M-4 Student Trevi Hibsman Hobnobs with Hollywood Hotshots

Pre-Doc Program Enlightens High School Students

Collaboration Ensures Success at AMSA/AHEC Rural Mission

Exotic Maladies Highlight Medical Outreach Program to Guatemala
Dean's Message

The past few years have been exciting ones for the College of Osteopathic Medicine as we have added new programs, incorporated new teaching paradigms, and broadened the overall scope of our pre- and postgraduate curriculum. This is a trend we are committed to continuing as we explore new areas of educational development and provide additional learning opportunities that will enrich both current and future generations of osteopathic physicians.

I am excited to report that a number of new programs are currently in the developmental stages, including the implementation of two sports medicine fellowships as well as a landmark forensic pathology fellowship that is being developed in partnership with the Broward County Medical Examiner's Office. The forensic pathology fellowship is the first such program of its kind to be established in the osteopathic profession and, if implemented, will be open to D.O.s who have obtained either AOA or ABMS board certification in pathology.

We are also strengthening our existing affiliations with institutions like the Bay Pines Veterans Affairs Medical Center and the West Palm Beach Veterans Affairs Medical Center in order to provide additional postgraduate clinical opportunities for our students. Through our relationship with Sun Coast Hospital in Largo, which serves as our West Coast Academic Center, we may secure nine new residency positions at Bay Pines in internal medicine, as well as an expansion in our surgery and family medicine residencies. We have also obtained a new position at the West Palm Beach Veterans Affairs Medical Center, which we may use as a traditional rotating internship tied in with the program at Columbia Hospital - West Palm Beach.

In July, the collaboration between NSU-COM and Palms West Hospital in Palm Beach County will officially initiate with the launch of a pediatric residency program. This partnership was established to provide training for new primary care pediatricians who are prepared to meet the challenges presented in a general ambulatory pediatric practice as well as a hospital setting. Thanks to this symbiotic collaboration, nine pediatric residency slots—three per year—have been established.

We are also investigating the possibility of developing a proposal for the creation of a fellowship in correctional medicine that would be coordinated through the Florida Department of Corrections. Over the years, correctional medicine has evolved into a very complex specialty that requires physicians to acquire specific skills because of its uniqueness. There is obvious justification for creating additional qualification in this field. Consequently, the development of a fellowship in this discipline will ultimately benefit the state correctional departments across the country because of the added value these highly trained physicians would bring to the system.

Within the next year, our students will have an opportunity to enroll in a new dual-degree program that will allow them to pursue a Doctor of Dental Medicine (D.M.D.) degree in conjunction with their D.O. designation. We are also providing additional learning opportunities for our faculty via the establishment of the Master of Science in Education Degree Program in collaboration with NSU’s Fischler Graduate School of Education and Human Services. Currently, we have three faculty members enrolled in the program.

In addition, the potential acquisition of two Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) grants also bodes well for our students and faculty, who would be able to conduct additional research that has the potential to positively impact many sectors of humanity. If funded, these projects will:

- provide correctional primary care preceptor training
- help to develop problem-based learning/primary-care-oriented modules for third-year students

Medical education is a constantly evolving entity that requires frequent modification to prepare students for the everchanging practice of medicine. Therefore, we cannot afford to remain static if we intend to cultivate a future generation of physicians that is both compassionate yet cutting-edge in the clinical environment.
Following the horrific events of September 11, 2001, NSU-COM established the Task Force on Bioterrorism and Weapons of Mass Destruction Preparedness. Since its inception, a number of valuable programs for physicians, other health professionals, and first responders have been provided throughout the state.

The task force, which has been upgraded and renamed the Center for Education and Research in Bioterrorism and Weapons of Mass Destruction, is currently collaborating with the other medical schools in Florida.

Major funding is expected from the state that will provide significant support for these important activities involving faculty and deans from several NSU colleges as well as the directors of the county health departments in Broward, Miami-Dade, and Palm Beach.

The executive administration would like to congratulate the NSU-COM students who won the Eastern Atlantic Student Research Forum. In this event, medical students from the eastern United States, including schools such as Duke, Johns Hopkins, and Harvard, share their research with peers from the many medical schools in this part of the country.

Our virtual library is now operational and consists of an electronic catalog, which is now available to our part-time and adjunct clinical faculty members in urban and rural areas. This virtual library gives free and unlimited access to full-text articles, reference books, and peer-reviewed journals. Access to resources such as MD Consult, MEDLINE, and the EBSCOhost Journals Service also is available.

On April 26, we are hosting the Fifth Annual CPR Day, a joint effort between the American Heart Association and the Florida College of Emergency Physicians. The purpose of the event is to reduce the number of lives lost from cardiac death by educating people about the Chain of Survival—the four-step process of providing treatment to victims of sudden cardiac death.

Maureen Campbell, D.O., medical director of emergency medical services (EMS) education and training for NSU-COM, and Kevin Nugent, director of EMS education and training, will be co-chairing the event. Broward County’s goal is to train 1,000 people in cardiopulmonary resuscitation and in the use of the Automated External Defibrillator (AED) machine.

We are winding down another outstanding academic year. With graduation just a month away, we would like to congratulate Dean Silvagni as well as our faculty and students for a year of hard work and a commitment to excellence that has never faltered.
Features

Pre-Doc Program Enlightens High School Students - 16
Since its inception in 2001, the Pre-Doc Program has educated countless high school students about basic medical procedures and introduced them to the principles that distinguish osteopathic medicine from its allopathic counterpart.

Hibsman Hobnobs with Hollywood Royalty - 18
When M-4 student Trevi Hibsman traveled to California in September 2002 to perform an elective rotation in family medicine, she had no idea she was about to be welcomed into a fairy tale world dripping with diamonds, opulence, sports superstars, and Hollywood heavyweights.

Preventive Medicine Residency Program Earns Recognition - 21
Since its July 2000 inception, NSU-COM’s Osteopathic Preventive Medicine and Public Health Residency Training Program has evolved into a postgraduate paradigm of excellence that has earned universal praise and national recognition for its quality and uniqueness.

Exotic Maladies Highlight Medical Outreach Program to Guatemala - 22
Over the past three years, NSU-COM has coordinated six medical missions to Guatemala. The most recent expedition proved to be yet another action-packed adventure for the volunteers who donated their time and expertise to the medical outreach crusade.

Dr. Anthony Ottaviani Plays Key Role in West Coast Success - 26
In his role as regional dean of the College of Osteopathic Medicine’s West Coast Academic Center, Dr. Anthony Ottaviani is responsible for overseeing all the pre- and postgraduate clinical training NSU-COM students receive at the west coast site.

Collaboration Ensures Success at AMSA/AHEC Rural Mission - 28
During the first weekend of February 2003, more than 125 community-minded students and faculty members representing various sectors of NSU’s Health Professions Division showcased their compassionate nature by participating in the AMSA/AHEC Florida Rural Mission for Health.

Dr. Robin McFee Sets Ambitious Agenda for Bioterrorism Center - 32
With Dr. Robin McFee at the helm, the Center for Education and Research in Bioterrorism and Weapons of Mass Destruction Preparedness sets its sights on a multifaceted course of action.

Departments

Dean’s Message - 2
HPD Executive Administration Communiqué - 3
News Briefs - 5
Faculty Focus - 13
Student Organization of the Month - 34
Alumni Corner - 35
Alumni Spotlight - 38
Staff Snapshot - 39
A number of NSU-COM faculty members attended or participated in the Second Annual NSU-HPD A Glimpse of the Future of Health Care in America Conference, held January 17-18, 2003, in the Health Professions Division complex. The symposium, which attracted a vast array of attendees, included a number of insightful panel discussions and addressed topical issues such as:

- Health Care in America: Right or Privilege?
- Universal Health Care: Is it Time?
- Terrorism and Weapons of Mass Destruction
- The High Cost of Prescription Drugs
- Non-citizens and the Homeless: Barriers to Access
- Medical Malpractice: Is There a Crisis?

