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College of Osteopathic Medicine

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An Insightful Glimpse into the Mind of Morton Morris, D.O., J.D.

By Scott Colton
Director of Education Communications

Morton Morris, D.O., J.D., who serves as vice chancellor and deputy provost of Nova Southeastern University's Health Professions Division, is a man of many talents. He's a respected leader in the osteopathic field, an esteemed member of the HPD administration, a savvy legal eagle - and an innate humorist who possesses a rapier wit that rivals some of today's most trenchant comics.

"It all started when I was in my mother's womb," was Dr. Morris' mirthful reply when he was asked to recount the moment he first realized he wanted to pursue a career as a physician. "I was always interested in medicine. I can never recall wanting to do anything else." In fact, his ardor to pursue a medical career was so potent that he accelerated through high school in 11 years instead of the requisite 12. "I think they just wanted to get me out of their hair as quickly as possible," remarked Dr. Morris in typical self-deprecating fashion.

The origins of his osteopathic inclination can be traced back to his days in Wilmington, Delaware, where Dr. Morris spent his formative years interacting with a
As dean of the College of Osteopathic Medicine, I am well aware of the demands that are placed on our students in terms of combining a challenging academic workload with extracurricular activities. Since I became NSU-COM dean in the summer of 1998, I have witnessed firsthand the commitment our students have made to excel in the classroom and in the community service arena.

It would be impossible for me to document all the outstanding community efforts that have been initiated by our various student organizations and professional clubs in this message. But as you will read in the pages of this and upcoming issues of COM Outlook, the students are taking an active role in selflessly outreaching to needy and underserved individuals locally, nationally, and internationally. Whether it is involvement in our AHEC’s Tobacco Cessation Program or in the mutually enriching medical missions to Haiti and Guatemala, NSU-COM students are showcasing exemplary leadership and professionalism in their participation.

At several recent South Florida youth fairs and expos, dozens of students donated their evenings and weekends to perform blood pressure, glucose, vision, and other assorted health screenings under the direct supervision of full-time faculty. Similarly, a contingent of faculty members and students traveled to the Salvation Army facility in Fort Lauderdale to perform physical examinations on approximately 60 youngsters who required medical clearance to attend a one-week camp in North Florida.

The NSU-COM chapter of DOCARE showcased its commitment to area youth by performing free health screenings for an adolescent hockey league. The Sigma Sigma Phi Xi Chapter, in cooperation with the Brian Grant Foundation, brought a big smile to a group of underserved children by providing them with an opportunity to attend their first Miami Heat basketball game at the American Airlines Arena. Sigma Sigma Phi also visits area public schools to lead interactive discussions on osteopathic medicine and career opportunities in the health professions arena. And our student chapter of SOMA recently established a vital educational program entitled Students Teaching AIDS to Students (STATS) for grades 4 through 12.

Our undergraduates are also showcasing their leadership abilities in other instrumental ways. At the recent AOA Convention and Scientific Seminar in Orlando, NSU-COM students were prominently featured in a number of presentations. During the "Osteopathic Medicine: Global Opportunities Seminar," four NSU-COM students who participated in medical missions to Guatemala and Haiti last year had the opportunity to make slide presentations regarding the importance of these projects. In addition, our students were among six finalists in the AOA’s Student Poster Competition, which featured 29 submissions.

I am proud of the way our students consistently exhibit high ethics combined with a mature sense of responsibility. They will proudly carry the banner of osteopathic medicine in the future and will provide great leadership for the profession.

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

An Insightful Glimpse into the Mind of Dr. Morton Morris

Over the past 40 years, the vice chancellor and deputy provost of NSU's Health Professions Division has carved out an eclectic career in both the osteopathic medicine and legal professions. In this revealing -- and often humorous -- interview with COM Outlook Editor Scott Colton, Dr. Morris discusses the details of a life well lived.

The Alumni Spotlight Shines on Dr. John D. Geake, Jr.

On October 25, 1997, life took a decidedly tragic turn for Dr. John D. Geake, Jr. when he was involved in a horrific motorcycle accident that left him a permanent paraplegic. His ability to transform tragedy into triumph delivers a profound message.

Office of Education, Planning, and Research Maps a Multifaceted Mission

Since its inception in July 1999, the Office of Education, Planning, and Research has developed into a multi-layered entity that adds intrinsic strengths to the College of Osteopathic Medicine and enriches the college by adding to - but not detracting from - its clinical and primary care focus.

NSU-COM Plays Major Role at AOA Convention

NSU-COM alumni, faculty, and students were a pivotal presence at the 105th Annual AOA Convention and Scientific Seminar held October 29-November 2 at the Orange County Convention Center in Orlando, Florida.

Sigma Sigma Phi Teams Up with Brian Grant Foundation

The NSU-COM Sigma Sigma Phi Xi Chapter showcased its commitment to community involvement by partnering with the Brian Grant Foundation to provide a group of underserved children with an opportunity to attend their first Miami Heat basketball game at the American Airlines Arena.

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Student Organization of the Month

Staff Snapshot
In January, 25 medical students, 17 health care professionals and 3 community volunteers are expected to participate in Medical Mission 2001 to Guatemala, which will mark a return to the region originally visited by NSU-COM in January 2000. Another Guatemala-bound contingent currently is gearing up for a June 2001 departure.

The Health Professions Division's commitment to community service was on full display at the Broward County Youth Fair, held November 16-26 in Pompano Beach, Florida. NSU-HPD faculty and students coordinated and manned a Health Screening and Education/First Aid Tent, which afforded attendees an opportunity to obtain incisive medical literature and receive free glucose, vision, and blood pressure tests.

According to a survey published in the November 2000 issue of Florida Trend magazine, Nova Southeastern University has surpassed the University of Miami as Florida's No. 1 independent college/university in terms of overall enrollment. Following are the top 10 universities listed in the survey:

1. Nova Southeastern University - 17,810 students
2. University of Miami - 13,715 students
3. Barry University - 8,000 students
4. Florida Metropolitan University - 6,047 students
5. Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University - 4,909 students
6. Florida Institute of Technology - 4,178 students
7. Saint Leo University - 3,650 students
8. Rollins College - 3,483 students
9. University of Tampa - 3,300 students
10. University of Phoenix/Florida Campuses - 3,278 students

HPD Student Assembly Building Unveiled

On November 16, NSU dignitaries gathered for the much-anticipated opening of the Health Professions Division’s new two-story Student Assembly Building, which is located adjacent to the Terry Administration Building. A lavish ribbon-cutting ceremony was coordinated to commemorate the official unveiling of the state-of-the-art edifice, which cost approximately $4 million and houses a 312-seat auditorium, a 50-station computer science laboratory, and 37 seminar rooms.

Dignitaries in attendance at the ribbon-cutting ceremony included (from l): Morton Terry, D.O., chancellor, Health Professions Division; Ray Ferrero, Jr., J.D., president, Nova Southeastern University; and Fred Lippman, B.Sc., R.Ph., executive vice chancellor and provost, Health Professions Division.

Cassandra Fulton, who served as a secretary in the Office of Student Services since November 1996, recently was elevated to the position of coordinator in the student services division.

