II Brandon Weeks, president of the ACOFPP student chapter. "I'd like to paraphrase a pearl from Dr. Martin, stimulated by a question from the audience: To be sure you're considering the patient's best interests, you should look in the mirror and ask yourself, 'Am I doing this for the patient or to the patient?' When you're doing something for the patient, you'll never go wrong."

Health Policy Forum Sparks Spirited Discussion



Pictured (from left) are second-year students Tony Weaver, Hara Rosen, Heather Ruff, Lindsay LaCorte, Denise Jordan, and Vi Song-Tring.

In order for South Florida voters to make an informed decision, the Student Osteopathic Medical Association, American Medical Women's Association, Student Professional Ethics Committee, Christian Medical and Dental Association, American Medical Student Association, and the NSU-COM Student Government Association presented their Uncovering the Future of Health Policy forum. The event, held October 16 in the HPD's Steele Auditorium, attracted numerous NSU-HPD faculty members as well as over 200 medical and dental students to listen to a pair of special guest speakers:

- Florida Congressman Ron Klein, who served as the Democratic Party representative for Barack Obama
- Republican representative Sharon Day, who served as the national chair of Women for McCain.

The speakers presented the health policy proposals of their respective presidential candidates and answered important questions pertaining to the future of the health care professions.



Dr. Fred Lippman, Health Professions Division chancellor, and Congressman Ron Klein.

NSU Employee Luncheon Honors Dedication, Longevity

On December 10, NSU held its annual Employee Anniversary and Recognition Luncheon at the Signature Grand in Davie to recognize staff and faculty members who have reached significant employment milestones. Following are the College of Osteopathic Medicine honorees:

20 Years of Service

Dr. Cyril Blavo



15 Years of Service

*Reimar Rodriguez
Dr. Mark Sandhouse*



10 Years of Service

*Dr. Barbara Arcos
Annette Clarke
Johneta Goodwin
Dr. Jennie Q. Lou
Kevin Nugent
Loiza Orts
Carmen Robledo
Dr. Anthony J. Silvagni*

5 Years of Service

*Dr. Pablo Calzada
Donna Chase
Raymond Ferrero III
Mirlyn Hurry
Dr. Susan Ledbetter
Dr. Naushira Pandya
David Thomas
Dr. Monica Warhaftig*



On December 2, NSU-COM coordinated its own recognition reception to personally honor those individuals from the college who had reached various employment landmarks. Pictured (standing from left) are Carmen Robledo, Dr. Naushira Pandya, Dr. Barbara Arcos, Dr. Monica Warhaftig, Dr. Jennie Lou, Mirlyn Hurry, and Annette Clarke. Seated are Dr. Cyril Blavo, Dr. Anthony J. Silvagni, and Dr. Mark Sandhouse.

Residency Fair Offers Students Glimpse into the Future



On November 14, NSU-COM coordinated its annual Residency Fair, which provides third-year students with a unique opportunity to meet with the directors of medical education (DMEs) and program directors from various U.S. residency programs. During the event, the students learn about a variety of residency programs, have an opportunity to ask the DMEs and program directors specific questions, and obtain feedback that invariably helps them decide where they want to pursue their residency training.

“The NSU College of Osteopathic Medicine Residency Fair is an excellent opportunity for our third-year students to network with residency program personnel from across the country,” said Joseph DeGaetano, D.O., M.S.Ed., FAAFP, FACOFP, associate professor of family medicine and assistant dean of clinical curriculum and GME. “The event really helps our students make smart decisions regarding where they wish to go for their next phase of training as a physician.”



Track Day Provides Vital Networking Experience for Students



On December 5, the college held its annual Track Day, which allows second-year students to meet with the directors of medical education (DMEs) from the 15 affiliated core campuses that provide clinical training to the students during their third- and fourth-year rotations. During Track Day, OMS-II students learn about the COM's affiliated core campuses, which are located in Florida, Alabama, and Georgia, and have an opportunity to ask the DMEs specific questions. The students utilize this information to begin to make decisions as to where they wish to go for their third- and fourth-year clinical training. The DMEs enjoy the opportunity to spend a day on campus, visit with COM faculty and administration, and meet their new cadre of trainees for the coming academic year.



MASH Holds Inaugural Alumni Dinner



Pictured (from left in back row) are Fahad Syed, Mehdi Jafri, 2004 alumnus Azhar Dalal, D.O., and 2008 alumnus Mohsin Siddiqui, D.O. Pictured (front row from left) are Saima Rafiq, Aisha Khan, Samya Mohammad, 2004 alumnae Rabia Halim Khan, D.O., and 2007 alumnae Hina Siddiqui D.O.

On November 24, the Muslim Association of Students in Healthcare (MASH) held its inaugural alumni dinner, which featured participation from several NSU-COM alumni who discussed their journey through medical school, rotations, and residency with current MASH members.

NSU Division of Clinical Operations Update

By Robert Oller, D.O., CEO, Division of Clinical Operations



■ The Third Annual Shark Shuffle 5K run and walk, which was held on September 21 and is a component of NSU's wellness initiative, was a great success as it attracted 765 registrants, 91 student volunteers, and 20 staff/faculty volunteers. Twenty-seven \$500 deans' grants were awarded to NSU students, while five \$100 headmaster's grants were presented to University School students. Shark Shuffle participants also had the chance to win various prizes, which included two airline tickets that were awarded to an 81-year old man who walked the course.

■ On September 14, NSU hosted its seventh annual A Day for Children health fair on the university campus, which attracted over 10,000 participants and 150 community organizations. The event, which has been described as Broward County's premier event for children, brings together a range of university services that are available to children in a fun, carnival-type atmosphere. The health fair featured free health screenings in critical areas such as vision, medicine, speech, behavior, and dental health as well as physical and occupational therapy, which were provided through the NSU Health Care Centers network. These screenings provide a tremendous benefit to the families since many of the children have

never been examined by a health care professional. During the event, a new dental fluoride varnishing treatment for children was introduced, with over 3,000 receiving the treatment. 2,500 free bicycle helmets were distributed by the Epilepsy Foundation, while Broward Health featured a teddy bear clinic to help familiarize children with the health care services provided in a hospital. In addition, 1,800 children were signed up to receive health care benefits through the Florida KidCare program and Florida Medicaid.

■ In October, NSU-COM's clinical services personnel began the process of implementing the NextGen electronic medical records system. This brings to fruition a yearlong planning effort for this phase of the university-wide project, which will have all NSU clinical operations supported by both electronic business operation as well as electronic medical records. This is an important milestone since less than 10 percent of our nation's health care providers have implemented total electronic medical systems support and documentation.

■ NSU was recently awarded the American Heart Association's Start! Fit-Friendly Gold Award and the Community Fitness Innovation Award for innovative programs that promote worksite wellness. Only 12 innovation awards have been presented nationally.

■ On November 14, NSU hosted the Executive Leadership Symposium titled Giving CEOs the Ability to Control Future Health Care Costs at the Alvin Sherman Library, Research, and Information Technology Center. The symposium featured a discussion among local employers that have differentiated themselves from their competitors with winning workplace wellness programs. Executives from NSU, JM Family Enterprises, The Ocean Reef Club, and Seitlin & Company discussed ways in which every employer can implement a wellness program. The program's goal was to educate South Florida's leaders regarding the need for, and benefits of, population health management programs and workplace wellness.

Pictured (from left) at the Educational Leadership Symposium are: Dee Edington, Ph.D., director of the University of Michigan's Health Management Research Center; Ray Ferrero, Jr., J.D., NSU president; Robert Oller, D.O., CEO of NSU's Division of Clinical Operations; Rick Luceri, M.D., vice president of medical services, JM Family Enterprises; Mark Kirkendall, executive director, The Ocean Reef Club; and Rose Amberson, M.S.W., vice president of human capital services, Seitlin & Company.



Student Government Association Report

By Jessica Hilst, OMS-III and SGA President

Political advocacy in America is a subject far removed from the everyday curriculum of the average osteopathic medical student. In fact, many students graduate without a complete understanding of the purpose or benefits of advocacy in health care. Because of this, policymaking in the health care field is very commonly instituted with little input from the very professionals those policies will affect. This disconnect is seen not only in health care but in many areas of politics on a local, national, and global level that impact our students.

These observations led the Student Government Association at Nova Southeastern University College of Osteopathic Medicine to create a Student Advocacy Series (SAS) in 2008 with the hopes of establishing a body of student advocates. The goals of the SAS are to educate students about issues they should know about, inspire informed debate regarding those issues, and empower them to do something and become advocates for what they feel passionate about.

Because 2008 was a presidential election year, the obvious choice for the first semester of SAS programming was national politics. We outlined our mission to our clubs and interest groups on campus and challenged them to participate in activities as part of the series.

Our first event was a voter registration drive, held July 15-17 with SOMA and then August 19-21 with SNMA. Many students throughout the Health Professions Division were registered during the drives. We also provided information about both absentee and early voting in Florida.

One of the first steps to creating student advocates in the area of health care policy was to educate our students about the basics. We accomplished this on August 20, with the Health Care Policy Panel Discussion. Three D.O.s, one M.D., and one D.D.S. joined us to give their opinions about being a health care worker today and answer questions about the future of medicine. Topics included GME funding, physician shortages, Medicaid/Medicare, the possibility of universal health care, and the growth of osteopathic medicine. We had a large student turnout and received excellent feedback regarding the efficacy of this discussion.

Another project we created was an ongoing debate party at the NSU Flight Deck. At each of the presidential and vice presidential debates, we hosted a watching party with food and drinks. This created an environment for real-time discussion of interesting topics and policies as they affect us as physicians and as students.

On October 19, the SGA, along with several other student organizations, hosted the Uncovering the Future of Health Care forum. Surrogates from each presidential

candidate came to speak on health care policy issues as they pertained to President-Elect Barack Obama and John McCain: Democratic Congressman Ron Klein and National Republican Committeewoman Sharon Day. After speaking on their candidate's policies, each guest was asked the same set of questions that were pre-submitted by NSU-COM students. Topics included universal health care, health care for children, legislative changes, and Medicare reimbursement.