On February 24, NSU-COM hosted a reception at the Westin Diplomat Resort and Spa in Hollywood, Florida, for members attending the American Osteopathic Association (AOA) Midyear Board of Trustees Meeting. Pictured (from left) are: Howard Neer, D.O., professor and associate dean, NSU-COM Office of Alumni Affairs; John Crosby, J.D., executive director, AOA; Anthony J. Silvagni, D.O., Pharm.D., dean, NSU-COM; and Marcelino Oliva, D.O., FOMA legislative chairman.

On January 29, Elwood J. Headley, M.D., director of the Veterans Integrated Service Network (VISN) 8, made separate presentations to NSU-COM students and faculty about the future of health care and the vital role veterans affairs medical centers play in the everchanging health care landscape. The West Palm Beach Veterans Affairs Medical Center and the Bay Pines Veterans Affairs Medical Center (through Sun Coast Hospital) are valued partners in the college’s Consortium for Excellence in Medical Education (CEME).
Politano, Zangeneh Capture First Place at Research Forum

In March, M-2 students Seth Politano and Tirdad Zangeneh received first-place recognition at the 29th Annual Eastern-Atlantic Student Research Forum for their poster presentation comparing the prevalence of sexually transmitted diseases among rural and urban communities in Jamaica. The Outstanding Public Health/Epidemiology Research Award—which was presented during a ceremony held at the University of Miami—marks the second time in three years that NSU-COM students earned top honors at the research forum.

The victory was especially noteworthy because NSU-COM was the only osteopathic college entered in the competition, which allows students from medical schools located along the U.S. East Coast to exhibit the clinical and basic medical science research they conducted at their respective schools. Over 50 research projects were presented and judged on completeness of study, organization, originality, methodology, presentation quality, and handling of questions.

The duo’s poster presentation triumphed over a number of submissions representing prestigious colleges and universities, including, Columbia University, Drexel University, Howard University, New York Medical College, University of Miami, University of Washington, and Yale University.

Paula Anderson-Worts D.O. M.P.H., who served as faculty advisor and project coordinator, Jon Dodds, Ph.D., M.P.H., and Patrick Hardigan Ph.D., assisted Politano and Zangeneh on the project.

Health Policy Fellowship Seminar Returns to NSU

In February, NSU-COM hosted 10 fellows from various osteopathic colleges and organizations throughout the United States for a three-day weekend seminar focusing on the implications of public-health policy for vulnerable populations. Steven Zucker, D.M.D., M.Ed., associate dean for community affairs and Area Health Education Center (AHEC) Program director, and James Howell, M.D., M.P.H., chair of the Department of Rural Medicine, hosted this event as part of the Osteopathic Heritage Health Policy Fellowship Program.

The program is designed for osteopathic physicians and other health professionals with strong linkages to the osteopathic profession. Graduates of the program join a cadre of health policy experts, which the profession can draw from to staff committees and task forces at the federal and state levels, testify on issues relevant to osteopathic medical education, and develop policy positions.

Among the many members of the NSU-HPD administration and NSU-COM faculty who presented or moderated sessions during the weekend seminar were Drs. Howell and Zucker, Rosebud Foster, Ed.D., Ronnie Martin, D.O., Michelle Powell-Cole, D.O., Gary Hill, D.O., and Jessie Legros, M.P.H.

Prominent outside speakers included Annie Neasman, R.N., M.S., deputy secretary for health in the Florida Department of Health, and Michel Dodard, M.D., associate professor and medical director, University of Miami School of Medicine.
Medical Students Run Around the World

By Chelsea Jerry, M-2 Student

At 6:00 a.m. on January 12, seven NSU-COM students joined over 22,000 runners and embarked on a 26.2-mile journey through four Disney parks—Epcot, Magic Kingdom, Animal Kingdom, and MGM Studios—at the 10th Anniversary Walt Disney World Marathon. Words of encouragement from family, friends, and even strangers helped guide the runners through to the finish line.

In August 2002, the NSU-COM Student Osteopathic Internal Medicine Association sponsored a presentation by Team in Training, an organization that coordinates fundraising for the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society in exchange for training guidance and preparation. Students relentlessly trained with Team in Training for the next five months, three to five times per week—often at 5:00 or 6:00 a.m. on Saturday mornings. Participants wore shoe and/or wrist tags for honored teammates living with leukemia and lymphoma to help motivate them to the finish line.

Collectively, the students raised over $14,000, all of which benefited the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society. Group fundraisers such as the Mr. NSU Contest, volunteering at local Miami Dolphins' games, and bake sales produced a portion of this sum. A generous offer to match monies the students raised from MASG Mutual contributed significantly to the total, while the remainder was raised through individual collections. Local businesses such as Market Wine Inc., Carrabba's Italian Grill, Papa John's, and Island Grill helped out by offering merchandise and services for fundraising events.

The NSU-COM marathon contingent consisted of Lisa Bocelli, Laura DeStefano, Scott Engel, Chelsea Jerry, Kelby Maher, Zack Musgrave, and Deanna Tran.

NSU-COM Earns Seven Stuey Nominations

The College of Osteopathic Medicine was recognized in seven categories when nominations were announced in March for the Fourth Annual NSU Student Life Achievement Awards. The awards, also known as the “Stueys,” serve as a celebration of NSU’s best in leadership, scholarship, service, integrity, commitment, involvement, and responsibility. A full wrap-up of the Stuey Awards ceremony will appear in the summer 2003 issue of COM Outlook.

Following are the NSU-COM affiliated individuals and organizations that received well-deserved Stuey nominations:

**Academic Dean of the Year**
Anthony J. Silvagni, D.O., Pharm.D.

**Administrator of the Year**
Fred Lippman, Ed.D., B.Sc., R.Ph.

**Alumni of the Year**
Joel Rush, D.O.

**Co-Curricular Advisor of the Year**
Debbi Cohn Steinkohl

**Corporate Partner of the Year**
North Broward Hospital District

**Graduate Organization of the Year**
American Medical Student Association

**Student of the Year**
Shalomi George
Students Enjoy Exposure to Pugilistic Sports Medicine Experience

In January, M-1 students Jesse Street and Tony Shalash were able to put their clinical skills to good use when they spent an evening working with amateur boxers at Hollywood Circle in downtown Hollywood, Florida. It was the second such experience for Shalash and Street, who were introduced to the idea of performing routine physicals for boxers through the NSU Sports Medicine Club and Stanley Simpson, D.O., an associate professor of family medicine who serves as a ringside physician at various amateur and professional bouts.

“I’m a huge boxing fan,” admitted Shalash, “so it’s a thrill for me to sit ringside and be a part of the atmosphere. Jesse and I show up 90 minutes before the first match, take a brief history, and ask questions of the boxers regarding their previous fights to find out if they have ever been knocked unconscious, suffered broken jaws, or been hospitalized. We then check each boxer’s eyes, jaw, and nose, listen to the heartbeat, and check for hernias. After every fight, we examine both fighters again, even if they have no visual signs of requiring medical attention. We check for excessive nose bleeding and to see whether or not they are coherent.”

Dr. Simpson, who has been organizing these student-based pugilistic physicals for approximately five years, says the experience is extremely beneficial for students interested in pursuing a career in sports medicine because “they gain exposure to the real-life events they will someday be involved in. It provides them with an invaluable opportunity to experience the guts and glory of sports medicine.”

Shalash wholeheartedly concurs with Dr. Simpson’s assessment. “It’s probably been the most rewarding medical experience I have encountered yet,” he stated. “At the end of the event, I feel like I’ve learned a lot from Dr. Simpson and the athletes.”