Annette Clarke, who served as a secretary in the Dean’s Office since September 1998, was promoted to the position of program specialist in the Office of Credentials effective in November. Ms. Clarke replaces Val Butler, who accepted a similar position with the College of Allied Health.
IGC Dinner Entertains and Informs Attendees

On September 20, the HPD Private Dining Room served as the site for the Interdisciplinary Generalist Curriculum (IGC) Program Physician Mentor Annual Orientation Dinner, which attracted a large and enthusiastic audience.

Although the event’s main objective is to reinforce the goals of the IGC Program, it also allows the faculty and student doctors to show their appreciation to the IGC physician mentors who volunteer their time to help advance student learning. The IGC dinner also provides an opportunity for NSU faculty and IGC physician mentors to exchange teaching strategies and derive new and innovative approaches to maximize their teaching effectiveness.

“These physicians are teaching partners who are dedicated to helping prepare the future physicians for the real world of medicine,” said IGC Administrative Director Debbie Cohn Steinkohl. “Having been medical students themselves, they can appreciate the importance of hands-on learning.”

A portion of the evening was devoted to a special faculty development workshop conducted by Camille Bentley, D.O., interim chair of the Department of Family Medicine and IGC co-project director. The workshop, entitled “The Rhythms of Education in Outpatient Medicine,” provided physician mentors and NSU faculty with ways to tailor their clinical teaching techniques according to the various stages of individual student learning styles.

NSU-COM Receives Four-Year ACCME Accreditation

NSU-COM has been resurveyed by the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education (ACCME) and was awarded full accreditation for four years as a provider of continuing medical education for physicians. ACCME accreditation seeks to assure both physicians and the public that continuing medical education activities provided by NSU-COM meet the high standards of the Essential Areas, Elements, and Policies for Accreditation as specified by the ACCME.

The ACCME rigorously evaluates the overall continuing medical education programs of institutions according to standards adopted by all seven sponsoring organizations of the ACCME. These are: the American Board of Medical Specialties; the American Hospital Association; the American Medical Association; the Association for Hospital Medical Education; the Association of American Medical Colleges; the Council of Medical Specialty Societies; and the Federation of State Medical Boards of the U.S., Inc.
On December 11, NSU held its Annual Employee Anniversary Luncheon, which recognizes staff and faculty members who have reached significant employment milestones. We are proud to congratulate the following individuals who received recognition. They are:

**20 Years**  
Morton Terry, D.O.

**15 Years**  
Steven Zucker, D.M.D.

**10 Years**  
Judith Schaffer, D.O.  
Cathy Wakefield  
Shelby Warshaw, M.A.

**5 Years**  
Camille Bentley, D.O.  
Paul Comeau, M.H.S.A.  
Barbara Edwards, B.A.  
Lawrence Jacobson, D.O.  
Sharon Schmidt, M.L.S.  
Laura Toksager, M.P.A.

In September, representatives from the Georgia Osteopathic Institute - the newest member of the Consortium for Excellence in Medical Education (CEME) - attended their first meeting at the NSU campus.

In December, NSU-COM established the Division of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation, which will be housed under the Department of Family Medicine umbrella. Ronald B. Tolchin, D.O., who has been a faculty member since July 1994, has been tapped to serve as chair of the new division. Dr. Tolchin holds specialty board certification in physical medicine and rehabilitation from the American Osteopathic Board of Rehabilitation Medicine and the American Board of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation.

Andrew J. Cohen, D.O., M.P.H., a 1993 NSU-COM alumnus, recently had an opportunity to provide Osteopathic Manipulative Treatment (OMT) to U.S. Surgeon General David Satcher, M.D. during a symposium held in San Juan, Puerto Rico. Dr. Cohen was participating in a special session entitled “Compassionate, Concerned, and Committed Physicians: Challenges and Rewards for Clinicians Treating People of Color and Ethnic Populations” in December when he was solicited to treat Dr. Satcher. “I was asked to provide some ‘healing touch’ and ended up performing muscle energy osteopathic techniques,” said Dr. Cohen. “It was truly an honor to serve in that capacity for someone who I have admired and respected for years. In a hotel filled with distinguished physicians invited from around the United States, my ability to perform OMT made a positive difference.”
In October, Alan Morrison, D.O., assistant professor in the Department of General Internal Medicine, established an active inpatient internal medicine teaching service at Memorial Regional Hospital. Over the past few months, Dr. Morrison also shared his expertise with medical students at several speaking engagements.

In September, he addressed the Student Osteopathic Internal Medicine Association on the topic “Internal Medicine and You.” In October, during Primary Care Week, the American Medical Student Association was treated to the same informative discourse. In November, Dr. Morrison switched gears and lectured medical students at Memorial Regional Hospital on the topic “Medical Management of Occupational Exposures to Blood and Body Fluids.”

In October, Elisa Ginter, D.O., assistant professor in the Department of Family Medicine, served as a speaker at the Student Osteopathic Medical Association (SOMA) national convention in Orlando. Dr. Ginter, the current SOMA advisor for NSU-COM, discussed “How to Conduct a Physical on a Spanish Speaker” and “Violence to Women.” She also was named as a co-investigator on the upcoming parasitic infection treatment project in Guatemala, which is headed by Camille Bentley, D.O., interim chair of the Department of Family Medicine, and funded through a $5,000 NSU President’s Faculty Scholarship Award that supports the development of faculty research projects.

In the summer of 2001, Dr. DeGaetano will have two case reports published in the Journal of the American Osteopathic Association (JAOA). The reports, which he collaborated on with his wife Hilda DeGaetano, D.O., an NSU-COM clinical assistant professor, focus on the following subjects:

- Pruritic Urticarial Pustules and Plaques of Pregnancy - an Unusual Case Presentation
- Persistent Open Anterior Fontanelle in a Healthy 32-Month-Old Male

Richard Rozencwaig, M.D. has joined the NSU-COM faculty, where he will serve as a clinical instructor in the Department of Surgery. Dr. Rozencwaig is an orthopedic surgeon with the Orthopedic Care & Sports Medicine Center in Aventura, Florida, who specializes in shoulder and elbow reconstruction as well as sports medicine. Medical and physician assistant students can perform elective clinical rotations at the Orthopedic Care Center.

In November, Dr. Patterson presented a poster at the Society for Neuroscience Meetings in New Orleans, Louisiana, entitled “Effects of Crossed Extensor Activation on Spinal Reflex Fixation in Rats.” He also served as a keynote speaker at the Georgia Osteopathic Medical Association meetings in Atlanta, Georgia, where he discussed “Cranial Osteopathy: Evidence for the CRI” and “Back to Osteopathic Basics: the Great 1917-18 Flu Epidemic.”
Alumni Association Executive Committee

1999-2000 Officers
John Geake, D.O., President - Class of 1993
Isidro Pujol, D.O., President Elect - Class of 1994
Jeffrey Grove, D.O., Vice President - Class of 1990
Robert Klein, D.O., Secretary - Class of 1991
Glenn Moran, D.O. Treasurer - Class of 1988

Past Presidents
Tamer Gozleveli, D.O. - Class of 1987
Michael Gervasi, D.O. - Class of 1987
Orlando Garcia, D.O. - Class of 1994
Daniel McBath, D.O. - Class of 1990

Committee Leaders
Isidro Pujol, D.O. - Program Chair
Daniel McBath, D.O. - Fundraising Chair
Tamer Gozleveli, D.O. - Webmaster
Michael Gervasi, D.O. - Editor

Alumni Web Page:
http://medicine.nova.edu

Join our Listserv! (listserv@list.nova.edu or
nsuc0m_alumni@list.nova.edu)

We are encouraging all alumni to post their addresses on Listserv to build an Internet directory.