Now that the election is over, the SGA is planning for next semester's SAS events. Our focus for the spring semester is to include local advocacy that pertains to being an osteopathic medical student. Some plans in the works include a D.O. degree designation debate, a grassroots advocacy workshop (hosted by our SGA secretary—a former lobbyist), a mock trial with NSU's Shepard Broad Law Center, an osteopathic political action committee event, and an ethical dinner hosted by the SGA's Student Professional and Ethics Committee.

We have had excellent response and results from the SAS program. Hopefully, this program will continue to blossom to include more areas of student advocacy training. The benefits of advocacy education are remarkable and make each participant a better physician in a political landscape that is already affecting our lives.



Looking Back...at Our New Home



Arnold Melnick, D.O., M.Sc.

Once the merger agreement was signed between Southeastern University of the Health Sciences and Nova University—no, actually long before it was—we all began to consider the “where, when and how” for the new buildings of the Health Professions Division of Nova Southeastern University on the Davie site. All parties agreed that we wanted to do it right and produce something worthwhile.

A 21-acre parcel of ground, originally sold many years ago by Nova University, was repurchased by NSU for the HPD site. Serendipitously, it was located on University Drive, adjacent to the rest of the campus. Then came the real planning. Because we had great experience with several companies in the past, we knew who we wanted to do the technical arrangements. ACAI Associates (Adolfo Cotilla, president) was chosen to be the architects, and the firm of Miller and Solomon (Larry Kibbler, president) was picked to do the construction. Both companies—and their presidents—had done outstanding work for us in North Miami Beach.

Working with them were a number of our staff members and administrators—too numerous to mention—but the lead project manager for HPD was Johnathan Rose, then our vice chancellor of operations, and for NSU John Santulli, vice president for facilities management. These two individuals, along with Adolfo and Larry, worked day-to-day, almost side-by-side, to ensure our success.

In order to provide exactly what we needed, Adolfo and his team interviewed all our administrators and all department heads, plus a large number of faculty members (including committees from each school) to determine everyone’s needs and wants—a tedious task but well worth the time it took. Part of that planning was to build in as much electronic components and teaching facilities as possible. From all this, the architects put together an innovative building plan. The proposal was enthusiastically approved by the HPD Board of Governors and the NSU Board of Trustees.

From initial programming and then through the site plan, architectural planning, and construction, it took about 18 months. That was due to “fast-track” programming—



continuing planning while simultaneously building—and we were the largest fast-track program in Broward County. The actual construction phase took only about eight months. An outstanding accomplishment was that the building was completed ahead of schedule and came in below budget—a tribute to all involved.

COM Outlook readers would find it redundant for me to describe what was built when they can see it every day in reality and in operation—and with a lot more beauty and relevance and utility than my words could convey. However, several of the many highpoints really thrill me. Amazingly, we built four separate buildings so seamlessly integrated that, inside, it appears to be one building. I am also proud of the 500-seat auditorium, the 50-computer station classroom, the dozen-plus offices for patient-simulation learning, the 100-seat Harvey (simulated mannequin) laboratory, and an unusual number of individual offices (700). And we had a huge patient-service clinical building.

All in all, we developed a facility consisting of more than 900,000 square feet, at a cost of about \$40 million—more than double what our North Miami Beach campus had cost. Add to that the buildings we constructed after the initial ones—the parking garage (1,600 spaces), the Assembly II Building (38,000 square feet), and the College of Dental Medicine (70,000 square feet), which was started less than six months after completion of the major structure—and we truly have an impressive Health Professions Division campus to be proud of.



Dr. Arnold Melnick is the founding dean of Southeastern College of Osteopathic Medicine (the precursor to NSU-COM). His pithy columns serve as a humorous and insightful bridge to

the past—and remind us of how far our college has come in a relatively short period of time.

Faculty Focus

Paula Anderson-Worts, D.O., M.P.H., associate professor of family medicine and public health, **Janet Hamstra, Ed.D.**, medical education specialist/assistant professor of internal medicine, and **Daniel Shaw, Ph.D., M.Ed.**, associate professor of family medicine, presented a paper entitled “The Professionalism Portfolio” at the Association of the Behavioral Sciences and Medical Education 38th Annual Meeting in San Diego, California.

David Boesler, D.O., M.S., associate professor of osteopathic principles and practice, was named chair of the Department of Neuromusculoskeletal Medicine.

Linda Cox, M.D., clinical assistant professor, was quoted in an article entitled “U.S. Experts Still Unsure of Allergy Relied by Mouth” that appeared in *U.S. News & World Report* and other news sources such as *News-Medical.net* in Sydney, Australia.

Joseph De Gaetano, D.O., M.S.Ed., FAAFP, FACOPF, associate professor of family medicine and assistant dean of clinical curriculum and GME, has been appointed to the American Osteopathic Association’s M.D.s in OGME Task Force. He also continues to chair a national task force on core competencies for the AOA and serve as a member on the American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine’s Society of Osteopathic Medical Educators’ Steering Committee.

Marti Echols, Ph.D., assistant professor of internal medicine and assistant dean of medical education, attended a conference in September on Enhancing Medical Education Outcomes: An Application-Oriented Curriculum at the Texas College of Osteopathic Medicine, which highlighted this new approach to curriculum.

Rogério Faillace, M.D., FAAP, assistant professor of pediatrics, appeared on the Health Professions Division TV program *Dateline Health* with William Blechman, M.D., director of Docs for Tots Florida, which is a nationwide network of doctors advocating for young children. Dr. Faillace, who is a board-certified pediatrician, discussed issues such as medical screenings for children and the treatments he provides to pediatric patients at NSU. He also made a presentation on the profession of pediatrics at the Urban League of Broward County’s summer camp.

Raymond Ferrero III, J.D., associate professor of family medicine/public health and HPD executive director for intramural health affairs, appeared on *Comcast Newsmakers* in September to address the Marchman Act and issues relating to drug and alcohol addiction. Ferrero, who is a partner at Addiction Recovery Legal Services, helps families file the Marchman Act, which is a Florida state law that can be used to force adults or juveniles impaired by drug or alcohol addiction into hospitalization and treatment.



Dr. Anderson-Worts



Dr. Boesler



Dr. De Gaetano



Dr. Echols



Dr. Faillace



Dr. Johnson



Dr. Levy



Dr. Oller

Jay Fleisher Ph.D., associate professor of public health, was invited as one of two outside consultants to discuss the results of a European Union-sponsored bathing water epidemiological investigation that encompassed five different countries. Dr. Fleisher will advise the World Health Organization (WHO) on the potential impact of the studies in regard to setting world guidelines for safe recreational water environments. In addition, Dr. Fleisher presented the results of his “Recreational Water Transmission in Subtropical Waters” study, which is the first of its kind, to the participants at the WHO Consultation held January 12-16, 2009, in Geneva, Switzerland.

Robert Hasty, D.O., FACOI, assistant professor of internal medicine and program director of the Palmetto General Hospital Internal Medicine Residency, presented an array of statewide and national lectures over the past few months. Topics he addressed included “Prevention of Medical Errors 2008” at the West Virginia Society of Osteopathic Medicine Annual Convention and the Southwest Florida Osteopathic Medical Society Annual Convention, “Prevention of Medical Errors” at North Shore Medical Center and Barry University, and “Transfer of Care” at the West Virginia Society of Osteopathic Medicine Annual Convention. In November, he was elected to the American College of Osteopathic Internists Council on Education and Evaluation.

Kenneth Johnson, D.O., FACOOG, associate professor of obstetrics and gynecology and director of the NSU Women’s Health Center, was appointed to the Florida Diabetes Advisory Council by Governor Charlie Crist. He also was interviewed for an article on Viagra for women that appeared in the October 1 edition of the *South Florida Sun-Sentinel*.

Heidi Lane, Ed.D., assistant professor of internal medicine and director of patient-centered education, attended the Arcadia Summit: Education Management Solutions User Network event held in Denver, Colorado, in October. The three-day event served as an interactive training session for users of the EMS system, and participants were provided an exclusive learning opportunity, which involved utilizing a premiere simulation and standardized patient facility, content experts, and user content and technique sharing.

Leonard Levy, D.P.M, M.P.H., professor of family medicine/public health and associate dean for education, planning, and research, and Dr. Cecilia Rokusek were presented with awards from the Miami-Dade Department of Health on October 27 “in appreciation for outstanding support and volunteer assistance in meeting the health needs of the residents of Miami-Dade County.”

Fred Lippman, R.Ph., Ed.D., professor of family medicine and public health and chancellor of the Health Professions Division, was recently elected to serve a one-year term as chairman of the Palmetto General Hospital Board of Governors. Dr. Lippman, who has served on Palmetto's 20-member board for nine years, was a popular choice to serve as chairman due to his continued efforts to create an environment that brings the advocacy of exemplary patient care and significant professional capabilities of the medical staff and other health care providers to the Tenet system administration.

Robert Oller, D.O., professor of family medicine and CEO of the NSU Division of Clinical Operations, was interviewed by WPBT Channel 2's *Nightly Business News* regarding the influence of pharmaceutical drug representatives on the prescribing habits of physicians. He also served as a speaker along with several other NSU faculty members at WPBT Channel 2's Sixth Annual Speaking of Women's Health Conference at the Signature Grand in Davie.

Edward Packer, D.O., FAAP, FACOP, professor and chair of the Department of Pediatrics, presented a lecture on "Enhancing Early Childhood Brain Development" for the Broward County Library's Smart Start program to parents of young children. The program was established to educate parents on various ways to improve childhood development and encourage reading.