AHEC Showcases Scholarship Repayment Programs

In March 19, the Area Health Education Center (AHEC) Program partnered with the NSU-COM Rural Medicine Club to present an overview of the National Health Service Corps (NHSC) scholarship and loan repayment programs to approximately 50 NSU-HPD students and faculty members. In his role as NSU-COM ambassador to the NHSC, Steven Zucker, D.M.D., M.Ed., associate dean for community affairs and AHEC Program director, led the discussion, which also included the participation of representatives from the NHSC, the Florida Department of Health, and the SU Office of Student Financial Services.

“Our NSU-COM AHEC Program is proud to continue its longstanding legacy of collaboration with the NHSC to help recruit HPD students and graduates interested in working to improve the health of the nation’s medically underserved in communities where the needs are the greatest,” Dr. Zucker stated. “NHSC scholarships offer qualified students an opportunity to receive monetary compensation that will cover tuition and related expenses in return for a service commitment in a federally designated health professions shortage area upon graduation.”

AHEC efforts to promote the NHSC scholarship and loan repayment programs at NSU’s Health Professions Division have already resulted in over 130 NSU-HPD students and graduates participating in the NHSC in Florida and across the nation.
Since its inception in 1999, the Consortium for Excellence in Medical Education (CEME) has evolved into a unified medical education system comprising an array of teaching hospitals and hospital systems spanning across Florida and the southeastern United States.

This integrated educational network also includes ambulatory centers, county health departments, and social service agencies. Following are the affiliated programs that currently comprise the CEME system:

- Columbia Hospital West Palm Beach
- Duke University/Southern Regional AHEC Family Medicine Residency
- Florida Hospital – East Orlando
- Florida Hospital – Ormond Memorial
- Louisiana State University Health Sciences Center Family Practice Residency Program at Lake Charles Memorial Hospital
- Miami Children’s Hospital
- Miami Heart Institute and Medical Center
- Mount Sinai Medical Center of Greater Miami
- North Broward Hospital District
- Osteopathic Institute of the South
  - Medical College of Georgia
  - The Medical Center - Columbus, Georgia
- Palm Beach County Health Department
- Palmetto General Hospital
- Parkway Regional Medical Center Orthopedic Surgery Program
- Sun Coast Hospital
- University Community Hospital - Carrollwood
- Westchester General Hospital
- West Palm Beach Veterans Affairs Medical Center

According to the American Osteopathic Association, more than 1,270 osteopathic medical students received placements regarding their osteopathic internship program—which encompasses internships and residencies—for the upcoming training year. Recent National Matching Service results indicate that 92 percent of the participants matched their first choice. In addition, 81 percent will continue their training in primary care areas, reinforcing the osteopathic profession’s tradition of providing care as family physicians, internists, pediatricians, and obstetricians/gynecologists.

Following are highlights culled from the American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine (AACOM) 2002 Annual Report:

- The 20th osteopathic medical school—the Edward Via Virginia College of Osteopathic Medicine—has received provisional accreditation from the AOA and will enroll its first class of about 120 students in 2003.
- Total enrollment in the 19 schools operating in the 2001-02 academic year reached 11,101 medical students, making it the first time in history enrollment surpassed 11,000.
- Underrepresented minority enrollment has declined in relative terms for the past four years and now comprises 7.8 percent of total enrollment—down from 9 percent in 1997.
- In 1968, women comprised only three percent of total osteopathic medical school enrollment. Currently, they comprise 43 percent of total enrollment and 46 percent of first-year enrollment.
- The number of osteopathic medical school applicants declined in 2002 for the sixth straight year but will show a substantial upturn of perhaps six percent or more in 2003.
In July 2003, the collaboration between NSU-COM and Palms West Hospital in Palm Beach County, Florida, will officially commence with the launch of a much-anticipated pediatric residency program, which was established to provide training for new primary care pediatricians who are prepared to meet the challenges presented in a general ambulatory pediatric practice as well as a hospital setting.

The American Osteopathic Association has accredited the new pediatric residency, which was specifically developed to meet the special criteria required of a "Fast-Track" training program. A Fast-Track program meets the unique licensure requirements needed for osteopathic physicians in many states that require a physician to have completed a traditional internship prior to applying for a license to practice. Incorporated into the pediatric residency are the core rotations of emergency medicine, internal medicine, surgery, and obstetrics and gynecology. Residents who complete their three-year pediatric residency will be recognized as having completed both an internship and a pediatric residency.

Palms West Hospital boasts a newly expanded pediatric unit with an active pediatric emergency room staffed by specially trained pediatric emergency physicians. The pediatric unit currently has 24 private pediatric beds and an 8-bed pediatric intensive care unit staffed by a team of critical-care specialists. The newly designed facility houses the latest in pediatric equipment and is designed with rooms and centers for research and education of the house staff. The patient environment has been enhanced by the addition of playrooms and child-life services.

Specialized services at the Palms West pediatric residency are diverse, with virtually every pediatric medical and surgical specialist working as part of the staff. This large array of specialists will allow the residents to become experienced in all of the various health care needs that are unique to the pediatric population. Residents will work directly with the various specialists in daily patient care and be provided opportunities to take elective rotations on most of the pediatric specialized services.

All pediatric residents at Palms West Hospital will maintain a small continuity of care practice in a private office setting on the hospital campus. The residents will learn to develop a pediatric practice and provide all aspects of care, including phone advice and prenatal counseling visits. The pediatric residency will work in conjunction with the Palm Beach County Health Department to care for children with special needs, including health issues related to poverty, developmental disabilities, chronic illness, and HIV infections. A rural program in Belle Glade will serve as a permanent site where residents will care for children in the rural environment.

Applications for residents are currently being accepted. Pediatricians in the area of Palms West Hospital who are interested in participating in the training program also are being recruited. All interested individuals should contact Dr. Edward E. Packer at (954) 262-1702 or by email at epacker@nova.edu.
Excellence Exemplified at Poster Session

On February 8, research-minded students and residents participated in the inaugural NSU-COM Poster Session, which was held in conjunction with the college’s alumni reunion. “Nineteen posters of exceptional quality were presented, and many of our alumni expressed just how impressed they were with the quality of work exhibited by our students and residents,” said Daniel E. Shaw, Ph.D, associate professor of behavioral medicine who coordinated the event. In recognition of their achievements, each author was presented with an award certificate for his or her hard work, professionalism, and quality. Following are the 19 poster presentations exhibited during the alumni festivities:

- Medical Informatics in a Pediatric Ambulatory Practice - Alberto Caban
- Comparison of STDs in Rural vs. Urban Jamaica - Seth Politano and Tirdad Zangeneh
- The Effects of Cranial Manipulation on Visual Function - Joanna Greenblatt
- A Comparison of Awareness, Treatment, and Control of Diabetes Mellitus in Urban Vs. Rural Populations in Jamaica - Joanna Greenblatt
- Coinfection: HIV and HCV; Successful Treatment of Hepatitis C in a Patient with Advanced AIDS and Decompensated Cirrhosis - Debra Balliram
- A Comparison Study in Bioterrorism Knowledge - Kevin Boehm
- Oligonucleotide Microarray Analysis of Insulin Action in Rat Skeletal Muscle - Jason Nydick
- Miami-Dade County Medical Examiner Asthma Death Autopsies - Andrea Ali, Noelle Barrera, and Manuel Rodriguez
- Assessment of Provider and Patient Compliance with Preventive Medicine Guidelines Using a Computerized Reminder System - Jesse Singer, D.O.
- A Randomized Controlled Trial on the Effectiveness of a Wellness Program for People with Multiple Sclerosis - JoEllen Alvarez, M.P.H.
- Bronchiolar Wall Remodeling in Asthma: A Metromorphic Assessment of Lymphatics - Lior Shamai
- Needs Assessment of the Port Antonio Health Care System - Carolee Chinshue-Coello, M.P.H.
- Tri-infection: HIV, HBV, and HCV: A Case Presentation with a Successful Outcome - Debra Balliram
- Cerebral Abscess: A Case Presentation - Irving Smith
- A Case of Pott’s Disease in an Eight-year-old Female - David Del Sesto
- Atypical Kawasaki’s Disease: A Case Presentation - Marin Dawson-Casswell
- The Role of Acetyl CoA Carboxylase in the Synthesis of Malonyl CoA - John Coppola and Karthik Krishnamurthy
- Thrombotic Thrombocytopenic Purpura During Penicillamine Therapy - Fredrick John Trayers, III, and Kathleen B. Wortman
- The Negative Impact of Media Sensationalism on Patient Health and Compliance: A Case-in-Point Mammographic Screening for Breast Cancer - Robert David Ball
Global Concerns Addressed at Bioterrorism Roundtable

On March 18, the college’s Emergency Medicine Society (EMS) coordinated an incisive and interactive bioterrorism roundtable discussion that touched on topical issues and addressed many of the students’ concerns related to bioterrorism and weapons of mass destruction (WMD).