You may also access Listserv at the Alumni Web Page by clicking on the "Join Our Listserv" link.

Upcoming Events

NSU Celebration of Excellence
January 25, 2001
Signature Grand in Davie, Florida
During this event, which commences at 6:00 p.m., each NSU college honors an outstanding alumni member. NSU-COM's honoree is Daniel McBath, D.O., Class of 1990. For further information, please contact NSU's Office of Alumni Relations and Special Events at (954) 262-2125.

NSU-COM 2001 Alumni Weekend
February 2-4, 2001
Hyatt Regency Pier 66 in Fort Lauderdale, Florida
Friday night reception and Saturday evening banquet will be held at the hotel. All lectures will take place at NSU's Health Professions Division. During the festivities, the NSU-COM classes of 1990 and 1991 will be honored. For additional information, please call (954) 262-1068 or e-mail immacula@nova.edu.

FOMA Convention
February 22-25, 2001
Hyatt Regency Pier 66 in Fort Lauderdale, Florida
An alumni reception will be held from 5:30-7:00 p.m. For additional information, please call (954) 262-1068 or e-mail immacula@nova.edu.

National ACOFP Convention
March 27-April 1, 2001
Pennsylvania Convention Center in Philadelphia
Alumni reception details TBA. For additional details, please call (954) 262-1068 or e-mail immacula@nova.edu.

ACOFP Florida Society Annual Convention
July 25-28, 2001
Hyatt Grand Cypress in Orlando, Florida
Alumni reception details TBA. For additional information, please call (954) 262-1068 or e-mail immacula@nova.edu.
On October 25, 1997, life took a decidedly tragic turn for John D. Geake, Jr., D.O. and his wife Ellen, whose lives were irrevocably altered when they were involved in a calamitous motorcycle accident. Fortunately, Mrs. Geake emerged fairly unscathed; however her husband suffered a less-fortunate fate, becoming a permanent paraplegic and enduring 14 arduous months of rehabilitation.

Although the recovery process was physically and emotionally draining, Dr. Geake was determined to live as full a life as possible and return to an enriching career as a productive practicing physician. And over the past few years, Dr. Geake, who serves as president of the NSU-COM Alumni Association Executive Committee, has done just that - with a little help from his friends. When his associates, patients, and colleagues heard about the appalling accident, they flooded his hospital room with cards, letters, and videos of encouragement.

Dr. Geake currently practices at the Hendry Regional Family Care Center in Clewiston, Florida, and is the medical director of the four-doctor facility. He also acts as medical director of the Hendry Regional Corporate Health Services facility, which was specifically designed to provide quality care concerning workmen’s compensation injuries and other health related services in that area. In addition, Dr. Geake participates in NSU-COM’s Rural Medicine Program, which involves having medical students and residents rotate through rural sites like the Hendry Regional Family Care Center.

In his role as president of the Alumni Association, Dr. Geake, a 1993 NSU-COM alumnus, has established a reputation for fostering goodwill among his former classmates and supporting the college by personally contacting alumni to bring them back into the NSU-COM fold. Through his efforts, graduates have been motivated to become active in the association and serve on various committees that enhance the college in a range of beneficial ways. His altruistic nature also extends to serving as a vociferous advocate for the disabled community.

Dr. Geake’s natural interest in the care and treatment of paraplegics compelled him to become an expert on the subject, and he generously shares his insights with other physicians by lecturing at medical conventions and meetings. In addition, he recently served as a consultant to General Motors at Disney World’s Epcot Center, where he was asked to test the new “traci” ride at Epcot’s General Motors’ practice area. Within minutes, Dr. Geake was able to transfer himself from his wheelchair unassisted and zip around the track at 60 m.p.h. Perhaps the most conclusive evidence of his caring character is illustrated by the way Dr. Geake opts to spend his lone day off each week. Instead of relaxing and recharging his energies, Dr. Geake volunteers his time to treat inmates at the Moore Haven Jail.

Dr. Geake’s fortitude to overcome life’s most chilling challenges without ever losing his intrinsic sense of humor serves as an inspiration to all who know him, including his daughters Jennifer and Tracy. NSU-COM salutes Dr. Geake’s numerous contributions to the college, his patients, the disabled population, and the osteopathic profession.
In September, NSU-COM coordinated an alumni reception during the Florida Osteopathic Medical Association's mid-year conference in Tampa. Pictured (from l) are: John Killinen, D.O., president, Florida Society of ACOFP; Morton Morris, D.O., J.D., vice chancellor and deputy provost, NSU Health Professions Division; Sandy Brandt; and Traudi Killinen.

Robert Scott Thompson, D.O., Class of 1991, concluded his yearlong stint as the lone physician at the Amundsen-Scott South Pole Station in Antarctica in late October. However, due to injuries he sustained during his stay on the frozen tundra, Dr. Thompson was immediately flown to Christchurch, New Zealand, to undergo surgery on a ruptured disc in his back.

In November, Glenn Moran, D.O., Class of 1988, and Myron Howell, D.O., an NSU-COM associate professor who serves as director of medical education and program director of the family medicine residency at North Broward Hospital District, were named as Fellows at the American College of Osteopathic Family Physicians (ACOFP) Conclave of Fellows Awards Banquet in Orlando. Gregory James, D.O., Class of 1988, received his ACOFP Fellow award in 1999. The Award of Fellow is in recognition of outstanding statewide or national contributions through teaching, authorship, research, or professional leadership to the stated purposes of the ACOFP.

The inaugural three graduates from the Miami Heart/Westchester General Hospital Internal Medicine Residency Program successfully passed their board certification exams on their initial try. NSU-COM extends its congratulations to:

- Kim Goldmintz, D.O. - Class of 1997
- Anjali Noble, D.O. - Class of 1997
- Mahyar Tahbaz, D.O. - Class of 1997
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.

If you would like to learn more about the Alumni Association Fund, please contact the Office of Alumni Affairs at (954) 262-1068.

Following are the altruistic individuals who have contributed to NSU-COM's Alumni Association Fund during the 1999-2000 fiscal cycle.

**Heritage Circle**
Represents donors who will make a significant deferred gift to the college via life-insurance policies, inheritances, or trusts. Additionally, friends of the osteopathic profession may choose to honor a D.O. by contributing to the fund. When this occurs, the contributors and the honoree will be appropriately acknowledged in the honor roll.

**Chancellor's Council**
($5,000 or more)
- John Geake, Jr., D.O.
- Tamer Ganzelvi, D.O.
- Jeffrey Grove, D.O.
- Gregory James, D.O.

**Dean's Council**
($1,000-$4,999)
- John Geake, Jr., D.O.
- Tamer Ganzelvi, D.O.
- Jeffrey Grove, D.O.
- Gregory James, D.O.

**500 Club**
($500-$999)
- Kenneth Johnson, D.O.
- Isidro Pujol, D.O.

**250 Club**
($250-$499)
- Joseph Corcoran, D.O.
- Tyler Cymet, D.O.
- Robert Klein, D.O.
- Gregory Serfer, D.O.
- Stanley S. Zimmelman, D.O.
- Armando L. Hassun, D.O.