Naushira Pandya, M.D., CMD, associate professor and chair of the Department of Geriatrics, was appointed by Governor Charlie Crist to serve on the Florida Cancer Control and Research Advisory Council. She also was invited to join the editorial board of the *Journal of the American Medical Directors Association (JAMDA)* and coauthored an article entitled "The Prevalence and Persistence of Sliding Scale Insulin Use Among Newly Admitted Elderly Nursing Home Residents with Diabetes Mellitus" in a recent issue of the publication. In November, she presented a lecture on anemia at the American Society of Consultant Pharmacists' 39th Annual Meeting and Exhibition in New Orleans, Louisiana.

Cecilia Rokusek, Ed.D., R.D., executive director of education, planning, and research and CBAP project manager, recently edited a manual entitled *Nutrition for Special Health Care Needs - Children to Adults*, which is a self-study course for the book *Pediatric Nutrition in Chronic Diseases and Developmental Disorders*. She also held two national training programs in October and November for the Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education (CAAHEP) on "All-Hazards Preparedness Curriculum Development and Integration." The five-hour training programs were given to deans,



Dr. Packer



Dr. Pandya



Dr. Rokusek



Dr. Sandhouse



Dr. Shamus



Dr. Thomas



Dr. Wallace



Dr. Wood

directors, and faculty members from 29 different allied health professions in the CAAHEP and held in Chicago, Illinois, and Orlando, Florida.

Mark Sandhouse, D.O., associate professor of osteopathic principles and practice, has been named interim chair of the Department of Osteopathic Principles and Practice. Dr. Sandhouse replaces former chair Dr. Elaine Wallace, who was recently promoted to the position of associate dean for academic administration.

Andrea Sciberras, D.O., assistant professor of internal medicine, discussed the topics "Whole Patient Assessment" and "Osteopathic Manipulative Treatment at the End of Life" at the American College of Osteopathic Internists' EPEC Program, which was a component of the 68th Annual Convention and Scientific Sessions held October 29-November 2 in Marco Island, Florida.

Eric Shamus, Ph.D., M.S., associate professor of osteopathic principles and practice, traveled to Brazil last September to participate in the 2008 Congresso Internacional de Fisioterapia, where he presented seminars on "Stabilometry" and "The Use of a Quadrant Postural Scale on Clinical Practice: The Effect of Positive and Negative-Heeled Shoes on Postural Balance and Lumbar EMG."

David Thomas, M.D., J.D., professor of surgery/public health and chair of the Department of Surgery, served as a panelist at a symposium coordinated by the Global Alliance to Immunize Against AIDS and held in December at Brown University in Providence, Rhode Island. A range of topics such as behavioral change, partner reduction, and circumcision were discussed during the event, which helped commemorate World AIDS Day.

Elaine Wallace, D.O, M.Sc., professor and former chair of the Department of Osteopathic Principles and Practice, was promoted to the position of associate dean for academic administration in October 2008. In this new role, Dr. Wallace will assist in providing supervision for the coordination and facilitation of NSU-COM academic services.

Ralph Wood, D.O., assistant professor of family medicine and chair of the Department of Family Medicine, had his article entitled "A Family Physician's Experience with Patenting a New Indication for an Existing Drug" published in the November 2008 issue of the ACOFP's *Osteopathic Family Physician News*.



CEME SPOTLIGHT:

Broward General Medical Center

Established in 1938, Broward General Medical Center (BGMC), a subsidiary of Broward Health, is the largest hospital in Broward County. BGMC, a 716-bed hospital, is a regionally renowned Level I Trauma Center. As a result of the services provided in emergency medicine, pediatrics, and adult medicine, BGMC maintains a reputation as a full-service health care facility. The Heart Center of Excellence, the Comprehensive Cancer Center, the Joint Replacement Center, the Orthopedics Sports Medicine Center, and the Sleep Disorders Center keep Broward Health on the cutting edge as a deliverer of quality medical care. Also housed in BGMC is the Chris Evert Children's Center staffed by highly trained pediatric and child specialists. The development of the Wellness Center, Liver Transplant Program, Women/Maternity Center, and Diabetes Program are evidence of BGMC's commitment to the citizens of Broward and Miami-Dade counties.

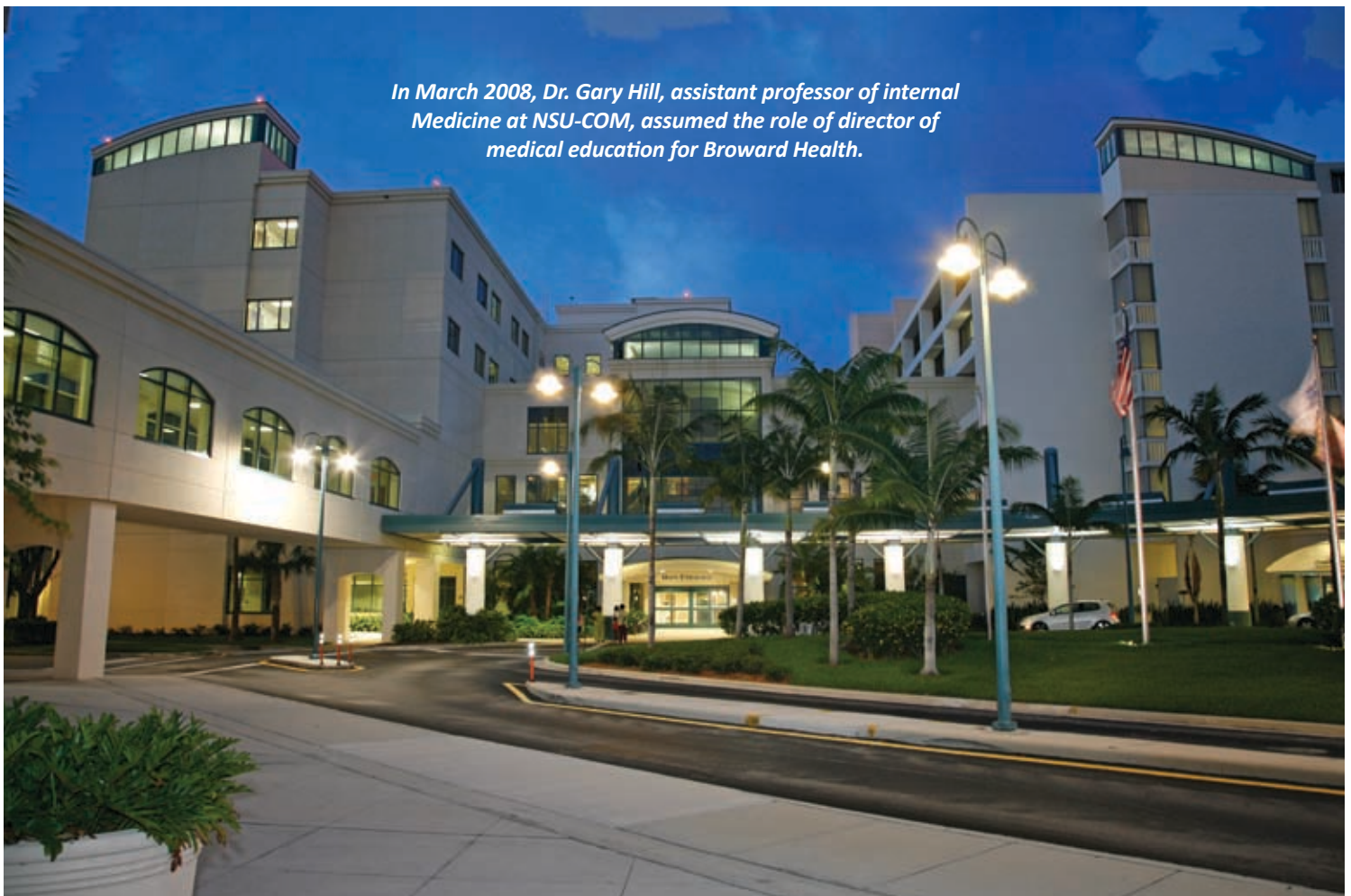
As a nationally renowned medical center, BGMC presents itself as an academic institution for the training of young doctors and

medical students. Administratively, Broward Health proudly acknowledges its academic and professional relationship with Nova Southeastern University College of Osteopathic Medicine. Although its partnership with NSU-COM stretches back several decades, Broward Health officially consummated an affiliation agreement with the college in 2000 and joined its OPTI as a committed partner in medical education.

For the 2008-09 academic year, Broward General Medical Center will host 40 residents in various specialties, 17 interns, and 60 third-year medical students in the various disciplines of medicine and medical schools from across the country. As part of the training curriculum, each resident and medical student has the opportunity to rotate through BGMC and other Broward Health-owned facilities. This experience provides the aspiring student and resident a solid foundation for their education.

On the technology front, new advances in the diagnosis and treatment of cancer will soon be available at Broward General.

In March 2008, Dr. Gary Hill, assistant professor of internal Medicine at NSU-COM, assumed the role of director of medical education for Broward Health.



Academic Achievements

During the 2007-08 academic year, the following residents received awards for their outstanding academic achievements:

Resident of the Year for Dermatology

Brian Feinstein, D.O.

AMA Leadership Award and AOF Merck

Resident of the Year

Joanna Drowos, D.O.

Intern of the Year for Family Medicine

Jabeen A. Abed, D.O.

Resident of the Year for Family Medicine

Sherika Newman, D.O.

Intern of the Year for Internal Medicine

Khoi Luong, D.O.

First-Place Poster Award at the ACAOS Conference and Resident of the Year for Orthopedic Surgery

Scott Greenberg, D.O.

The first addition will be the Varian Trilogy Image Guided Radiation Therapy Systems (IGRT), which will provide more precise radiation therapy treatment than conventional linear accelerators. The second addition to BGMC will be Proton Beam Therapy, which is the safest alternative therapy for children with cancer and will be the hallmark of the Pediatric Cancer Program. In addition, Broward General is one of 14 leading medical centers across the country selected to provide joint replacement surgery for retired National Football League players. It is the only location selected in Florida.