“Student moderators wanted the discussion to mirror the phases of response to an actual bioterrorism/WMD incident,” said Ben Lawner, co-president of the EMS. “The understanding of current bioterrorism-related threats mandates that people acknowledge their fears, uncertainties, and doubts. Though the panel did not provide the audience with definitive answers, much discussion revolved around state, educational, and first responder infrastructure.”

Panelists included

- Robin McFee, D.O., M.P.H., director of NSU-COM’s Center for Education and Research in Bioterrorism and Weapons of Mass Destruction Preparedness
- Geoffrey Miller, NREMT-P, assistant director of the University of Miami School of Medicine’s Center for Research in Medical Education
- Joel Spalter, M.D., assistant professor of internal medicine, NSU-COM Division of Infectious Disease
- Bernard Loeffke, PA-C, retired major general, U.S. Army

Dr. McFee spoke about the NSU-COM bioterrorism center and its efforts to educate the area’s students, health care providers, and general public, while Miller discussed the University of Miami’s role in preparing first responders and military surgical teams to survive chemical and biological attacks. Dr. Spalter fielded several inquiries about smallpox vaccinations and disaster medical assistance teams (DMAT), while General Loeffke talked about civil and self defense as well as his experiences while on assignment in Russia.

Drs. Morris, Ottaviani Honored with Service Awards at Bal Fantastique

On March 29, Morton Morris, D.O., J.D., vice chancellor and deputy provost of NSU’s Health Professions Division, and Anthony Ottaviani, D.O., M.P.H., a member of the HPD Board of Governors who also serves as regional dean of NSU-COM’s West Coast Academic Center at Sun Coast Hospital in Largo, Florida, were presented with Distinguished Service Medals during the annual HPD Bal Fantastique fundraiser.

The event, held at the Hyatt Regency Pier 66 in Fort Lauderdale, attracted over 450 attendees and helped raise more than $100,000 for the not-for-profit Health Professions Division Foundation. Proceeds from events like the Bal Fantastique are used to promote research, establish scholarships for deserving students, update equipment, and enhance the teaching environment of the HPD’s six nationally renowned colleges.
Mark Sandhouse, D.O., associate professor of osteopathic principles and practice, received funding for a major research project entitled “The Effect of Cranial Osteopathic Treatment on Visual Function.” The project, which is funded by a two-year, $152,000 grant from the Osteopathic Heritage Foundation, involves assessment of the effects of osteopathic cranial manipulation on various aspects of human visual function. The project is a joint effort with the College of Optometry and includes co-investigators Michael M. Patterson, Ph.D., Richard Sorkin, O.D., Diana Shectman, O.D., Josephine Shallo-Hoffmann, Ph.D., and Patrick Hardigan, Ph.D.

Jean M. Malecki, M.D., M.P.H., FACPM, was recently promoted from clinical associate professor of preventive medicine to the rank of clinical professor. Dr. Malecki, who chairs the Department of Preventive Medicine, also serves as director of the Palm Beach County Health Department. She also was featured in the March 2003 issue of Esquire magazine in a thought-provoking article entitled “What Ever Happened to Anthrax?” that summarized the events and aftermath of the fall 2001 anthrax incident in Palm Beach County.

Elaine Wallace, D.O., professor and chair of the Department of Osteopathic Principles and Practice, has been nominated for the Philanthropic Collaborative for Integrative Medicine’s inaugural Bravewell Leadership Award. The accolade, which is accompanied by a hefty $100,000 cash prize, was established in 2002 to recognize, empower, and support champions of integrative medicine in their efforts to transform the culture of health care. The recipient of the Bravewell Leadership Award will be selected sometime this summer. In February, Dr. Wallace and Dr. Sandhouse served on the National Board of Osteopathic Medical Examiners (NBOME) Test Construction Committee. She also presented a lecture at the ACOFP Annual Convention and Exhibition on the genitourinary system and osteopathic manipulative treatment.

Edward Packer, D.O., FAAP, FACOP, associate professor and chair of the Department of Pediatrics, was a contributing author in the spring 2003 issue of Pulse, which is the journal of the American College of Osteopathic Pediatricians. His article focused on “The Use of Distance Learning Technology in Continuing Education at Remote Clinical Rotations.” Dr. Packer also presented a grand rounds CME lecture on “Recognition of Type 2 Diabetes in Children” at Broward General Hospital, spoke at a local Hadassah health event on the topic “Obesity in Children,” and presented at the 2003 NSU-HPD Second Annual Symposium on Diabetes on the “Changing Ramifications of Type 2 Diabetes in the Pediatric Population.” He also sponsored three poster presentations at February’s NSUCOM Alumni Reunion and Seventh Annual Continuing Medical Education Program on the following topics:

- Potts Disease in a Child
- Atypical Kawasaki Disease
- Medical Informatics in an Ambulatory Pediatric Setting

Maureen Campbell, D.O., and Kevin Nugent, REMT-P

Kevin Nugent, REMT-P, director of the Department of Emergency Medical Services, (EMS) Education and Training, and Maureen Campbell, D.O., medical director of EMS education and training, recently appeared on the Health Professions Division television program Dateline Health to discuss activities related to Mass CPR Day, which will be held April 26 in the HPD complex. It is anticipated that approximately 1,000 people will participate in this year’s event.
In January, Robin McFee, D.O., M.P.H., assistant professor of preventive medicine, was appointed director of NSU-COM’s recently established Center for Education and Research in Bioterrorism and Weapons of Mass Destruction Preparedness. The center’s primary mission is to provide leadership as a vital education, training, and research resource for the health care community and the community at large. In addition to serving as a presenter at numerous statewide symposiums, Dr. McFee spoke at the HRSA Primary Care Fellowship meeting in Washington, D.C., and was interviewed about various bioterrorism topics by the Tampa Tribune, the Miami Herald, and the Baton Rouge Advocate.

In February, Joel Spalter, M.D., assistant professor of internal medicine, was appointed chair of the newly formed Division of Infectious Disease within the Department of Internal Medicine. Because topics related to infectious disease have been consistently added to the curriculum over the years, the creation of a specific division was deemed necessary to effectively deal with this integral aspect of internal medicine.

Anthony J. Silvagni, D.O., Pharm.D., FACOFP, was recently elected to chair the Florida Medical School Council of Deans and the Florida Osteopathic Medical Association (FOMA) Grants Committee. Dr. Silvagni, who also presented lectures on research papers and urinary tract infection at the American College of Osteopathic Family Physicians (ACOFP) Annual Convention and Exhibition in March, will continue to serve on FOMA’s Membership Committee.