**Century Club**
($100-$249)
- Michael Baron, D.O.
- Kenneth E. Bresky, D.O.
- Charles Chodorow, D.O.
- Richard Cottrell, D.O.
- Bruce David, D.O.
- John Gordon, D.O.
- Jennifer Hayes, D.O.
- Sharon Johnston, D.O.
- Frances M. Mally, D.O.
- Mitchell Pace, D.O.
- Robert Sammartino, D.O.
- Theodore A. Spevack, D.O.
- Donald Teplitz, D.O.

**Friends**
($99 or less)
- John G. Allred, D.O.
- Deirdra Bergman, D.O.
- Alice F. Blavo, D.O.
- David Brown, D.O.
- Douglas Bushell, D.O.
- Nai-li Chen, D.O.
- Christopher Davis, D.O.
- Maria Ruiz Harris, D.O.
- Joseph Hodge, D.O.
- James D. Landreau, D.O.
- Steven and Carolyn Newman, D.O.
- Hue Nguyen-Ngo, D.O.
- Lourdes Pelaez-Echevarria, D.O.
- Marcos Rejtman, D.O.
- Susan Sager, D.O.
- Patrick Sayavong, D.O.
- Lawrence Schwartz, D.O.
- Sandi Scott-Holman, D.O.
- Stuart Shalit, D.O.
- Cindy S. Matika Srebnick, D.O.
- Richard Thacker, D.O.
- Linda Tripodis-Murray, D.O.
- Todd Trites, D.O.
number of osteopathic advocates. "One of my relatives was an osteopathic physician, and he was extremely influential in my decision to pursue a similar vocation," he explained. "I also had a very close friend who was an optometrist, and he helped convince me that attending an osteopathic school would be in my best interest."

After earning his pre-medical undergraduate degree in physical chemistry from Temple University in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, Dr. Morris relocated to Missouri in 1952 to attend Kirksville College of Osteopathic Medicine. Following graduation in 1956, with his focus firmly on the future, Dr. Morris dusted off his suitcase once again to perform his internship at Flint Osteopathic Hospital in Michigan. "My original plan was to complete my internship and then pursue a residency in internal medicine because I'd always thought I wanted to be a cardiologist," said Dr. Morris, who drove a cab, vaccinated chickens, and worked as a chemist to earn extra money during his educational forays. "However, I couldn't afford to take a residency because it only paid $75 a month. So I decided to return to the East Coast and establish a family practice in Swedesboro, New Jersey."

It would prove to be a judicious decision. During the next five years, the small town of Swedesboro introduced Dr. Morris to the rigors and rewards of practicing osteopathic medicine. It also served as the setting where Dr. Morris would meet a sassy Sicilian named Marie who would soon become his wife. "During that time I had a very busy and trauma-related practice since it was a farming type of community," he explained. "I also had become very interested in orthopedic surgery, and since my practice was so oriented in trauma, I decided on orthopedic surgery. I had developed close friendships with some orthopedic surgeons in the area, so I decided to apply for a residency at Metropolitan Hospital in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania."

In 1963, Dr. Morris took a one-week break from his orthopedic residency tasks to vacation on the balmy Miami Beach coast. Within days, he would soon be hailed as a hero for preventing the drowning death of a young boy. "I was sitting at the pool one afternoon when I suddenly saw a child floating in the water," he recalled. "After we pulled him from the water, I performed cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) on him. It was actually a bit humorous because the medical profession had just switched from artificial respiration to CPR and nobody knew what CPR was. With artificial respiration, the victim lays prone; in CPR, the person is supine, with the head up. Everybody was yelling and saying 'You're killing the kid, turn him over, do it right.' Of course the kid pulled through, and I kept getting thank-you notes from his mother for about 20 years."

After completing his orthopedic residency in 1965, Dr. Morris spent the next few years practicing in New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and New York, but despite the growing success he was experiencing in his career, something was lacking. "In the back of my mind, I'd always wanted to go to law school. In fact, when I made the decision to go into orthopedic surgery, I had also debated about whether to go to law school or buy a liquor store with a friend. I always had an interest in law and medicine and the relationship between the two because I did a lot of worker's compensation cases during my family practice group. In retrospect, I think I should have bought..."
the liquor store since my friend sold it 20 years later for a nice sum of money that enabled him to retire at an early age.”

In 1967, Dr. Morris was offered opportunities to relocate to either Tucson, Arizona, or North Miami Beach. After mulling over his options, he opted to embrace a new lifestyle and joined the orthopedic practice of B. Boyce Swartz, D.O. at Osteopathic General Hospital in North Miami Beach -- the forerunner for what is now known as NSU-COM. “When I came to South Florida I established a residency program in orthopedic surgery at Osteopathic General. I also worked out of two offices in North Miami Beach and Pembroke Park and serviced hospitals from Pompano Beach to South Miami.”

Although his stature in the osteopathic medical community continued to rise, Dr. Morris still harbored an unyielding desire to achieve a law degree. So in 1978, at the age of 47, he began pursuing his dream at the University of Miami School of Law. “It was very intense, but it was harder on Marie than it was on me,” admitted Dr. Morris, who made the Dean’s List in 1980. “I attended law school during the day and tended to the medical practice at night and on alternate weekends.” By committing himself to an accelerated schedule, Dr. Morris completed the law program in less than three years and graduated in January 1981. A few months later, on his 50th birthday, Dr. Morris passed the Florida bar exam on his first attempt. To his knowledge, he was the only osteopathic physician in the country to hold a J.D. degree in association with the D.O. appellation at that time.

In May 1981, he launched a legal practice that primarily specialized in health law and defense malpractice. “I represented physicians, nurses, and other health care professionals before licensing boards and represented them with Medicare, Medicaid, and other contractual claims,” said Dr. Morris, who is the proud father of son Jay, a computer programmer for Florida Power and Light, and daughter Judy, a physician. Balancing dual careers in medicine and law may have presented intrinsic challenges for Dr. Morris, but his passion for both professions continually overrode any underlying concerns. “If you asked me to pick between law or medicine I could not choose between the two because my legal practice was so integrally entwined in medicine. I loved being in the operating room, but I also loved courtroom and legal work.”

Through his affiliation with Osteopathic General Hospital, Dr. Morris struck up a friendship with Morton Terry, D.O. Consequently, when Dr. Terry was engaged in initial talks to launch Southeastern College of Osteopathic Medicine in the late 1970’s, Dr. Morris was elected to the inaugural board of directors and has served as board secretary ever since.

Over the next 15 years, Dr. Morris continued to successfully navigate his way through the osteopathic and legal professions. He became a pivotal figure within the American Osteopathic Association (AOA) and the Florida Osteopathic Medical Association (FOMA), serving on numerous committees, including continuing medical education, long-range planning, constitution and bylaws, and osteopathic postgraduate training institute implementation. Additionally, Dr. Morris maintained a perpetual link with the College of Osteopathic Medicine
by teaching courses in medical jurisprudence and orthopedics since the institution’s inception in 1981.

In 1994, Dr. Morris was approached by Chancellor Terry to join the HPD administration on a part-time basis in the position of continuing medical education director. Two years later, he rose to full-time status, assuming the title of vice chancellor for academic affairs, which he maintained until October 1997 when he was elevated to his current role as vice chancellor and deputy provost. Because he is well versed in a range of areas, Dr. Morris’ responsibilities are as diverse as his talents.