In 2008, Broward General was named as a Blue Distinction Center for Complex and Rare Cancers by Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Florida. The award is bestowed upon medical facilities that have demonstrated expertise in delivering quality health care. Broward General also received the American Stroke Association's "Get with the Guidelines" Bronze Performance Achievement Award. The award recognized BGMC's commitment and success in implementing a higher standard of stroke care by ensuring that stroke patients receive treatment according to nationally accepted standards and recommendations.

Through a partnership with Jackson Memorial Hospital, Broward General is the first hospital in Broward County to offer a liver transplant program. The arrangement allows all residents within the five-county South Florida region,

particularly Broward and Palm Beach counties, to benefit from Jackson Memorial Hospital's organ procurement processes.

At the present time, a range of internships, residencies, and fellowships are available to postgraduate students, including

Traditional Rotating Internship Program

Dr. Gary Hill, Program Director

Family Medicine Residency Program

Dr. Paula Anderson-Worts, Program Director

Internal Medicine Residency Program

Dr. Natasha Bray, Interim Associate Program Director

Dermatology Residency Program

Dr. Stanley Skopit, Program Director

Orthopedic Surgery Residency Program

Dr. Joel Rush, Program Director

Oral Maxillofacial Surgery Residency Program

Dr. Steven Kaltman, Program Director

Palliative Care Fellowship Program

Dr. Pamela Sutton, Program Director

On June 28, 2008, the Orthopedic Surgery Residency Program based at Broward General Medical Center graduated its first resident. This milestone achievement by Broward General Medical Center allowed Broward Health to continue its austere history of service to the citizens of Broward County. BGMC and Broward Health are proud to report that they graduated 15 residents in the fields of dermatology, family medicine, and oral maxillofacial surgery as well as one fellow in palliative care.

Being a member of the 20 hospital institutions that comprise the OPTI, which is committed to medical education, Broward General Medical Center was honored as the institution from which one of its residents—Shauntell Solomon D.O.—would function in the role as resident representative for a one-year term. Dr. Solomon will be tasked with the responsibility of bringing forth the ideas and concerns of approximately 440 fellow residents across the state of Florida and the southeastern region of the United States. As a member of the Consortium of Excellence in Medical Education, BGMC plays a significant role in policies that affect hundreds of residents and medical students across the country.

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

Identical Twins Brad and Chris Keel Aim for Individuality, Embrace Similarity

By Scott Colton,
Director of Medical Communications



Brad and Chris Keel share an unbreakable brotherly bond.

Being identical twins can be both a blessing and a curse. Just ask fourth-year students Bradley and Christopher Keel, who were born three minutes apart and have spent the past 29 years trying to establish their individualism in a world that frequently sees them as one brain inhabiting two bodies.

Chris even joked that this article may surprise some of their former NSU-COM faculty members who taught him and Brad during their first two years at the college. "I would venture to guess that when this issue of *COM Outlook* comes out, there will probably be a lot of faculty members who suddenly realize there were two of us in their classes and not just one," he laughed.

In some ways, however, Brad and Chris only have themselves to blame for their perplexing predicament.

Because nature decreed they would appear as mirror images of each other, they could have rebelled by dressing in drastically different clothes or styling their hair in exceedingly dissimilar fashions. Instead, they dress similarly, possess comparable haircuts – and attend medical school in the same class at NSU-COM.

Of course, when you're identical twins who grow up in the same house, go to the same schools, and share common friends, it's nearly impossible to fracture that ineffable bond. In fact, research studies have shown that the connection between identical twins can actually be stronger in some cases than the bond between a mother and a child.

Brad and Chris, who were born in Birmingham, Alabama, but moved to Chattanooga, Tennessee, when they were just three months old, were exposed to the world of medicine at an early age thanks to their parents, who both work in the health care field. "We grew up with a father who's a pharmacist and a mother who's a nurse, so we were kind of introduced early on to medicine," said Chris, who is more verbal and intense than his brother. "My father owned his own pharmacy until I went to college, so we were around the medical field all the time. I really developed my interest in medicine in high school when I began having an interest in biology, so I pursued that career path through college and earned my bachelor's degree from the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga."

However, Brad, who is the self-proclaimed "laidback" twin, had decidedly different plans that did not include any link to medicine. "I originally wanted to join the navy, but my dad – a navy man himself – wasn't too thrilled with the idea," he explained. "So he said, 'If you agree to go to college for one year and then still have a desire to enlist in the navy, you can.' I really didn't want to go to college at all, but I agreed."

After several false starts, which included brief and unfulfilling stints as both an engineering and business major, Brad dropped out of college for a semester to work in the construction field. When that endeavor proved unrewarding as well, Brad realized it was time to return to college. "I still didn't know what to major in, so I sat down with my dad, who said, 'Why don't you go to nursing school? It's a two-year program, and you may like it enough that you decide to go to medical school in the future.'"

Following his father's sagacious advice, Brad entered the nursing program at Chattanooga State Technical Community College, received his associate's degree in nursing, and in the process found his calling – medicine. "It was during my last semester at nursing school that I made the decision to go to medical school because there wasn't anything else I really liked," he admitted. "In fact, a good friend of mine says I basically defaulted into medicine."

NSU-COM: A Date with Destiny

Now that Brad was about to mirror Chris professionally as well as physically, the brothers began applying to numerous medical schools, with the goal of gaining dual acceptance. However, as the application and interview process drew to a close, only one medical school had offered the twins

mutual acceptance—NSU’s College of Osteopathic Medicine.

It seems appropriate that Brad and Chris would wind up at an osteopathic school given the fact that their father’s best friend growing up was an osteopathic physician and that their childhood best friend, who is about to graduate from the Edward Via Virginia College of Osteopathic Medicine, has pursued a similar career course. “In a sense,” Chris admitted, “osteopathic medicine chose us.”

As they approach their impending May 2009 graduation, Brad and Chris feel their shared NSU-COM experience has brought them even closer—even if there have been moments when one wanted to kill the other, and vice versa. “If you asked anybody who was in our gross anatomy dissection group about us, they’ll tell you we fight,” stated Chris, who admitted that too much familiarity can indeed breed contempt at times. “We even threatened to cut each other’s hands off in gross anatomy, but the rigorous process of medical school during the first two years definitely brought us closer as far as having a family member who is going through the same thing. You’re able to share the same hardships and get through them together.”

Brad concurred with Chris’ assessment, adding that, “The best thing is you’ve already got somebody you can count on. Whether it’s to gripe at me because I’m not doing what I need to be doing or helping me deal with some issue, Chris has always been there,” he said. “It’s like having a best friend who’s always there in good times and bad.”

Mirror Images: Disparate Personalities

Because they’ve basically spent their entire lives metaphorically attached at the hip and look so much alike, it’s not a far-fetched notion for people to assume their personalities also mirror each other’s. But Brad quickly dispelled that notion. “Everybody thinks identical twins are just alike, but we’re two totally different people,” he explained. “I hunt and fish all the time, while Chris is into aviation. We have completely opposite personalities and different outlooks on things, but that actually serves us well. What really helped us get through



The Keel brothers: Inseparable from birth!



Future D.O.s share a warm brotherly hug.



Santa, why are we always dressed alike?



Looking dapper (and similar!) in the 1980s.



Chris and Brad enjoying some downtime.

school was the fact that Chris was always wound up about everything, and I tend not to worry about anything. In that sense, our personalities have always complemented each other.”

Although their brotherly bond is unshakable, both agree there is a downside to being identical twins that look so much alike and are pursuing the same professional ambitions. “It’s a strange feeling to have somebody who looks just like you doing the same thing in life,” Chris admitted. “There’s this constant struggle you have as a twin to maintain your identity, and with us both going into the same field, it’s even more difficult at times. From another perspective, you’re always being compared to each other. There’s always a bar set for whatever you do, and there are many things I do better than Brad and vice versa. But for all of the things I can’t or don’t do as well as he does, I’m expected to live up to the same standard. And those expectations have come from our teachers throughout school as well as our parents. It’s something nobody does intentionally, and it’s probably made us better on many levels, but it does cause problems in some cases.”

Dating has also proved problematic for the brothers on occasion, mainly because their deep bond has a tendency to frustrate their girlfriends. “The whole dating issue is definitely a huge deal,” said Brad, who plans on pursuing a career in internal medicine once he graduates. “I’ve had girls say, ‘It’s always your brother this and your brother that—it’s always about your brother.’ And Chris has faced the same issue. It’s almost as if you’re dating one of us, you’re dating both of us.”

Competing for girls, grades, and athletic accolades has always been part of their brotherly dynamic, but Chris is quick to stress it’s been a good-natured kind of competitiveness. “If Brad gets a better grade than me or excels at something I don’t, it doesn’t really bother me because anything that happens in Brad’s life that’s good for him is good for me,” Chris explained. “At the end of the day we’re still brothers who care about each other—and that will never change.”



WHO'S WATCHING THE BABY?

Analyzing the OB/GYN Crisis from a Student and Faculty Perspective

By Scott Colton

Director of Medical Communications

Declining reimbursement rates combined with skyrocketing malpractice costs and a public propensity toward litigious action have led many obstetricians/gynecologists (OB/GYNs) to radically alter the way they practice. To avoid lawsuits, many OB/GYNs have ceased taking high-risk cases, such as pregnant women with preexisting diabetes, or stopped practicing obstetrics entirely because of liability concerns.

Although the crisis exists to various degrees throughout the country, the situation is especially critical in Florida based on surveys that show a drastic decline in the total number of practicing OB/GYNs, the decreasing number accepting high-risk patients, and the percentage decline in those stopping the practice of obstetrics when compared with national figures. Although they are usually practiced in tandem, an obstetrician is a physician who delivers babies and is in the practice of obstetrics while a gynecologist is a physician who specializes in treating diseases of the female reproductive organs.

According to the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists' 2006 Professional Liability Survey, 41

percent of Florida OB/GYNs were decreasing the number of high-risk patients they accepted compared with the national average of 26 percent. Similarly, 13 percent of Florida OB/GYNs were ceasing their practice of obstetrics compared to the national figure of 7 percent.