In February, Alan Morrison, D.O., FACP, assistant professor of internal medicine, discussed new therapies for treating diabetic patients at two recent NSU events. In February, Dr. Morrison presented a session entitled “Update on NIDDM Treatment” at the NSU-COM Seventh Annual Alumni Reunion and Continuing Medical Education Program. In March, he spoke on “Current Concepts in Diabetes Mellitus” at the Health Profession Division’s Second Annual Symposium on Diabetes: A Comprehensive Update for the Primary Care Health Provider.

Eric Shamus, Ph.D., assistant professor of osteopathic principles and practice, recently appeared on the HPD television program Dateline Health with Larry Starr, NSU’s assistant athletic director for sports medicine, to discuss how to prevent and deal with sports-related injuries. In February, Dr. Shamus presented two seminars at the National Physical Therapy Convention in Tampa Florida: “Diagnosis and Treatment of the Pelvic Diaphragm and Pelvis” and “Core Conditioning for the Throwing Athlete.”

James Howell, M.D., M.P.H., professor and chair of the Department of Rural Medicine, was recently elected to serve on the National Rural Health Association’s (NRHA) Rural Minority and Multicultural Health Committee. The NRHA, which is headquartered in Kansas City, Missouri, is a national organization consisting of approximately 2000 members. The NRHA’s mission is to improve the health of rural Americans and populations through appropriate and equitable health care services as well as to assist its members in providing leadership on rural issues through advocacy, communications, education, and research.
Michael M. Patterson, Ph.D., professor and assistant chair of osteopathic principles and practice, traveled to Germany in mid-February to attend the Fourth European Congress on Traditional Osteopathy, where he delivered two lectures on osteopathic research design and the meaning of osteopathic treatment. In addition, he served as president of the thesis juries that judged the theses of the graduating students from the German Osteopathic School. The meetings were held on the island of Frauchimsee in Lake Chimsee, in an ancient sixth-century abbey that still serves as an active abbey as well as a conference center. In mid-March, Dr. Patterson traveled to Vienna, Austria, to teach at a postgraduate seminar of the Austrian School of Osteopathy, where he lectured to recent graduates of the school on various osteopathic topics. He also spoke at the Austrian Osteopathic Congress on the topic “Osteopathic Systems,” which was attended by students and osteopaths from several European countries. Dr. Patterson also has been appointed to the Research Committee of the newly formed World Osteopathic Health Organization. The organization will be composed of osteopathic physicians and osteopaths from around the world and will serve to facilitate communication between osteopathic movements in various countries, promote international osteopathic research, and coordinate educational standards for developing osteopathic organizations and schools worldwide.

Ronnie Martin, D.O., FACOFP, professor and chair of the Department of Family Medicine, has maintained a high profile over the past few months. In addition to serving as a speaker at the AOA Heritage Health Policy Program held on the HPD complex in February, Dr. Martin discussed “Universal Insurance Coverage and PLI” at January’s A Glimpse of the Future of Health Care in America symposium and served on the conference’s planning committee. His busy agenda also included:

- Serving on the panel at the January 27 Basic Concepts of Tort Reform Town Hall Meeting, which was open to all M-1 and M-2 students as well as all HPD faculty members and provided the attendees an opportunity to have their medical malpractice concerns addressed.
- Addressing professional liability insurance and graduate medical education (GME) issues at the AOA Federal Health Council and speaking at the ACOFP board meeting on GME, clinical evaluations, and competencies in resident education.
- Presenting at the March 2003 ACOFP Annual Convention and Exhibition in Nashville, Tennessee, on the topics “Domestic Violence and Abuse” and “Residency and Competency Training” as well as helping to administer the certification examination to the approximately 560 graduating residents.

On February 16, Rosebud Foster, Ed.D., special assistant to the executive vice chancellor and provost, appeared on the PBS program Issues to participate in a roundtable discussion addressing the recent call for health care overhaul by Miami-Dade County Mayor Alex Penelas. During his speech in mid-February, Mayor Penelas called for the Miami-Dade Commission to assume authority for improving the county’s health care from the Public Health Trust that operates Jackson Memorial Hospital.

Jennie Q. Lou, M.D., M.Sc., associate professor of public health, was recently selected to serve on the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences Consumer Advisory Board. In February, she assisted her students with a poster presentation entitled “A Randomized Controlled Trial on the Effectiveness of a Wellness Program on the Lives of People with Multiple Sclerosis” at the 14th Annual Art and Science of Health Promotion Conference that was held at the Mayo Clinic in Washington, D.C., February 17-21, 2003. The information contained in the poster presentation also was accepted for publication in the American Journal of Health Promotion.
Pre-Doc Program Enlightens High School Students

By Scott Colton
Director of Education Communications

In 2001, Sigma Sigma Phi members Mark Ciaglia (M-3) and Ben Zachar (M-3) created a pilot program called Pre-Doc that was designed to educate high school students about basic medical procedures and introduce them to the principles that distinguish osteopathic medicine from its allopathic counterpart. Based on the feedback received since the program's inception, Ciaglia and Zachar scored an unequivocal educational bull's-eye.

“The students absolutely love it,” said Amber Stephens, who served as coordinator of the Pre-Doc Program last semester. “We generally visit about four schools each semester and make presentations to the anatomy and physiology classes; in fact, some of local high schools actually have health professions classes that discuss what nurses and doctors do. So when we come in and talk about various health issues like blood pressure and heart disease, the students are very enthusiastic.”

During the presentations, which normally last from 60 to 90 minutes, the eager teens have an opportunity to break into groups and visit six medical stations that are geared...
to entertain and inform them about osteopathic manipulative treatment, ophthalmoscope and otoscope usage, general medical education, gross anatomy, stethoscope/heart sounds, and blood pressure.

One of the more popular programmatic segments comes during the gross anatomy portion of the presentation, when students are able to view and touch an actual human brain. "They’ve never seen a real brain before, so they are extremely excited," said Stephens, an M-2 student who also serves as vice president of the NSU-COM Pediatrics Club. "We bring in gloves so they can hold the brain and get a true hands-on exposure to medicine."

Beyond explaining the intricacies of taking a blood pressure or performing an ear exam, the Sigma Sigma Phi members are intent on serving as mentors to the students and developing a personal connection that continues even after the Pre-Doc session ends.

"Hopefully, we are getting people interested in becoming doctors while also getting NSU’s name out into the community," she explained. "I’ve left my email address with some of the classes we’ve visited, and I’ve actually had a few students email me for advice after they’ve gone to college."

Although it can be difficult to coordinate the Pre-Doc presentations while also dealing with the demands of a rigorous medical school curriculum, the participants willingly sacrifice their time in order to serve as a vital link to the next generation of medical practitioners. "Many of the kids we meet think they have to get perfect grades or be the best kid in the class to have a shot at getting into medical school," Stephens stated. "So when one of the students, who had gone on to college and was struggling in an organic chemistry course emailed me for advice, I wrote back, ‘Well, about three counselors told me I could never get into medical school, and I had the lowest scores you’d ever seen, so don’t ever give up on your dreams.’"

M-2 student Carey Chittenden, who has coordinated this semester’s Pre-Doc sessions, says the program benefits all the parties involved because "It’s a fun and effective way to promote osteopathic medicine and healthy living in the South Florida community. By focusing our efforts on educating local high school juniors and seniors, we hope to enhance osteopathic medical school enrollment—especially here at NSU-COM."

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<th>Pre-Doc Stations Summary</th>
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<td><em>When Sigma Sigma Phi members visit local high schools, they form six educational stations and utilize a small-group learning modality to promote optimal interaction between themselves and the students. Once the six stations are set up, the student body is divided up and assigned to a specific station. The facilitators speak on their respective topics for approximately 12 minutes, which includes time to discuss techniques and answer questions before the students rotate to the next station.</em></td>
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**Osteopathic Manipulative Treatment**

At this station, a pair of facilitators demonstrates a series of osteopathic manipulative treatments while discussing relevant osteopathic principles. Concepts about assessment, treatment, and reevaluation also are discussed with the students.