“No day is the same,” said Dr. Morris, who also serves as an adjunct assistant professor at Miami’s Barry University School of Podiatric Medicine, where he lectures on medical jurisprudence. “I oversee the computerization of NSU’s Health Professions Division and serve as faculty advisor to some of the student activities such as the Student Osteopathic Surgical Association and the student district of FOMA. I recently became acting chair of NSU-COM’s Department of Surgery, and I also oversee the college’s continuing medical education program.”

Additionally, Dr. Morris is responsible for regulating all HPD continuing medical education activities and assisting each college’s administration to ensure the quality, effectiveness, and success of each activity. He acts as the coordinator for HPD compliance with the American for Disabilities Act and serves on the Research and Planning Committee. Dr. Morris also played an integral role in securing full Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education (ACCME) status for the Health Professions Division - a designation reserved for those institutions that maintain high standards in continuing medical education.

“I enjoy working at NSU’s Health Professions Division for a variety of reasons, but my favorite aspect is working with the students,” said Dr. Morris. “I’ve always had an interest in education. That’s why I was involved in the residency program and training orthopedic residents at Osteopathic General Hospital. In fact, when I had my law practice, I used to have medical students rotate through my office when the osteopathic college first opened up. Every once in awhile a student would select an elective rotation through a medical law practice.”

After over 40 years of effort and achievement in the medical and legal professions, Dr. Morris still has no desire to slow down or contemplate retirement. “Why should a person give up activities that he enjoys?” asked Dr. Morris. “I love my wife, my kids, my home, and my work. Who could ask for more than that?”
Dr. Morton Morris: Achievements & Accolades

Throughout his dual careers in law and osteopathic medicine, Dr. Morris has amassed a laudatory list of achievements. Following are just some of the notable accomplishments he achieved -- and the accolades he's received -- over the past 40 years:

- Serves as executive director of the American Osteopathic Academy of Orthopedics
- Received 1982 Distinguished Service Award from Florida Osteopathic Medical Association
- Appointed by former Governor Lawton Chiles to serve on Florida Advisory Council on Diabetes
- Served as president of the Florida Osteopathic Medical Association in 1978-79
- Appointed by the Florida Department of Health to serve on the Florida Advisory Telemedicine Task Force
- Served as president of the Dade County Osteopathic Association in 1971-72
- Received 1989 and 2000 Knotty Cane Award from American Osteopathic Academy of Orthopedics
- Served as a member of the House of Delegates to the American Osteopathic Association since 1978
- Co-founded Dade-Monroe Professional Review Organization
- Serves as general counsel to the Florida Osteopathic Medical Association
- Appointed by Governor Chiles to serve on the Florida Cancer Control and Research Advisory Board
- Instituted action against Blue Cross/Blue Shield and successfully demonstrated proof that the organization was discriminating against osteopathic physicians
- Co-founded Florida Osteopathic Insurance Trust
- Serves on the Broward County Bar Grievance Committee
- Received Lifetime Achievement Award from the Florida Osteopathic Medical Association in 1999
- Received Appreciation Award from American Osteopathic Academy of Orthopedics in 1997 and 1998
- Serves as Chairman of the Council of Continuing Medical Education for the American Osteopathic Association
The Student Osteopathic Medical Association (SOMA), the student branch of the American Osteopathic Association (AOA), was founded in 1970 as a not-for-profit organization. Its myriad objectives include improving the quality of healthcare delivery, contributing to the education of osteopathic medical students, educating people about the purpose and ideals of osteopathic medicine, and establishing lines of communication between health care professionals.

SOMA is recognized by the AOA and the American Medical Association (AMA) as the National Professional Society of Osteopathic Medical Students. Membership in SOMA offers students a legitimate voice in shaping the future of their chosen profession and provides a means of communication among the students of the 19 colleges of osteopathic medicine.

Over the years, the AOA has become increasingly attuned to addressing the needs and concerns of the country’s growing number of osteopathic medical students. “Last year, Dr. Eugene Oliveri, the former AOA president, created an initiative making it the Year of the Student,” said Kasey Nelson, an M-2 student who serves as president of the NSU-COM chapter of SOMA. “And so what we’ve been able to do is have student positions on all the AOA committees. And SOMA is responsible for nominating most of those students. In addition, we actually have a voting member on the AOA Board of Trustees.”

For a nominal $65 fee, which covers all four years of the medical school experience, SOMA members have at their disposal an extensive benefit package that includes preceptorships, scholarships, student loans, discount diagnostic equipment, discounts on medical books, health insurance, and student-oriented periodicals. It also includes educational activities such as national programs on international health, medically underserved areas, research and development, legislative affairs, public relations, community medicine, and AIDS awareness. SOMA members also receive a free subscription to the Student DOctor Magazine.

The NSU-COM chapter of SOMA, the largest student organization on campus, convinced 94 percent of the current M-1 class to join the organization, a success rate Nelson attributes to the joint efforts of the college’s SOMA officers. “One event we established last year, which I think has been key in getting students aware of SOMA, was called Osteoblast 2000 and held during orientation week for the M-1’s,” he explained. The beach party event, which featured a Hawaiian theme, provided the perfect informal environment for the M-2 students to meet and greet the incoming crop of NSU-COM students.

Educating its membership - and outreach to the community - are two primary goals of the college’s SOMA chapter. According to Nelson, these objectives are achieved in a range of ways. “We have a number of experts in their field come in to speak to our members,” he stated. “We recently coordinated a lecture series on alternative medicine, which we’re doing in conjunction with the American Medical Student Association (AMSA). What we have done there with Julie Chevillet, our alternative medicine coordinator, is bring in experts to speak to us about acupuncture, midwives, things of that nature. We also offer weekly yoga classes on Monday evenings.”

In terms of community involvement, the organization has established a program entitled Students Teaching AIDS to Students (STATS) for grades 4 through 12, which is coordinated by COM-SOMA Vice President Heidi Pearson. “We go into the public schools and teach the students about HIV and AIDS and provide them with presentation materials,” said Nelson, who plans on pursuing a career in internal medicine. “Our main goal is to improve osteopathic awareness not only among the students but also among the community as a whole.”
Getting to Know
Errol Lewin, M.Sc., M.H.S.A.
Associate Director
Area Health Education Centers (AHEC) Program
Assistant Professor
Masters of Public Health Program

Date of Hire:
August 24, 1994

Official NSU-COM Responsibilities:
I work very closely with Dr. Steven Zucker, associate dean for community affairs and AHEC program director, in overseeing the day-to-day operations of the NSU AHEC Program and all of its related programs. I develop and assist Dr. Zucker with the implementation of contracts and affiliation agreements with numerous academic institutions and community providers throughout our 19-county service area. I also am the co-director for the Practice Opportunities Program, where teams of our college's osteopathic medical students are sent to rural communities throughout Florida to conduct health assessment site surveys. As assistant professor in the College of Allied Health, I developed and currently teach the course in health economics and finance and also assist in guiding students with their practicum.