Further substantiation of the problem came in the form of a recent article published in the *South Florida Sun-Sentinel*, which detailed how the situation is even direr in South Florida, where counties such as Broward and Palm Beach have seen alarming drops in OB/GYN numbers. In Palm Beach County, projections show 30 percent fewer OB/GYNs practicing in the area than in previous years while the need is expected to grow 7 percent within the next three years. Even more troubling is the fact that 20 percent of Palm Beach County OB/GYNs have cut obstetrics out of their practices—and another 15 percent plan to do so in less than two years based on preliminary survey results, which focus solely on those who stop practicing because of liability concerns.

So what does this mean for current or prospective medical students who have a desire to pursue OB/GYN as a

career path once they graduate? After spending upwards of \$150,000 to earn their four-year medical degree, are future physicians going to be enticed into the OB/GYN realm knowing their malpractice insurance premiums could outstrip the income they earn from obstetrics?

Money...Money...Money

“I definitely see myself going into the field,” said OMS-III Laura Martin, who concluded her term as president of the college’s Student Association of Obstetrics and Gynecology (SAOG) in the spring of 2008. “My main concern isn’t money as far as deciding what field of medicine to practice. I certainly don’t like the high malpractice insurance costs, and I’m obviously hoping we can do something about that at least at a state level. But it doesn’t deter me from going into such a rewarding field as OB/GYN, although it certainly is a concern.”

Martin, who has always been interested in women’s health issues, acknowledges that although she intends to pursue her OB/GYN ambition, many future physicians choose their careers based on the amount of money they’re going to make. As a result, skyrocketing malpractice rates may clearly deter such graduates from going into the OB/GYN field.

And who could blame them? Florida physicians, especially those practicing in South Florida, pay the highest medical malpractice insurance premiums in the country, with OB/GYNs being the hardest hit premium-wise. According to the *Medical Liability Monitor*, which provides the latest information on medical liability insurance rates and trends, OB/GYNs who practice in Miami-Dade County pay an annual average of \$237,629 for their malpractice coverage compared with \$230,248 in Broward County and \$187,485 in Palm Beach County.

If you look at the crisis from an historical perspective, it’s easy to see why so many OB/GYNs are drastically altering the way they practice—and why potential OB/GYNs might be scared off from selecting obstetrics as a specialty in the future. “When I was working as part of an 18-man multispecialty practice in Dallas, Texas, in the 1960s, my malpractice premium was less than \$1,000 a year,” said Daniel Barkus, D.O., M.S., FACOOG, who serves as professor and chair of NSU-COM’s Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology. “However, by the last year I practiced OB (1990), my premium was \$125,000 in pretax dollars.”

Kenneth Johnson, D.O., FACOOG, who serves as associate professor of obstetrics and gynecology and director of the NSU Women’s Health Center, says the OB/GYN specialty—as well as the medical profession as a whole—is in jeopardy due to a variety of factors. “If you put together a poor economy and an ever-rising litigious climate, there’s a propensity for people to sue their doctors more frequently,” he explained. “If you couple those issues with unaffordable malpractice insurance with respect to making a living, then you really get an idea of the big picture. It’s affecting everyone.”

What’s happening in South Florida in relation to the practice of obstetrics is a scenario that’s been played out in other parts of the country in previous years as malpractice

premiums soared to unaffordable levels. “One thing that needs to be pointed out is the disparity between adjacent geographical areas,” stated Dr. Barkus. “Insurance companies devise a formula based on different populations and the tendency to sue in that region. In Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, when the premiums went through the roof, a number of obstetricians moved to other states where the rates were more affordable, such as New Jersey or Delaware, or gave up the profession entirely.”

Dr. Johnson, who has witnessed this unwelcome phenomenon unfold in South Florida, says it’s a problem that poses an ominous challenge to the OB/GYN specialty, as well as others. “The principles of mass exodus that occurred in Philadelphia are actually affecting every specialty,” explained Dr. Johnson, who graduated from NSU-COM in 1991. “It’s something I deal with both at Broward General Medical Center and here at NSU every day. When I began working at NSU-COM in 1996, there were 45 obstetricians doing OB in my department at Broward General. When I was vice chief eight years later, there were less than 15, and now there are less than 5 private OBs at Broward General.”

A Litany of Litigation

The skyrocketing cost of malpractice insurance has clearly had a profound effect on the OB/GYN field both locally and nationally. But what is driving the increase in litigation, which





subsequently hikes up malpractice premiums? According to Dr. Johnson, there are several issues in Florida contributing to this vicious cycle. “We have multiple factors that are worse here than anywhere else in the country, including more lawsuits, higher jury awards, and a legislative amendment that can cost you your license,” he said. “Because litigation has gone well for the plaintiffs in Florida, especially the plaintiffs’ attorneys, there is a disproportionately high level of energy being expended to sue in this state.”

Unfortunately, the one-two punch of litigation and excessive malpractice premiums is having a detrimental effect at all levels of the OB/GYN vocation, including the decision-making processes of new graduates. “The word is out that Florida is not the place to be practicing medicine right now,” Dr. Johnson admitted. “New graduates tell each other this, and I know that for a fact because I’ve actually been told so by some of the residents I’ve worked with. Consequently, if you have a mass exodus of physicians and little hope of recruiting new, young talent, this could represent the death of a profession—or at the very least alter it considerably.”

According to Dr. Johnson, who has dealt with his share of lawsuits over the years, it’s the ambiguity or “grayness” of so many cases that allows these lawsuits—and hefty settlements

and jury awards—to occur. In many cases, even though the physician was not at fault, savvy attorneys craftily play on the jury member’s emotions to elicit favorable verdicts. “Malpractice insurance created a wealth revenue for plaintiff attorneys that’s unprecedented because they can take a 40 percent cut of a \$10 million settlement,” he stated.

Early in his career, Dr. Johnson had the displeasure of dealing with just such a lawsuit when he was in the midst of doing his OB/GYN residency in 1994 at Northwestern University Medical School’s Columbus Medical Center in Chicago, Illinois. While he was assisting a Spanish-speaking woman with the delivery of her twins, a seemingly routine birth took a dangerous turn, resulting in a less-than-ideal outcome and a lengthy lawsuit that dragged on for over 13 years.

“I was a second-year resident with an attending physician at my side,” recalled Dr. Johnson of the incident. “The first twin, a beautiful baby girl, was delivered perfectly. But then the second baby suddenly had a drop in its heartbeat, followed by a gush of blood because the placenta had separated. It was a dangerous situation, and we begged the patient in Spanish to let us proceed with a cesarean section, but she refused. We had two doctors and two interpreters present who tried for 30 minutes to convince her to have the cesarean, but she continued

to refuse, which meant there was nothing we could do. We told her, 'Do you understand that the baby might die, and we can save him right now?' She said, 'Yes, I understand.' We asked again if we could proceed, but she still said no."

When the situation turned increasingly ominous, the woman finally acquiesced and allowed the doctors to perform the procedure. Unfortunately, because so much time had elapsed, the baby was barely alive and had suffered severe brain trauma. What followed was a protracted lawsuit that was just recently settled. Today, the boy is almost 14 and suffers from cerebral palsy. "I had three pages of notes documenting everything we said and did to prevent this outcome, so you would think the facts were clear enough to prevent a lawsuit and settlement, but that's not how it turned out," Dr. Johnson stated. "The fact is any doctor who has any encounter with a patient can be sued. And while these cases are usually dropped quickly once we present the facts, there's opportunity for the plaintiffs to pursue a settlement. That explains 90 percent of the mass exodus from OB. The problem is there's not much you can do about it as a physician."

Dr. Barkus, who has served as chair of the college's OB/GYN department since its inception, delved into the matter further with his own incisive explanation. "You have to understand how the system works," he said. "When a case like this comes to trial, they bring the child in to court, and the message the plaintiff's attorney gives to the jury is, 'Hey, somebody was wrong here. Look at this poor kid—who's going to pay for this?' And the jury is thinking it's really not the doctor who is going to pay for it, it's his insurance company, which is an impersonal kind of entity."

Dare to Go Bare

As malpractice premiums have mushroomed, a trend called "going bare" or foregoing professional liability insurance, has become an increasingly popular alternative for Florida physicians—especially OB/GYNs. According to the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists' 2006 Professional Liability Survey, 4.7 percent of OB/GYNs reported not being covered by liability insurance nationally; however, the rate in Florida was a whopping 35.6 percent.

Physicians such as Dr. Johnson, who have their medical malpractice insurance premiums paid by the universities

and institutions they work for, are able to avoid some of the headaches and financial hardships that are an intrinsic part of practicing obstetrics in today's world. The same, however, cannot be said for those in private practice. "Many of the private physicians not in a group setting have "gone bare" because it's the only thing that makes sense financially if you're going to do obstetrics," he explained. "If you have to buy malpractice insurance, you'll just be delivering babies to cover the insurance premiums, which explains why physicians are going bare and foregoing malpractice insurance."

Because of Florida's favorable homestead laws, "bare" physicians cannot lose their homes if a lawsuit is filed and successfully settled. However, they must guarantee a malpractice award by obtaining a bank letter of credit or go uninsured by promising to pay up to \$250,000 per malpractice incident up to \$750,000 a year. It's clearly become a popular option based on recent statistics that show 5,200 Florida physicians—including 3,450 in South Florida—are currently uninsured.

"The more doctors that go bare, the easier it is for everyone to go bare," Dr. Johnson stated. "If everyone's bare, there's no huge settlement to go after. So it works on one extreme, but it's also a living nightmare on the other. If you go bare and have to pay claims out of your own pocket, you could potentially lose your entire estate except for your home. And that has happened. Consequently, some doctors who are practicing bare knowing it's unlikely a plaintiff will come after them are still having trouble sleeping at night."

Forecasting OB/GYN's Future

Despite the current atmosphere of doom and gloom that pervades the profession, there are rays of optimism that exist for the next generation of OB/GYNs. "Fewer and fewer people are willing to endure some of these hardships," Dr. Johnson admitted. "However, those who do will be in extreme demand and, if they shop around, can find positions like mine where there is incredible support for what is obviously a critical specialty. In addition, CEOs of major hospitals that offer obstetrics find themselves having to pay OBs large salaries to cover obstetrics in their hospitals because there are no longer private obstetricians doing it. And therein exist some great opportunities."