**Ophthalmoscope and Otoscope**

Students are shown how to operate the two devices and are taught what to look for in a typical ear and eye exam. Students are then provided an opportunity to use the equipment and look into each other’s eyes and ears.

**Medical Education**

This station explains the philosophy of osteopathic medicine and discusses its similarities to and differences from allopathic medicine. Other issues addressed include a description of medical school classes, a discussion of what a typical day is like, and an overview of how long the matriculation process takes.

**Gross Anatomy**

Dissected brains are exhibited and anatomical structures/psychological functions are discussed. Following the presentation, students are encouraged to put on rubber gloves and touch the organs.

**Stethoscope and Heart Sounds**

At this station, proper technical use of the stethoscope is demonstrated. Students also listen to heart-sound tapes, which afford them an opportunity to discern normal from abnormal sounds. The facilitators also discuss the importance of maintaining a healthy lifestyle and preventing heart problems.

**Blood Pressure**

Blood pressure and its diastolic and systolic components are explained. Students also learn about the heart’s physiology and its association with the aforementioned vascular pressures.
Hibsman Hobnobs with Hollywood Royalty

By Scott Colton
Director of Education Communications

When M-4 student Trevi Hibsman traveled to California in September 2002 to perform an elective rotation in family medicine, she had no idea she was about to be welcomed into a fairytale world dripping with diamonds, opulence, sports superstars, and Hollywood heavyweights.

"Because I was born in Ranchos Palos Verdes, California, and had lived there until I came to NSU to attend medical school, I knew I wanted to end up back in California to do all my elective rotations," said Hibsman, who was suffering from a severe case of fourth-year medical student blues at the time. "I was kind of in a rut and down on medicine because I wasn't sure what I wanted to do once I graduated, so my friend Steven Sawalich, who produces charity events, invited me to go to a City of Hope fundraiser for inner-city children in Los Angeles that was being hosted at Rod Stewart's house. The only catch was I'd have to go by myself because since Steven was producing the event, he had to be there early. So I got the directions to Rod Stewart's house and showed up on the doorstep."

Trembling with an adrenaline-induced mixture of anticipation and anxiety, Hibsman was soon ushered into the palatial mansion to rub elbows with some of the world's most famous celebrities, including tennis ace Andre Agassi, Frasier's Kelsey Grammer, Taxi's Danny DeVito, Will & Grace's Eric McCormack, and the Terminator himself, Arnold Schwarzenegger.
“I was terrified walking in the door because I had never done anything like this before,” admitted Hibsman, who plans on pursuing a career in either family medicine or audiology once she graduates from NSU-COM later this spring. “The very first person I met was actor Gary Busey. He came up to me, grabbed my hand, kissed it, and said, ‘Who are you? I’ve never seen you before?’ I said, ‘Hi, I’m Trevi, a medical student.’ So it kind of became the catch phrase of the night—Trevi—the medical student. He asked me if I had ever come to one of these events before. I said no, so he immediately began introducing me to everyone.”

To her amazement, Hibsman soon became the focal point of attention in a room filled with Hollywood power brokers. “The first person Gary introduced me to was Andre Agassi, who turned out to be the nicest person,” she said. “He wanted to hear everything about medical school, but since I was still kind of down about the whole experience, I didn’t really want to talk about it. He wanted to know exactly what I wanted to go into, so I told him I was thinking about family medicine. He asked why I didn’t seem more excited about it, so I started telling him that by the time I graduated I would be about $200,000 in debt. He said, ‘Oh my gosh, I feel terrible because I just made about $200,000 at a tournament a few weeks ago.’ He had no idea that doctors incurred that sort of debt.”

Before long, Grammer also joined the lively conversation, which soon led to a comical debate on how to erase Hibsman’s medical school debt. “It was hilarious because there I was with Andre Agassi, Kelsey Grammer, and Gary Busey discussing my life and my future in medicine,” she laughed. “They came up with the idea that they should create a Make a Trevi Wish Foundation and raise about $250,000 to help me start my career off on the right foot.

“I sat next to Andre at dinner, and after talking some more he said I should consider going into pediatrics because he thought I would be good with kids,” she added. “Then he started talking about his wife Steffi Graf and their son, Jaden. And then Andre joked that I could become their professional babysitter in Las Vegas because it couldn’t get any better than having a doctor as your babysitter.”

Throughout the evening, Hibsman never spent a single moment with her friend Steven, who was busy making sure all facets of the celebrity-drenched affair ran smoothly. Instead, she dealt with his absence by cozying up to an array of popular actors and assorted dignitaries, including the United Nations ambassador of Afghanistan who offered Hibsman a highly lucrative job that she graciously declined.

“Dinner turned out to be an amazing experience because I got to sit next to Andre,” explained Hibsman, who also befriended funnyman DeVito. “While I was chatting with Andre at dinner, I suddenly felt a tap on the shoulder. When I turned around, there stood Arnold Schwarzenegger, who said, ‘Hi Trevi, it’s a great pleasure to meet you’ before giving me a handshake and a kiss on the cheek. When I got over my shock, I saw Danny standing behind him, laughing.”

Later that night, a celebrity auction was held that served as the perfect exclamation point in Hibsman’s fairy tale adventure. “Andre was auctioning off a tennis lesson with himself and Steffi, which was eventually purchased by my friend Steven’s mom for $37,500. When Andre came by to congratulate her, he said, ‘I’ll only give you the lesson if you promise to bring Trevi with you.’”

A few months later, Hibsman found herself unexpectedly stargazing at yet another charity event that featured a stunning assemblage of Academy Award winners. “Right before my birthday last November, my friend Steven asked, ‘If you could meet two movie stars, male and female, who would they be?’ I said Tom Hanks and Julia Roberts. The next day, his parents’ birthday present to me was a ticket to a Paul Newman charity event that
benefited children who are suffering from terminal illnesses."

The fundraiser, which was held at the Kodak Theatre where the Academy Awards are staged annually, proved to be an eye-popping A-list celebrity showcase that included high-powered Oscar winners Hanks, Paul Newman, Roberts, Joanne Woodward, Sylvester Stallone, and Goldie Hawn. It also proved to be a priceless opportunity for Hibbsman to mingle with the Hollywood elite and create a lifetime of indelible memories.

"While I was waiting outside the VIP room, I suddenly saw Tom Hanks walk in," recalled Hibbsman, who nervously introduced herself to the two-time Oscar winner before asking him to pose for a quick snapshot. "I asked a security guard to snap the photo, but I knew it wasn't going to come out that great because it was an extreme close-up."

Incredibly, while Hibbsman was strolling through the VIP room a short time later, Hanks reaffirmed his reputation as one of Hollywood's nicest superstars when he unexpectedly approached her to ask a surprising question. "Tom came up to me and said, 'Trevi, I have a feeling that picture outside didn't turn out well because it was so crowded. Do you want to take another one?' I just started crying," recalled Hibbsman of the sweetly surreal experience.

"I started telling him about what a big fan I am of his and his wife, Rita Wilson, and just as I'm saying all this, I turned around and there she was, suddenly standing right next to me. She heard what I said and replied, 'Are you bragging about me?'"

While Hibbsman chatted with Hanks and Wilson, the eternally perky Goldie Hawn walked over to say hello. Ironically, Hawn's sudden appearance wasn't Hibbsman's first brush with the Private Benjamin star. "When I was a kid I played ice hockey for 10 years and was the only girl on my team," she explained.

"Most of the boys I played against were mean to me and constantly called me names. One skinny kid in particular had a really dirty mouth, and in this one game he was getting more and more profane. So I checked him against the boards. He fell down and his parents had to come get him. It turned out his parents were Goldie Hawn and Kurt Russell. Needless to say, Goldie wasn't too happy with me at the time."