I Enjoy Working with the AHEC Program
Because:
AHEC's goals and objectives are a "perfect fit" with my own philosophy in reaching out to the disadvantaged, in order to assist in leveling the playing field. I particularly enjoy working with the NSU AHEC Program, as I like to associate with winners. I perceive our AHEC Program to be the premier program in the state, if not in the country. Our positioning is largely due to the work of a very committed and talented staff, under the leadership of Dr. Zucker, who strives for excellence from his staff, and one who is seen as a visionary leader of AHEC at the state and national level. Working with AHEC also gives me the opportunity to interact with community leaders throughout the state and the nation as well as academic leaders here at NSU and at many statewide colleges and universities.

Future Goals for the AHEC Program:
To continue building programs and writing grants to help our college and the Health Professions Division access funds for improving access to health care for Florida's underserved rural and inner-city populations.

How I first became involved with NSU-COM:
I came to the United States and pursued training in healthcare administration at Florida International University in Miami. It was there that I met a professor named Dr. Rosebud Foster, whose knowledge of the health care industry appeared to have no limits. She got to know me, and I suspected that I might not have been one of her typical graduate students. She knew of a vacancy in AHEC, and she recommended me to fill the position, and hence my years of association with Dr. Zucker, Dr. Foster, and NSU-COM.

When I Retire I Plan to:
Retire, what is that? Seriously, I just want to be able to continue to make a contribution, wherever I think I can make a difference.

Most Frightening Event of My Life:
The incident that I am about to relate was very frightening because it brought home my own mortality very forcefully. I was flying home from the Philippines, having attended a meeting on behalf of the Jamaican government. There were about five of us seated in the front of the aircraft and after about two hours of flying we developed camaraderie and just passed the time in "light conversation." One of the gentlemen, Liu, was
Errol Lewin, M.Sc., M.H.S.A.

reminiscing about the vacation he just had with friends and family members in Vietnam whom he had not seen for a very long time, and he explained how much he was looking forward to returning home to his wife and children in San Francisco.

He suddenly indicated to me that he was not feeling well, so I called a flight attendant, who requested any physician on board to come to the front of the aircraft. I changed my seat to facilitate the responding physician, and after about 15 minutes, the flight attendant came and whispered to me, "We have lost him." His body was taken off the plane and left in Hawaii. I still tell myself it could have been me, and I still wonder about his family in San Francisco, who waited in vain to see Liu again.

Greatest Achievement:
As an employee with the Jamaican government, I had responsibility for interfacing with bilateral and multilateral agencies, such as the World Bank and other regional and international financial institutions. The country was given a very limited time -- a time frame we felt was given to ensure that we would not meet the criteria -- to submit all the required documentation for a $200 million loan. I was given the mandate, "whatever it takes, get it done!"

Luckily, I had met two consultants at the University of Wisconsin in Madison when I spent a summer there working on a special project on production functions. I recall that we were engaged in a conversation regarding the World Bank and their experience with the internal machinations of the institution. I engaged them to assist us in accomplishing this Herculean task. Sure enough, after four months...and nine detailed position papers on various sectors...and a well-developed macro-economic policy document...and thousands of man (and woman) hours of working night and day, we got it done!

My coworkers would be surprised to know that: My parents, who are both deceased, had two sets of twins. I am the firstborn of the first set of twins. I have been married for almost two decades to my wife Audrey and have one daughter, Anika Giselle. I am a devout Seventh-Day Adventist and keep the Sabbath from sundown Friday evenings to sundown Saturday evenings. My first choice of a profession was to be a veterinarian. However, I quickly realized that I had to choose option number two - economist -- when I had to be resuscitated and carried away from the site where a horse that had breach presentation necessitated emergency surgery. My first sight of blood quickly turned to darkness, and I had to be resuscitated by a vet. There are friends who still will not let me forget that I was attended to by an animal doctor.

My Dream:
I continue to dream of the day when I will be able to play the piano. I also haven't given up my dream of learning to swim. (Yes, I am from the island of Jamaica.)

Basic Philosophy in Life:
Respect for self...respect for others...responsibility for all my actions

Favorite Hobbies:
Listening to all types of music, playing dominoes, table tennis (now retired, but willing to come out of retirement to take on the university's champion) and helping people to solve their problems.

Three Words that Best Describe Me:
Respectful...perceptive...professional. (Maybe my wife would express a different opinion!)
Office of Education, Planning, and Research Maps a Multifaceted Mission

By Scott Colton
Director of Education Communications

Since its inception in July 1999, the Office of Education, Planning, and Research has developed into a multi-layered entity that adds intrinsic strengths to the College of Osteopathic Medicine. In broader terms, the acquisition of several key personnel, who were brought on board to helm departments like clinical research, education communications, and primary care research, has enriched the college by adding to - but not detracting from - its clinical and primary care focus.

The idea to establish the multi-pronged office sprang from the fertile mind of Anthony J. Silvagni, D.O., whose keen vision has resulted in the creation and/or expansion of innumerable programs since he came on board as NSU-COM dean in July 1998. When it came time to recruit the ideal individual to launch the new unit, Dr. Silvagni sought the services of Leonard Levy, D.P.M, M.P.H., a trusted ally from his days as dean at the University of Osteopathic Medicine and Health Sciences in Des Moines, Iowa.

At the time, Dr. Levy was entrenched as president of the California College of Podiatric Medicine in San Francisco; however, the allure of re-teaming with Dr. Silvagni eventually proved too irresistible to resist. “Before I came here, I had been approached by Dr. Silvagni to discuss some of the areas he felt needed to be addressed,” said Dr. Levy, who has carved out a meritorious career in allopathic, osteopathic, and podiatric medical education. “He felt the college had developed to the point where its next step had to include some focus on the research needs of the institution. It was not any focus that wanted to change the college’s thrust from being clinically and primary care oriented. But even with that orientation, Dr. Silvagni felt there still needed to be a research component, and he asked me if I was interested in developing that infrastructure.”

Once he arrived on campus, Dr. Levy began to assess the college’s prior efforts in the areas of research, faculty development, and communications. What he discovered was that although some attempts had been made in regard to faculty development, the areas of research and communication had been underdeveloped. “There were minimal research or communications components in place, and the college had not yet developed a successful track record of acquiring the dollars in the form of grant money that was required to nurture such a program,” he explained. “Most university academic health centers cannot afford to use hard dollars solely for research. They need to acquire dollars extramurally in the form of grants and contracts.”

Having ascertained the deficiencies that existed, Dr. Levy began the task of targeting two areas that required immediate attention: faculty development and research. “Initially, my goal was to strengthen the already ongoing faculty development programs to prepare teaching staff for the emerging new approaches to contemporary medical education,” said Dr. Levy, who also served as a full-time consultant to
Identifying the college’s needs was step one in Dr. Levy’s master plan. Step two involved mapping out a strategic plan that would encompass a plausible list of target areas. “Developing a strategic plan helped provide me with a clearer direction and prevented me from haphazardly engaging in activities,” he explained. “The plan included the necessity to begin identifying what kinds of faculty development programs were necessary and then developing the appropriate survey instruments.” Dr. Levy also was intent on pursuing tangible sources of grant funds and distinguishing some of the areas where soft money would help expand the capability of programs within the college by providing additional infrastructure in terms of faculty and staff in family medicine, general internal medicine, and general pediatrics.