Because women are never going to stop having babies,





Dr. Barkus says the uproar over the obstetrics crisis is a bit overblown because there will always be a need for physicians to deliver babies. “I don’t think there’s really a crisis in the sense that a pregnant woman will not be able to find someone to deliver her baby,” he explained. “However, there is a crisis in the sense that some very talented people are prematurely leaving the OB field who might do a lot of good for babies yet unborn.”

Until the crisis is satisfactorily resolved, OB/GYNs will continue to do what’s necessary to survive, even if it means sacrificing malpractice insurance or adopting preventive measures such as screening out high-risk patients or eliminating high-risk procedures from their practice regimen. “Fewer and fewer physicians are taking high-risk patients or performing risky procedures, and that growing majority includes me and fellow OB/GYN Dr. Renee Alexis here at NSU,” Dr. Johnson said. “The thing that’s tragic about this is no one deals with diabetes in pregnancy better than Dr. Alexis and I, but we don’t take diabetic patients anymore because we just do low-risk obstetrics here. The irony is we practice state-of-the-art, high-risk obstetrics even though we don’t offer it up front.”

Former SAOG president Laura Martin, who is mulling the possibility of specializing in maternal fetal medicine or



gynecology once she graduates and completes her postgraduate training, isn’t sure where the OB/GYN specialty is headed, although she is “hoping for a cultural shift and for the mindsets of our patients to change so they are not so sue happy.”

However, even she admits she may be asking for too much. “More female physicians are going into the field and want to both raise their own children and have a demanding career, which creates yet another problem in terms of lawsuits,” Martin stated. “Many practitioners have reduced office hours and are going into larger practices,” she explained. “And when you go into a larger practice, that means you may spend less time with your patients—and may not even deliver your patients’ babies, depending who is on call. This can cause the physician-patient relationship to deteriorate, which then allows more distrust to develop among your patients, making them more likely to sue if something goes wrong. It’s a complicated shift we’re having right now.”

While the professional outlook for the OB/GYN field is not especially picturesque at the moment, Dr. Barkus says the rewards still far outweigh the frustrations. “My advice to students who want to pursue OB/GYN is to go ahead and do it because it’s something they’ll never regret,” he stressed. “The rewards will be unique, and the rewards will be something you would not get from practicing any other form of medicine. Yes, there are long hours, and yes, there will be some risk to it. But it is more than balanced by the rewards. If you want to do this, don’t let anybody dissuade you by telling you the downside to it because the upside is so much greater.”

Dr. Johnson’s “Physician Paradise”

Dr. Johnson says there already exists what he calls “physician paradise,” which is working in a government setting because doctors who work for county health departments, etc., are exempt from having to purchase malpractice insurance and are basically immune from lawsuits thanks to a longstanding principle called sovereign immunity. Generally speaking, sovereign immunity is the doctrine that the sovereign or state cannot commit a legal wrong and is immune from civil suit or criminal prosecution.

While Dr. Johnson is quick to stress that physicians should be held accountable for their actions if they make an egregious medical error, he is dismayed by a system that has diametrically opposed extremes for different segments of the physician workforce. “Only certain physicians in America get to practice under this incredible sovereign immunity umbrella,” he explained. “My wife, Michelle, enjoys sovereign immunity because she works for the state of Florida as a physician for the Broward County Health Department—and that’s the paradise I think we all deserve as physicians. She sees all comers, including high-risk patients, and does the best she can without fear of litigation.”

Paradise, indeed!

Health Policy Fellowship



Grooming the Next Generation of Osteopathic Leaders

By Scott Colton, Director of Medical Communications

Since its establishment in 1994, the Health Policy Fellowship (HPF) program has graduated 147 osteopathic physicians or individuals with a professional connection to osteopathic medicine who have a desire to assume leadership roles in the profession and attain positions of influence in health policy. Not surprisingly, a number of NSU-COM full-time faculty members have completed or are in the midst of completing this popular fellowship, including

- *Natasha Bray, D.O.* (2009)
- *Pablo Calzada, D.O., M.P.H., FAAFP* (2005)
- *Robert Hasty, D.O., FACOI* (2007)
- *Gary Hill, D.O.* (2004)
- *Alina Perez, J.D., M.P.H., M.S.W.* (2006)
- *Samuel Snyder, D.O., FACP, FACOI, FASN* (2008)

The fellowship, which is a year-long program designed to give osteopathic physicians the skills they need to analyze,

formulate, and implement health policy on the local, state, and national levels with the purpose of increasing access to affordable, quality health care, has earned high marks from the NSU-COM participants. “The HPF program is truly an amazing experience,” said Dr. Hasty, who serves as assistant professor of internal medicine and program director of the Palmetto General Hospital Internal Medicine Residency. “On a monthly basis, we traveled to various locations in the country and were able to have meaningful and personal discussions with health policy thought leaders throughout the United States. I also had the opportunity to see many of the osteopathic colleges and meet with many of the leaders of the profession. This gave me insight and skills into health policy that are tailored for an osteopathic physician training to become an advocate for our patients and profession.”

The New York Institute of Technology/New York College of Osteopathic Medicine and Ohio University College of Osteopathic Medicine coordinate the certificate program in health policy through collaboration with the American Osteopathic Association (AOA), the American Association of



Dr. Natasha Bray

Dr. Pablo Calzada

Dr. Robert Hasty

Dr. Gary Hill

Dr. Alina Perez

Dr. Samuel Snyder

Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine (AACOM), and AACOM member colleges. Thanks to this collegial collaboration, future leaders gain eye-opening insight into the health policy process while having the opportunity to interact with others pursuing the same goals.

Perez, who serves as assistant professor of public health, certainly relished her fellowship experience. “The weekend seminars held at various colleges and organizations were an excellent vehicle to not only getting exposed to the various subjects covered in the fellowship but also to professionals, practitioners, and policymakers from those areas,” she explained. “While sitting in class for more than eight hours a day was trying at times, the nature of the lectures and exercises assigned for the fulfillment of the experience were sufficient to make the “pain” worth it. The breadth and depth of the lectures and the experiences shared by the lecturers were invaluable tools. In addition, being able to experience the lobbying process firsthand through real-

life exposure to our senators and state representatives at Capitol Hill really opened my eyes to the importance of communication, advocacy, and our role as professionals in the health field.”

For time-crunched professionals who are frequently juggling both family and professional demands, participating in the fellowship is not a decision to be entered into lightly because of the program’s stringent requirements that include attending an intensive five-day academic orientation in August, which serves as the precursor to nine other three-day weekend seminars, including graduation. In addition to attending the seminars, which rotate among various osteopathic colleges and the Washington, D.C., offices of the AOA and AACOM, the participants must

- be an active participant in all sessions
- devote at least 20 hours each month to reading and research assignments
- complete health policy writing projects

The broad-based curriculum offers Health Policy Fellowship partakers a range of analytic and communication tools applicable to health policy such as foundations of health policy, information systems for research, statistical analysis interpretation, and policy analysis writing for presentation and publication. In addition, guest experts on health policy issues serve as seminar discussion leaders and resources for problem-based case studies. Policy areas addressed include

- economics of health policy
- federal and state health programs
- health professions workforce
- special populations managed care
- medical education
- telecommunications and telemedicine

“The Health Policy Fellowship was a great vehicle to learn how to understand the policymaking process,” said Dr. Calzada, who serves as associate professor of family medicine and public health and assistant dean of clinical operations. “Community health and public health are of extreme importance to me as a physician, and adding the knowledge offered by the HPF has been very rewarding.

“I learned that the policymaking process is paramount to improving the health care system and the quality of life of our nation. I learned that the process is slow, complex, and yes, tedious at times, but I also learned that with the right advocacy tools and disposition, we can make a difference in important issues affecting our profession and health care in general. On a personal level, the fellowship was beneficial because it provided me additional knowledge as well as a different perspective to address some of the issues I teach to my public health students. At the academic level, developing the skills to choose, dissect, and provide solutions to current health issues has proven to be a very effective tool in my growth as a professional and a teacher.

While I am not an osteopathic physician, participating in this fellowship really opened my horizons to new career interests. It not only made me more in tune with the issues of the osteopathic profession, but it brought new awareness of current health care issues across the board. This new awareness has really awakened my desire to be more involved with the policy process and to communicate that to my students.”

-Alina Perez-

"While I only graduated from the HPF in 2007, it has already had a tremendous impact on my career. Since completing the fellowship, I have worked with the students to create a monthly health policy roundtable and participated in a panel discussion on health policy. I am a young academic physician with great expectations, and I am confident that I will use these skills for years to come and help create and implement solutions regarding health policy issues."

-Dr. Robert Hasty-

In fact, it has already impacted my career and future development. It has enhanced my knowledge of policy and health care systems, and it has facilitated the possibility of meeting and networking with other physicians and health care advocates with similar interests."

According to Dr. Bray, assistant professor of internal medicine, who is currently in the program, "My interest in pursuing a health policy fellowship stems from my interest in medical education. To best educate future physicians, we need to understand the policy framework that will shape their future practice environments," she explained. "The fellowship is helping me develop a greater understanding of how to shape policy within the current political structure, and I feel this understanding is vital to ensuring we control the future of our profession rather than regulatory bodies dictating how we care for our patients and educate our students."

To learn more about the Health Policy Fellowship, please contact the program's coordinator, Nancy Cooper, at (740) 593-2017 or coopern@ohio.edu. For a program overview, please visit <http://iris.nyit.edu/nycom/hpf/>.

"There are many challenges facing medical education today. The continued escalation of the monetary cost and time commitment to become a physician threaten to further the socioeconomic gap between physicians and their patients. Our best and brightest are faced with choices of delaying income-earning potential to pursue a minimum of seven years post-undergraduate education in an environment of declining reimbursement rates for services. I believe we are only beginning to see the consequences of these difficult economic pressures on physician specialty choice and physician workforce shortages."