As the triumvirate of Hanks, Wilson, and Hawn chatted with her, Hibbsman suddenly spied Pretty Woman Roberts amicably conversing with Newman just a few feet away. Seizing her once-in-a-lifetime opportunity, Hibbsman gleefully stated that it would be great to get an all-girl photo featuring herself, Hawn, Wilson, and Roberts.

"I gave my camera to one of the waiters," she said. "But just as he was about to take the shot, Julia said, 'Do you mind if Paul's in the shot?' Of course, I graciously deferred to her request."

Now that she's back in Florida completing her core rotations, Hibbsman fondly recalls those treasured celebrity encounters whenever she's in need of an emotional lift.

"Whenever I get down or depressed about studying for my board exams or anything else, I just start thinking about the great time I had at these events or start leafing through my photos," she stated. "Looking back at those incredible experiences helps me move forward."
Preventive Medicine Residency Program Earns Widespread Respect

Since its July 2000 inception, NSU-COM’s Osteopathic Preventive Medicine and Public Health Residency Training Program has evolved into a postgraduate paradigm of excellence that has earned universal praise and national recognition for its quality and uniqueness.

However, when it was launched three years ago, the program—the first of its kind in the osteopathic profession—was initially looked upon with a measure of skepticism from some circles. “Because it was the first preventive medicine residency program in the country to have osteopathic residents incorporated into an existing M.D. residency program, it was certainly met with raised eyebrows,” said Jean Malecki, M.D., M.P.H., FACPM, who chairs the Department of Preventive Medicine and serves as director of the Palm Beach County Health Department.

Fortunately, any concerns were quickly dispelled once the program—which comprises three allopathic and three osteopathic residency slots—was initiated. In January 2001, the West Palm Beach Veterans Affairs Medical Center boosted the program’s cachet when it became a member of NSU-COM’s Consortium for Excellence in Medical Education (CEME) and provided residents with an opportunity to hone their skills at a cutting-edge facility that complemented the educational opportunities available through the Palm Beach County Health Department.

Over the past few months, NSU-COM’s Osteopathic Preventive Medicine and Public Health Residency Training Program has been nationally recognized for its excellence by a number of organizations, including the American Osteopathic Association (AOA), the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), and the American College of Preventive Medicine (ACPM).

“It’s been an exciting time for the program,” said Dr. Malecki, who was featured in the March 2003 issue of Esquire magazine. “We just received five-year accreditation from the AOA, which is unprecedented for such a new program. And we were singled out by HRSA, which provided the college with the initial $450,000 training grant three years ago, as being the model pilot program for the rest of the nation.”

Jesse Singer, D.O., a third-year resident who graduated from NSU-COM in 1999, brought additional esteem to the residency program when he was invited to present his poster on “Assessment of Provider and Patient Compliance with Preventive Medicine Guidelines Using a Computerized Reminder System” at the ACPM annual meeting in San Diego last February. The research, which he conducted while working at the West Palm Beach Veterans Affairs Medical Center last year, underlines the enormous strides the residency program has made in a relatively short time span.

“The fact that Dr. Singer has been recognized by our specialty society for his poster presentation about utilizing automation in prevention speaks volumes about our program’s success,” said Dr. Malecki, who gave the plenary session on “Bioterrorism Preparedness and the Rising Priority of Local Public Health” at the ACPM symposium in February. “A lot of hard work went into creating and improving this program, and now we’re seeing the fruits of our labor.”

Chris Perkins, D.O., who was elected chief resident by his peers last year, echoed Dr. Malecki’s sentiments. “It’s an outstanding program that’s getting better all the time,” he stated. “It has prepared me to become a health officer, whether it be on the state, local, or national level. As chief resident, I’ve had the opportunity to work with the faculty and help make the program even stronger for my colleagues who will be following in my footsteps.”

Dr. Singer, who will be earning his M.P.H. degree in April and graduating from the residency program in June, says the program “really is the perfect extension of my interests. I love the fact that the community is your patient. You can really make sweeping changes in people’s quality of life. You get the clinical aspect as well as the science of public health, and you can make a difference one person at a time or one population at a time.”
Over the past three years, NSU-COM has coordinated six medical missions to Guatemala, with each one developing into a distinctly memorable experience for the participants. The most recent expedition—the longest and most comprehensive in terms of participation and patient volume—proved to be yet another action-packed adventure for the 95 volunteers who donated their time and expertise to the medical outreach crusade.

The two-week trip, held February 21 through March 9, actually consisted of two separate missions in various regions of Guatemala, which allowed the health care cadre to provide follow-up care in areas previously visited as well as outreach to other medically needy regions. "It proved to be a very complicated yet enriching mission," said Lauritz "Larry" Jensen, D.A., director of pre-clinical education and chair of NSU-COM's International
Medicine Committee. “We spent the first week working in the areas we’ve been cultivating for several years—Santa Catarina Palopó, San Antonio Palopó, Jaibolito, and Xipe—then traveled north to work in a very tropical region called Poptún.”

Over 2,500 patients were examined and/or treated during the two-week medical campaign, which included the requisite array of exotic maladies that are rarely seen in the United States such as leishmaniasis and Wuchereria bancroftii. One particularly heartrending case involving a 35-year-old Guatemalan woman illustrated the gravity of the health care situation in Guatemala—and underscored the importance of conducting continued missions to the region.

When the medical team examined the patient, who had been afflicted with the parasite Wuchereria bancroftii (also known as filariasis or elephantiasis) for 16 years, it was immediately apparent how dire her situation was on a number of levels. Because the disease causes gross disfigurations of the genitals and legs in its latter stages, the patient had become a social outcast who endured the additional stigma of being rejected by her own husband and children.

“This particular case put a human face on an infectious tropical disease that you really only read about in textbooks,” Dr. Jensen explained. “The patient’s husband and her two children essentially threw her out of the house because they were afraid they would “catch” the disease. She’s on her own, totally self-sufficient, and desperate to be restored to good health. It’s a truly tragic story; however, one of the physicians who accompanied us on this mission, Dr. Anthony Christoff, is setting up a bank account to help fund her treatment. When we return to Guatemala in June, we will assist the Guatemalan doctors with the management of her condition.”

In addition to dealing with the usual assortment of injuries and ailments—as well as a countrywide teacher’s strike that made traveling difficult due to protestor-induced road and airport closures—the mission participants were confronted with several crises that helped the health care contingent forge an unbreakable bond. “One night while having dinner at a local restaurant, I received a phone call from Chris, one our contacts at Lake Atitlán,” said Camille Bentley, D.O, assistant professor of family medicine who has been involved with the Guatemala medical mission program since its inception. “He told me about a three-year-old girl from Santa Catarina who had a giant abscess on the back of her head and asked if he could bring her to me.”

After immediately agreeing to assist the child, Dr. Bentley returned to the hotel, where she and several volunteers crafted a makeshift surgical station. Once the hysterical youngster arrived with her father, Dr. Bentley quickly examined the tangerine-size growth located on the back of the child’s head. “We decided we would incise and drain the abscess,” said Dr. Bentley, who also serves as medical coordinator of the NSU-COM Health Education and Training Center (HETC) Program. “With the help of some students and physician assistants, we sedated the child by using a mixture of Children’s Tylenol and Benadryl.”

After prepping the surgical area, Dr. Bentley and her assistants lanced the abscess and expressed the pus. However, before they could perform the procedure, they had to fashion a provisional papoose out of a sheet to restrain the understandably fidgety child. “We also had the child’s father sit by her head to talk to her and calm her down,” Dr. Bentley said. “When we were done we wrapped the wound in a pressure bandage and placed
Mission participants included Dr. Paul McHugh, John Crosby, J.D., executive director of the AOA, Bob Klobnak, executive director of DOCARE International, Dr. Joel Spalter, and Dr. Elisa Ginter.

the child on antibiotics to prevent a staph infection from occurring. We have followed up on the case via email and were happy to learn that the child is fully recovered and doing fine.”