“Like all colleges and universities, there is a limitation to how far tuition dollars and other hard-money sources can be stretched to support the various types of initiatives,” stated Dr. Levy. “That meant looking at research and educational grant-funded projects, especially from governmental sources.” After months of exhaustive investigation had been completed, Dr. Levy and other key staff prepared and submitted several grant applications, including one for the support of a pre-doctoral primary care training project and another that would lead to the establishment of the Department of Primary Care Research.

Under his stewardship, three new departments have been established within the past 18 months - clinical research, education communications, and primary care research. One existing department - data coordination, study, and analysis - was incorporated into the Office of Education, Planning, and Research because it already served as the repository for the various types of information needed to conduct all NSU-COM programs, including those of an educational or research nature.

In addition to designing survey/evaluation tools and tracking student grades and COMLEX examination results, the Department of Data Coordination, Study, and Analysis serves as the gatekeeper for a range of imperative information. “If a grant-funded program is required to provide the number of our students who went into areas targeting the medically underserved, the department can provide that information,” said Dr. Levy. “The unit has the ability to compile information about students before they get here and after they leave.”

Another valuable link in the NSU-COM chain is the Department of Clinical Research, which was established in October 1999 to conduct clinical trials for pharmaceutical and other industries that produce products that ameliorate and augment the practice of medicine. “This department does not develop the protocols as you would with other research but instead acquires protocols from those companies that ask us to
participate," explained Dr. Levy, who sees the department as bringing numerous benefits to the college. "It's an additional source of research activity for the college that also provides an avenue for students to witness how research is performed. In fact, the students are encouraged to participate in such research with mentors. It also serves as an important source of funds, which is added to tuition dollars we receive. And it acts as yet another way of bringing the name of the college before the various medical communities."

Over the past year, Rita Silverman, M.P.S., who serves as director of the Department of Clinical Research, has assiduously coordinated an array of research trials that target a spectrum of health issues such as asthma, hypertension, coronary artery disease, and hormone replacement therapies for menopause patients. "There are a number of benefits that are derived from performing onsite research trials at NSU's Sanford L. Ziff Health Care Center," stated Silverman. "We can provide all procedures associated with the research study, which are offered at no cost to the participants. Screening is an especially big plus for those seeking to participate in the trial because they are given a comprehensive look at their current health status."

The screening procedure is a vital component because lab results frequently reveal unexpected abnormalities that could lead to future health hazards for the participants if left untreated. "The screenings uncover problems people may not have known about," said Silverman. "One woman's lab reports revealed an abnormal Pap smear, which meant she couldn't participate in our study. But the good news is that because her abnormality was detected, we immediately urged her to visit her primary care provider to receive immediate treatment for a condition that could have proved life threatening had it not been uncovered during our screening. Many people who attempt to qualify for our clinical trials don't normally visit a doctor or they simply can't afford a particular test. So we also provide a major service to the community by coordinating these trials."

The clinical trials also serve as an essential educational tool for NSU-COM faculty and residents because the physicians are exposed to new drug therapies in a clinical setting and are afforded an opportunity to assess how they interact with existing medications. "During their rotations, the residents receive information on the studies we're working on," explained Silverman. "This provides them insight into other medical alternatives like working with clinical trials and how they could be incorporated into their patient practices."

In November 1999, another key component -- the Department of Education Communications -- was devised and brought under the Office of Education, Planning, and Research umbrella with the expressed intent of promulgating the college's activities and achievements both internally and externally. "Communications is a vital part of any organization," stressed Dr. Levy. "Our communications unit has created an esprit de corps within the college by promoting what is taking place and showing how those activities and programs are providing added value to the
community of health professional schools.” This objective was achieved principally through the launch of COM Outlook, a bimontly publication that is disseminated internally to students, staff, faculty, and administration and externally to the college’s alumni base, local media, and other key individuals and organizations.

Although Dr. Levy is responsible for overseeing the various departments that comprise the Office of Education, Planning, and Research, his chief focus lies in the areas of planning and research and linking them to the educational needs of the college in consultation with Dean Silvagni. In recent months, the efforts of Dr. Levy and Sonia Alemagno, Ph.D. have led to the procurement of two major federal grants from the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), including support for a three-year project that paved the way for the establishment of the Department of Primary Care Research. Over the next three years, NSU-COM will receive $899,432 to fund these projects.

This newly formed academic unit, which is being lead by A. Alvin Greber, D.O., chair of the Department of General Internal Medicine, was established to develop the infrastructure required to conduct collaborative and interdisciplinary primary care oriented health services and educational research. The department’s mission is to assess and improve the quality of services delivered to target groups at high risk of acquiring health and social problems. The goal is to decrease morbidity and mortality and ease the burden of health problems that afflict various individuals and communities. The target groups include the elderly, substance abusers, HIV/AIDS victims, homeless citizens, incarcerated individuals, and the rural poor.

The second grant provides vital funding for a Predoctoral Primary Care Training Program, which aims to provide instruction for students in serving older adults with chronic diseases who also are physically and behaviorally challenged. Charlotte Paolini, D.O., who chairs the Division of Geriatrics, serves as project director for the program, which develops problem-based learning modules that focus on the target groups.

Dr. Alemagno, who currently serves as part-time director of the primary care research unit, says the ultimate goal is to develop a fully functioning research center linking all levels of the collegiate structure. “The first step involves our medical students, so we’re going to be looking at the research curriculum that is in place for the students,” she explained. “There are very few students who have chosen to take electives in primary care research, primarily because there hasn’t been much going on in that arena. So our goal is to address that issue. The HRSA grant allows us to develop some new curriculum that will be in place sometime this year for third and fourth-year medical students so they can gain some research exposure, although it will not be a course requirement initially.

“The next step is to assist the residency programs in meeting the requirement for residents to do scholarly activity,” added Dr. Alemagno. “The prerequisite is
that each resident in our affiliated programs should complete a research project or some equivalent scholarly activity within a few years of graduating. One of the issues we are going to be looking at in collaboration with the Consortium for Excellence in Medical Education (CEME) are the actual projects that have been done or plan to be done by residents. Then we can begin investigating some way of either offering distance education or another kind of curriculum that can be standardized across the residency programs.”

Phase three in the research implementation process targets NSU-COM faculty, specifically those individuals who possess a true investigative proclivity. Over the next few years, a number of research-oriented workshops will be coordinated and funded through the HRSA grant, which also provides for two research fellows in the current fiscal cycle and three in the 2001-2002 funding period. In addition, the grant funds a portion of the salary for two current research fellows: Anjali Noble, D.O., an instructor in the Department of General Internal Medicine, and Paula Anderson Worts, D.O., an assistant professor in the Department of Family Medicine.

As the Department of Primary Care Research -- which was officially launched in October 2000 -- evolves, Dr. Alemagno foresees a day when a full staffing complement will be on board to achieve the college’s long-term research objectives. “Ultimately, the grandiose plan includes hiring a full-time research director, a statistician, research assistants, grant writers, and general personnel who can oversee and maintain a research library.” One immediate goal is the recruitment of a full-time, grant-funded medical education specialist/research associate, who will join the department to provide leadership in instructional and faculty development, clinical assessment of students, and the planning, development, and implementation of research in medical education.