By taking a proactive role in shaping the policies that affect our medical students and residents, we have the opportunity to enhance the entire health care system. The opportunity to participate in the Health Policy Fellowship is providing me the foundation I need to serve as an educator to osteopathic medical students and residents.

-Dr. Natasha Bray-

Frequently Asked Questions

How Do HPF Graduates Use Their Health Policy Education?

Most graduates become leaders in their communities and states and join a cadre of health policy experts from which the profession can draw to staff committees and taskforces at the federal and state levels, testify on issues relevant to osteopathic medicine/education, and develop policy positions. Almost half of the fellows serve on the AOA House of Delegates, while several serve on the AOA Board of Trustees. Nine graduates have become dean of a college of osteopathic medicine, while many others have served or are serving as president/vice president of their state osteopathic organizations.

How Much Does the Program Cost?

The program costs approximately \$10,000, with each seminar costing around \$1,000 for travel and lodging, although costs will vary according to how far you travel and the city visited. There is no tuition fee, and the HPF covers the cost of transportation from the hotel to the seminar site and also provides breakfast and lunch.

How Do I Get a Sponsor?

Sponsors include state osteopathic associations, specialty associations, COM schools, places of business, foundations, and hospitals. The HPF will write letters of support encouraging potential sponsors to support your participation.

Can I Receive Academic Credit for My Participation in the Fellowship?

Participants can earn 15 quarter hours of non-degree graduate credit from Ohio University at a total cost of \$1,575 or receive 10 semester hours of credit from NYIT/NYCOM. Many fellows have applied these credits toward a graduate degree in public health or health administration.

Will I Receive CME Credit for Participating in the Fellowship?

Participants will receive approximately 16 hours of category 2-B credit for their participation in each seminar.

What Happens if I Have an Emergency and Have to Miss Part—or All—of a Session?

If participants have to miss a session, they will be asked to complete a makeup assignment that requires them to read and apply the information presented at the seminar (based on handouts, reading assignment, and group assignment). The makeup assignment requires approximately 18-20 hours to complete. If participants miss more than one session, they are asked to withdraw and repeat the fellowship the following year, beginning with orientation.



Dr. Shaw with wife Laurie and sons Zachary and Cody.

Psychology and Osteopathic Medicine a Perfect Match for Dr. Daniel Shaw

By Scott Colton, Director of Medical Communications

As a child growing up in North Miami, Florida, pursuing a career in psychology was not a thought that even remotely flickered across the professional radar screen of Daniel Shaw, Ph.D., Ed.S., M.Ed., who has been affiliated with NSU-COM since 1988 and currently serves as associate professor of behavioral medicine in the Department of Family Medicine.

In fact, as he entered his teenage years, Dr. Shaw was actually torn between two widely divergent career choices: becoming a drummer in a rock band or a dentist. Unfortunately for his inner rock god persona, the drummer dream soon went silent for some very pragmatic reasons. "When I realized most people don't make it in the music business, and that I'd be playing in smoky bars until 2:00 or 3:00 in the morning and on weekends, I said, 'Nah, that's it.' I sold my drums, bought a bicycle, and decided to go to college."

However, by the time he began attending the University of Florida (UF) in Gainesville, his dental aspirations had quite literally "bitten" the dust as well.

After struggling through chemistry during his junior year in high school, Dr. Shaw realized a career in the hard sciences was not a realistic possibility. Fortunately, his future came into clearer view when he took an elective psychology class during his senior year, which he aced. "It was like a light bulb went off in my head, and I said, 'That's it!' So now I had this dream that I was going to be a psychotherapist, have a private practice, and see patients every day."

It may have sounded like the perfect prescription for success, but Dr. Shaw, who once bicycled 365 miles from Gainesville to North Miami during his spring break, soon found himself becoming disenchanted with his undergraduate psychology training at the University of Florida. "I became discouraged because there was very little application; it was all background in theory with a major focus on behavioral psychology," said Dr. Shaw, who was born in Manhattan, New York, but moved to North Miami when he was three. "Even though I have a great respect for behavioral psychology and often use it in therapy, at that

time it meant teaching rats different behaviors. And I didn't think I wanted to do that."

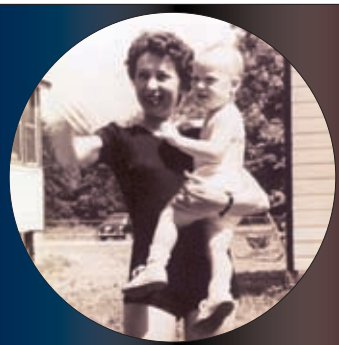
A random glance through the college catalog provided Dr. Shaw with an ideal educational antidote in the form of a course offered through the university's College of Education called The Psychology of Adolescence, which is where he met a remarkable mentor named Dr. Betty Siegel who would significantly impact his life. "I took the course and wound up meeting Dr. Siegel, who is an amazing woman," he explained. "She personally introduced me to all the professors in the College of Education because they had a more humanistic background versus the more experimental one in the School of Psychology."

Once Dr. Shaw discovered his educational niche, his personal life began falling into place as well. During a summer break from college, Dr. Shaw returned to South Florida to visit his family and unwind with a group of friends at the beach. Suddenly, a woman he didn't know who was sitting with his friends stood up and started running down the beach. Inexplicably, Dr. Shaw was spellbound. "I can still see Laurie's long hair flowing as she ran," Dr. Shaw smiled as he recalled the memory. "I immediately fell in love, and luckily it was reciprocal because we've now been married for 34 years."

SECOM Surprise Awaits

After graduating from the University of Florida with a B.S. degree in psychology in 1974, Dr. Shaw decided to continue his education at UF, obtaining a M.Ed. in educational psychology in 1975, an educational specialist (Ed.S.) degree in counselor education in 1978, and a Ph.D. in counselor education in 1981.

While Dr. Shaw was pursuing his Ph.D., his goal was to become the director of a university counseling center, which meant he could work in an academic environment and do some teaching and counseling. Fortunately, his wish came true because his first postdoctoral position was serving as director of the University of Tampa Counseling Center, where he was responsible for a range of duties such as providing on-call crisis intervention, outreach programming, and group counseling as well as the direct student services of psychological counseling, career counseling, and reading/study skills.



Dr. Shaw as an adorable tyke.



1970s: Long hair, colorful threads!



Check out those groovy sideburns!



Once a Gator, always a Gator.



All in the family: The Shaws

Although Dr. Shaw spent four fulfilling years at the University of Tampa, a life event occurred in August 1984 that shifted his and Laurie's priorities and precipitated a move back to South Florida: the birth of their first child, Cody, who is currently pursuing a master's degree at the University of Florida in political science and international relations. "We realized we needed to be where our families were," he said. "As a result, we relocated to Cooper City in 1985."

Dr. Shaw quickly landed a position at Miami's St. Thomas University, where he served as director of the counseling center and assistant professor of psychology. In this capacity, he was responsible for a range of tasks, such as directing, developing, implementing, and maintaining the counseling center for the main campus in order to further the development of students and providing short-term individual and group psychological testing as well as vocational and psychological testing.

Within a few years, however, Dr. Shaw realized his opportunities for advancement and future career fulfillment at St. Thomas were limited, so he began sifting through the local newspapers in search of new professional possibilities. Coincidentally, around this time, Dr. Shaw attended an HIV/AIDS continuing medical education program at Southeastern College of Osteopathic Medicine (SECOM) in North Miami Beach. During his time at the college, he met a number of SECOM administrators, took a tour of the campus, and said to himself, "This would be a neat place to work."

Apparently the universe was listening because a short time later Dr. Shaw spotted an ad for a SECOM faculty position and immediately applied. Following an immensely successful interview, Dr. Shaw was hired as an assistant professor of family medicine and made an immediate impact by providing individual and group psychotherapy for students, faculty, and staff and conducting human anatomy lab debriefing sessions for all first-year medical students.

Interestingly, for a man who has spent his life earning various degrees and working in academia, Dr. Shaw was never a big fan of classroom learning. "I always found it way too boring," said Dr. Shaw, who plans to open a bicycle shop with his youngest son, Zachary, when he eventually

retires from NSU-COM. “But I’ve always loved learning. My favorite part of my doctoral work was sitting in the library before everything was online and going through the different abstracts and looking for articles that related to my dissertation topic. I was like a kid in the candy store.”

Georgia on His Mind

The next 15 years would prove to be professionally enriching for Dr. Shaw, who took on additional roles at the college such as director of clinical affairs, director of the Academic Testing Center, and chair of the Department of Behavioral Medicine. However, when a tantalizing job offer from the Medical College of Georgia School of Medicine in Augusta suddenly materialized in 2003, Dr. Shaw found it too enticing to resist.

“When I was contacted by the Medical College of Georgia regarding a position that was available as associate director of the Career Development and Education Center, I was immediately intrigued because it would allow me to be closer to my longtime mentor Dr. Siegel, who was then serving as president of Kennesaw State University,” said Dr. Shaw, who received the thumb’s up from his family. “My family wanted a change of scenery and to be somewhere cooler that actually had a change of seasons – plus, it sounded like a great job.”

In July 2003, Dr. Shaw and his family moved into a beautiful house located on an acre of bucolic Georgia property. Unfortunately, it didn’t take long for the seeds of discontent to take root. Although Dr. Shaw was thoroughly enjoying his new job and the slower Georgia pace, the same could not be said for his family – especially Laurie, who had given up a good job at a health information management consulting firm to make the northern move.

“In Cooper City, Laurie had a shelf at our local library reserved especially for her because she reads five or six nonfiction books a week,” Dr. Shaw explained. “However, when she went into the county library in Augusta in search of a book she couldn’t find, she asked the librarian if she could reserve it for her. After checking her files, the librarian informed Laurie that the book in question – a *New York Times* bestseller – was not available because, ‘That book just don’t quite meet our standards.’

“By Thanksgiving of that year, Laurie came to me crying and said, ‘Please, we want to go home to South Florida.’ My family’s needs always come first, so even though I had my dream home and a job I loved in a stimulating academic environment, I needed to do what was best for the entire family, which was return to Florida. I immediately called NSU-COM to see if I could return to my old job, and the college graciously agreed to take me back. So after finishing out the academic year at the Medical College of Georgia, I returned to NSU-COM in July 2004.”

In his current role as associate professor of behavioral medicine, Dr. Shaw is immersed in a variety of activities that includes

- ongoing and researchable development of an integrated behavioral medicine curriculum within the Department of Family Medicine and its residency programs
- providing individual feedback and assessment for residents regarding patient communication skills based on direct observation of clinical encounters
- having various teaching responsibilities in college and departmental courses, with a focus on small-group seminars for the family medicine residency program in NSU clinics and affiliated hospital residencies

When Dr. Shaw reflects on his two-decade career at NSU-COM, he does so with a great deal of pride and reverence. “I consider myself very lucky to be here,” he admitted. “I only know one other person from my graduating class who is working in a medical setting. So even though I’m not a physician, I truly enjoy bringing the psychological side to the profession. I love teaching, and osteopathic medicine is just perfect for me because it emphasizes the whole person – mind, body, and spirit.”



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 2003 – Arthur Snyder, D.O.
 2004 – Lori Dribin, Ph.D.
 2005 – Edey Groseclose, Ph.D.
 2006 – Howard Hada, Ph.D.
 2008 – Cyril Blavo, D.O.

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2007 – Mary Smith Allegro

Celebration of Excellence

Distinguished Alumni

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 2007 – Ross Zafonte, D.O. ('85)
 2008 – Majdi Ashchi, D.O. ('89)

Alumni in the News

Joanna Drowos, D.O., M.P.H., M.B.A. ('04) had an exceptionally busy 2008 filled with numerous educational and professional milestones. Dr. Drowos, who currently serves on both the ACOFP Public Health Committee and Resident and Young Physician Committee, was awarded the Merck Outstanding Resident of the Year Award at the American Osteopathic Foundation Honors 2008 Banquet last October in Las Vegas. The spring and summer months proved to be just as eventful as she graduated from Florida Atlantic University with her M.B.A. in health care administration, completed her family practice residency, passed her family practice boards, and was hired by the Palm Beach County Health Department to serve as its medical and administrative director of the Riviera Beach Health Center. Dr. Drowos also graduated from the 2007-2008 Training In Policy Studies (TIPS) Fellowship program offered by the New York College of Osteopathic Medicine of New York Institute of Technology.

Will Kirby, D.O., FOACD ('00), who is working as a board-certified dermatologist in Beverly Hills, California, was recently hired by Neutrogena Dermatologics as a consultant to endorse its products on TV networks such as QVC. He also appeared on several episodes of the nationally syndicated TV show *The Doctors*, which involves medical professionals who discuss a range of various health-related topics and answer questions from viewers who are too embarrassed to ask their own doctors.

Helwey Mustafa, D.O. ('05) has joined Watson Clinic's team of hospitalists in Lakeland, Florida, and will treat patients admitted

to Lakeland Regional Medical Center. Dr. Mustafa completed both her internship and residency training in internal medicine at Reading Hospital and Medical Center in Reading, Pennsylvania.

Ronald Renuart D.O. ('90) was elected to a republican seat in the Florida House of Representatives in District 18, which is in the Jacksonville area, and is the first osteopathic physician to serve as a representative in the Florida House.

Karin Stanton, D.O. ('03), who recently completed her OB-GYN residency training at Sparrow Hospital in Lansing as part of the Michigan State University residency program, joined Lakeland OB-GYN in October. Lakeland OB-GYN, located in Lakeland, Florida, provides full women's care services, including routine prenatal care and delivery, high-risk prenatal care, family planning, full gynecologic care and surgery, well-women visits, and pap smears.

Submission of Alumni News to Scott Colton

I am currently in the process of compiling information for the next issue of *COM Outlook* and invite our alumni to keep me apprised of any newsworthy professional events that occur in their lives (e.g., accepting new positions, publishing a book, receiving an award, appointment or election to a prestigious committee or organization.) Please submit all data to me via email at scottc@nova.edu by **Friday, March 6, 2009**. If you have any additional questions, please contact me directly at (954) 262-5147.

Alumni Reunion in Vegas Dazzles Attendees



As part of the American Osteopathic Association's 113th Annual Convention and Scientific Seminar, which took place October 26-November 1 in Las Vegas, Nevada, NSU-COM held an

alumni luncheon at the Palazzo Hotel and Casino that attracted 175 attendees. Gregory James, D.O., M.P.H., FACOFP, who served as president of the college's Alumni Association in 2007, presided over the luncheon, which was highlighted by a slide presentation by Dr. Anthony J. Silvagni that updated alumni on the college's recent achievements.

However, the luncheon merely served as a tantalizing prelude to the main alumni reception held that evening at the Mirage Hotel and Casino Secret Garden and Dolphin Habitat, which featured two pools of dolphins as well as a mini zoo showcasing Siegfried and Roy's white lions, white tigers, panthers, and leopards. "It was really an interesting event," said Lynne Cawley, M.Sc., director of alumni affairs. "The facility is a member of The Alliance of Marine Mammal Parks and Aquariums, which maintains the highest standards of care for marine mammals and their conservation through public education, scientific study, and wildlife presentations. We thought the facility would make for an interesting evening because it is a research and educational facility."

During the evening, Secret Garden and Dolphin Habitat handlers and educators were on hand to answer questions and present interesting facts about the various animals. Participating alumni also had an opportunity to chat with former classmates and faculty and snap photos of the dolphins at play in a beautiful outdoor setting surrounded by pools of dolphins and palm trees. "Once again, we had a great turnout, with 250 in attendance including alumni, faculty, students, and dignitaries from the American Osteopathic Association," said Howard Neer, D.O., FACOFP, associate dean for alumni affairs. "It was a surprisingly interesting evening, and everyone really enjoyed it."



Alumni Association Fund Honor Roll

In the spring of 1999, NSU-COM launched an alumni-based fundraising effort to generate dollars that would be used to create an endowment fund to reduce future tuition costs for NSU-COM students and produce a funding pool that would be utilized for discretionary purposes as determined by the Alumni Association Executive Committee. Every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of the following list of donors; however, if you notice an error or omission, please contact Lynne Cawley in the Office of Alumni Affairs at (954) 262-1029 to rectify the matter. For example, the college has received a number of donation cards with credit-card pledges where no name is listed. The Office of Alumni Affairs cannot process the credit-card donation without a name indicated, so if you have not received a letter of thanks from NSU-COM but know you have made a credit-card contribution, please contact Ms. Cawley at the aforementioned phone number.

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(Leave a Legacy, Buy a Bench Program)

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Dr. John and Ellen Geake ('93)
(Leave a Legacy, Buy a Bench Program)
*Dr. Jeffrey Grove ('90)
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Dr. Stanley Zimmelman ('91)

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Dr. Richard A. Cottrell ('90)
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*Dr. Tyler Cymet ('88)
Drs. Felix Fernandez/Ravi Mehan ('00)
Dr. Jack Goloff ('85)
*Dr. Thomas Green ('98)
Dr. Walter J. Kay
Dr. Christopher P. Lampson ('85)
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Dr. Glenn Moran ('88)
Dr. Earle Pescatore ('89)
Dr. Michael Ross ('88)
Dr. Aye Unnoppet ('00)

250 Club (\$250 - \$499)

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(in memory of Peter Batcho)
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Dr. Robert Sammartino ('90)
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Dr. Kenneth Chan ('92)
*Dr. Stan Cohen
Mr. Scott Colton
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Dr. Bruce David ('88)
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Dr. Malcolm R. Freedman ('94)
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** in honor of 2008 Living Tribute Award recipient Dr. Cyril Blavo*

Alumni Association Fund Honor Roll

Cumulative List (1999-2008)

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Represents donors that have made a significant deferred gift via life insurance policies, insurances, or trusts.

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(Gift: \$500,000 life insurance policy)

Dr. Albert Whitehead
(Gift: \$250,000 life insurance policy)

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Dr. John Geake, Jr. ('93)
Dr. Jeffrey Grove ('90)
Dr. Donald C. Howard ('85)

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Dr. Raymon Priewe ('86)
Dr. Tamer Gozleveli ('87)
Drs. Kenneth ('91) and Michelle Johnson
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Dr. Richard A. Cottrell ('90)
Dr. Robert Crook ('88)
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 Dr. Dafna Trites ('94)
 Dr. Claudine Ward ('02)
 Dr. Douglas P. Webster
 Dr. Richard Weisberg ('93)
 Dr. Michael Weiss ('86)
 Dr. Sharon White-Findley ('86)
 Dr. John E. Williams ('96)
 Dr. Michael Williams ('00)
 Dr. Paul Winner
 Dr. Scott Yagger ('89)
 Dr. Stephen Yandel ('89)
 Dr. Adrian M. Zachary ('98)
 Dr. Christopher Zub ('99)

2009 Calendar of Events

January 30-31, 2009

6 *Protecting Our Next Generation, Ages 0-3*
NSU-HPD Campus – Davie, Florida

February 5-8, 2009

Academic Corrections Health Care Conference
Hilton Airport – Fort Lauderdale, Florida

Labor Day

February 6-8, 2009

13 *13th Annual Alumni Reunion and CME Program*
Plantation/Davie, Florida
Renaissance Hotel (social events) and NSU-HPD Campus (CME)

March 4-8, 2009

ACOFP Annual Convention
Gaylord National Resort and Convention Center – Washington, D.C.

parents Day

April 25-26, 2009

20 *2nd Annual Interdisciplinary Geriatric Symposium:
Addressing the Clinical Challenges of Elder Care*
NSU-HPD Campus – Davie, Florida



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