While it’s clear the Office of Education, Planning, and Research has brought significant luster to the college, Dr. Levy is not content to have the unit rest on its laurels. “My hope is that over time this office will be in a position to facilitate researchers to create peer-review articles. We have developed an appetite for research among the faculty, which has been helped by the continuing contract initiative that was established university-wide in that it includes scholarly activity. More and more, the faculty is developing an interest in research that we want to encourage. It is in the best interest of the college and the publics that we serve for more research to come out of this organization.”

Another goal is to lure additional NSU-COM students into participating in a research-based elective curriculum. “It is in the college’s best interest to have students taking elective time in research because it’s from the students that ultimately the faculty with research capability are generated,” added Dr. Levy. “As we identify and obtain additional grant dollars, the objective is to nurture a growing research ‘habit’ that will complement the mission of this institution.”
Current NSU-COM Clinical Trials

BELLES
A 12-month study measuring the effects of cholesterol lowering medications and coronary artery disease in post menopausal patients using newly developed EBCT scanning.

Pharmaceutical Partner: Pfizer
Principal Investigator: Kenneth Johnson, D.O.
Sub Investigators: Sandi Scott Holman, D.O. and Peter Cohen, D.O.

FEMHRT
A four-month study comparing two hormone replacement therapies for menopause.

Pharmaceutical Partner: Pfizer
Principal Investigator: Kenneth Johnson, D.O.
Sub Investigators: Joseph DeGaetano, D.O. and Alan Morrison, D.O.

SMART
A six-month asthma trial comparing daily prophylactic use of XXX42mcg twice daily to control asthma as compared to placebo treatment.

Pharmaceutical Partner: Glaxo Wellcome
Principal Investigator: Edgar Bolton, D.O.
Co-investigators: Joseph DeGaetano, D.O. and Peter Cohen, D.O.

OCTAVE
A six-month study comparing xxx versus enalipril for treatment of mild-to-moderate hypertension.

Pharmaceutical Partner: Bristol-Myers Squibb
Co-investigators: Peter Cohen, D.O. and Joseph DeGaetano, D.O.
AOA Convention Highlights

NSU-COM alumni, faculty, and students played a major role at the 105th Annual AOA Convention and Scientific Seminar, which was held October 29-November 2 at the Orange County Convention Center in Orlando, Florida. Following are select symposium highlights:

**Osteopathic Medicine: Global Opportunities Seminar**

Four NSU-COM students who participated in medical missions to Guatemala and Haiti last year had the opportunity to make slide presentations to the assemblage regarding the importance of these projects. Jessica Brown and Ilya Fonarov discussed their Guatemala experiences while Jean Charles and Laurent Dreyfuss shared their Medical Mission 2000 to Haiti memories. Both groups stressed how vital these missions are to improving health care in rural areas while also promulgating the osteopathic philosophy in the international realm. During the convention, NSU-COM’s international focus received additional impetus when Elisa Ginter, D.O. was elected to the board of DOCARE International and Camille Bentley, D.O. was tapped to serve as the organization’s vice president.

**AOA Student Poster Competition**

NSU-COM students were among six finalists in the AOA’s Student Poster Competition, which featured 29 submissions. NSU-COM’s meritorious poster targeted “Bronchial Glands in Asthma: A Morphometric Assessment.” Project research was completed with the assistance of Andrew Mariassy, Ph.D, a professor of anatomy in the College of Medical Sciences. An abstract of the presentation appeared in the September 2000 Journal of the American Osteopathic Association (JAOA).
During the convention, NSU-COM hosted a luncheon and an evening reception to reunite many of its distinguished alumni. The luncheon attracted 115 graduates, who were treated to lively and informative presentations by Dean Silvagni, Howard Neer, D.O., associate dean in the Office of Alumni Affairs, and John Geake, D.O., who serves as president of the Alumni Association Executive Committee. Attendees also had a chance to view the college’s new 17-minute video that features a comprehensive overview of the programs offered at NSU-COM.
• Dianna Silvagni, J.D. was elected to the board of the Auxiliary to the American Osteopathic Association (AAOA) and will continue to serve as president of the Auxiliary to the American College of Osteopathic Family Physicians (AACOFP).

• Elaine Wallace, D.O., chair of the Department of Osteopathic Principles and Practices, presented a session on “Low Back Pain - PSOAS and Piriformis.”

• Edgar Bolton, D.O., chair of the Division of Pulmonary Medicine, served as a speaker on the topic “Antibiotics: Meeting the Challenges of Treating Respiratory Tract Infections in the Age of Resistant Organisms.”

• Dean Silvagni served as a program chair at the convention, representing the American College of Osteopathic Family Physicians.

• Michael Patterson, Ph.D., assistant chair of the Department of Osteopathic Principles and Practices, and three former students presented two posters at the AOA Bureau of Research meeting. The research presented had been performed at the University of Health Sciences College of Osteopathic Medicine in Kansas City, Missouri, during the past two years. One of the posters -- “Effects of Opposite Forelimb Stimulation on Hindlimb Spinal Fixation in Rats” -- was judged among the top six in the student poster prize competition.

SOMA Convention Highlights

The Student Osteopathic Medical Association (SOMA) National Convention, which was held prior to the start of the AOA Convention, proved to be a proud showcase for NSU-COM students, who led all osteopathic schools in terms of students in attendance (24), scholarships awarded (4), and students elected to the National Board of Trustees (3).

SOMA scholarships were awarded to the following NSU-COM students:

• Dave Sheraga (M-3): $1,000 Corporate Grant Scholarship - sponsored by Bristol-Myers Squibb
• Alice Tsai (M-3): $1,000 Corporate Grant Scholarship - sponsored by Parke-Davis Pharmaceuticals
• Kim Kurak (M-3): $1,000 Medical Education Scholarship - sponsored by the AAOA
• Kathleen Pelkan (M-3): $500 Corporate Grant Scholarship - sponsored by GEICO Insurance

In addition, elections were held for the National Board of Trustees for the 2001-2002 school year. NSU-COM students were selected to serve in three prestigious positions:

• Alice Tsai (M-3): National Vice President
• Kim Kurak (M-3): National Treasurer
• Kasey Nelson (M-2): Region I Trustee

COM-SOMA President Kasey Nelson (foreground) enjoys the Halloween festivities with his peers and Elisa Ginter, D.O. (far right) who serves as faculty advisor to the college's SOMA chapter.

Pictured (from l. are: John Sheppard; Paul Wiesmierski; James Treadwell; Stacy Temkin; Lilia Gorodinskij; Doede Donachy; and Susan Lee.
On November 23, the NSU-COM Sigma Sigma Phi Xi Chapter, in cooperation with the Brian Grant Foundation, was able to provide a group of underserved children with an opportunity to attend their first Miami Heat basketball game at the American Airlines Arena. Fifteen tickets were allotted to Sigma Sigma Phi and distributed to the children and their fathers.

The youngsters met with Sigma Sigma Phi members earlier in the day to participate in the Doctor's Bag Program, which allows the children to play with and learn about the equipment that a physician uses to examine a patient. They had a chance to listen to their heartbeats, look into each other’s eyes and ears, elicit patellar reflexes, and examine x-rays. The children proudly showcased their newly learned skills by examining their fathers at the program’s conclusion.

To prepare for their Miami Heat experience, the children also received poster boards and markers, which they used to create individual souvenir signs for the game to properly thank Miami Heat forward Brian Grant for his generosity. With posters in hand, the children were able to live out their dream of meeting Grant and witnessing their favorite basketball team in action.