When the health care team traveled 300 miles north to Poptún to conduct the second stage of its humanitarian mission, the participants had just begun to settle into their hotel when a medical emergency unfolded on their doorstep. “We had just arrived in Poptún and were in the hotel unpacking the medications when we heard a loud screech followed by a colossal bang,” Dr. Bentley recalled. “We knew it was a serious car wreck, so we grabbed our stethoscopes and some supplies and started running toward the sound of blaring horns.”

As they arrived at the scene, the twisted remnants of a truck and a van greeted them, as did the unsettling image of a blood-drenched young man lying on the side of the road in obvious pain. “The driver of one of the vehicles had apparently fled the scene, so we rushed over to the young man, who was all cut up, and began attending to his wounds,” Dr. Bentley said. “Since no ambulance ever showed up, we had Paco, our guide and health contact in Poptún, get the step van we used to transport supplies. We then carefully loaded the victim, who had suffered fractured ribs and a possible ruptured spleen, into the van and took him to a local hospital. We later found out that he was transferred to a major hospital in Guatemala City, where he was doing well.”

Dr. Bentley also encountered a bizarre—and ultimately tragic—case that involved a Guatemalan physician who came to the local hospital in Poptún seeking medical assistance. “While I was at the hospital, I was suddenly told there was a physician coming in who was experiencing chest pains,” she recalled. “The first thing that struck me was that, for some unknown reason, I was being asked to see this patient instead of the staff doctors who worked at the hospital. I was amazed that the other doctors would let me run their case because that would never happen here in the United States.”

After examining the patient and getting his history, Dr. Bentley surmised that the 46-year-old physician was suffering from severe angina. “He had a history of high blood pressure, was overweight, and had smoked heavily earlier that morning, so he obviously possessed a number of risk factors for cardiac disease,” she explained. “He had given himself a shot of Demerol to alleviate the pain, which he had been experiencing for eight consecutive days. I put him on oxygen and attempted to get him some nitroglycerin, but neither the hospital nor the local pharmacy had any. Fortunately, my dad, who was volunteering down the road in another clinic, happened to be carrying a fresh batch of nitro with him for his own heart condition.”

After retrieving the medicine and administering it to the patient, his pain was relieved. Still, Dr. Bentley knew the physician’s life was in danger unless he received immediate assistance at a larger, more appropriately staffed hospital. “I knew he needed a higher level of medical care as soon as possible because the hospital in Poptún lacked any cardiac medications or a crash cart,” said Dr. Bentley, who arranged to have an ambulance take him to the primary hospital in Guatemala City. “Sadly, I found out he passed away later that night from a major myocardial infarction. What disturbed me more than anything else was that he was a physician—and he knew he was suffering from angina. Unfortunately, like so many patients that have a heart attack, he was denying it. And he died because of that. Perhaps if he had received appropriate treatment eight days sooner, he might have survived.”
Guatemala Mission Memories

Susan C. Lee, M-4 Student

At 78, her withered face and toothless smile bore the markings of a survivor. She hobbled to my examining chair without complaint, despite her hunched back and the appearance of great pain. As she told me her problems of crippling arthritis, I noticed her hands. They were like maps of a well-traveled road: long grooves cut with roughened skin from years of cooking, washing, weaving, and carrying children. The thumb and first finger of each hand were flattened, bulbous in character. The edges were so rounded—they looked like saucers.

I felt her hands, and as I moved my fingers up and down her skin, I asked if I could photograph her hands. She agreed, graciously. I asked her what had happened to make certain fingers flattened like that while the others were normal. She replied that she kneaded corn for many years, and that was what had happened to her overworked hands. I took the pictures so I could frame them and put them on my wall at home. This simple woman inspired me through the arduous existence she led.

On my wall I will have a tangible memento of this trip—and what being a physician means to me. Each time I am burnt out and sick of my own life, I will look at this woman’s hands, remember how hard she worked (and suffered), and be grateful for all the gifts and opportunities I have been given.
Anthony Ottaviani, D.O., Plays Key Role in NSU-COM’s West Coast Success

In his role as regional dean of the College of Osteopathic Medicine’s West Coast Academic Center, which is located at Sun Coast Hospital in Largo, Florida, Anthony Ottaviani, D.O. M.E.H., FACOI, FCCP, is responsible for overseeing all the pre- and postgraduate clinical training NSU-COM students receive at the west coast site.

However, had it not been for his wife Catherine, who he met while attending high school in Buffalo, New York, Dr. Ottaviani may well have pursued a less secular career path. “I was either going to be a priest or a physician—and then I met my wife, who has been so supportive and encouraging throughout our marriage,” Dr. Ottaviani said. “I think a lot of young catholic Italian boys like myself thought of joining the priesthood because it was an attractive calling that was similar to a physician’s role. But the reality is that I always leaned toward medicine.”

That intrinsic interest in medicine was strengthened further during Dr. Ottaviani’s interaction with his childhood physician, who became both a revered role model and friend. Fortuitously, when he began his undergraduate studies at Gannon College in Erie, Pennsylvania, Dr. Ottaviani formed a strong bond with another physician who would have a significant impact on his professional future.

“When I went to college I met an osteopathic physician named Arthur B. Calabrese who became a wonderful mentor,” he explained. “He and his wife really befriended me. Dr. Calabrese was the head of my college infirmary, and I was extremely impressed with his kindness, his character, and his integrity. When it finally became time for me to apply to medical school, I decided to submit an application to Dr. Calabrese’s alma mater, which was the Kansas City College of Osteopathic Medicine.”

Like many medical students, Dr. Ottaviani found himself gravitating toward several different specialties before finally finding his niche. “At first I wanted to be an obstetrician, and then I decided in my senior year that I didn’t want to be involved in surgery,” he stated. “I knew I wanted to be more people involved, so I did a rotating internship in anesthesia at Riverside Hospital in Trenton, Michigan.”

After completing his internship in 1969, Dr. Ottaviani was accepted into the anesthesiology residency program at Detroit Osteopathic Hospital. However, he quickly realized that he and anesthesiology were an ill-suited match. “I was six months into the residency when I suddenly realized I had made a terrible error because I wanted to be involved with a patient’s day-to-day care,” explained Dr. Ottaviani, who is a fellow of the American College of Osteopathic Internists and the American College of Chest Physicians. “I approached the department chair, who told me I should pursue whatever makes me happy in medicine. So I applied to the internal medicine residency program at Detroit Osteopathic Hospital.”

Once he found his niche, Dr. Ottaviani successfully completed his internal medicine residency and followed that by conducting a one-year fellowship in pulmonary disease at Wayne County General Hospital, located at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor. While he was completing his fellowship, Dr. Ottaviani was unexpectedly offered an opportunity to work in an established four-man internal medicine group at Sun Coast Hospital in Largo, Florida.

It should have been a joyous time for Dr. Ottaviani and his wife Catherine, who had tied the knot during his second year of medical school. There was just one drawback involved—informing his mother of the decision.

“My mother thought I was coming back to Buffalo to practice, and I knew I couldn’t tell her the truth because she would be so unhappy,” he recalled. “So I made up a little white lie and told her I had been offered an opportunity to practice in either Florida or Hawaii. She immediately said, ‘Oh my gosh, please go to Florida. We will never see you if you go to Hawaii.’ What she didn’t know at the time was that I had never been offered a position in Hawaii.
Since joining the Sun Coast team in 1973, Dr. Ottaviani has spent the past 30 years in the field of pulmonary and critical care. His interest in the specialty was evidenced further in 1985 when he completed a two-year fellowship in pulmonary medicine at the University of South Florida’s College of Medicine, where he currently serves as a clinical faculty member. However, his involvement with NSU-COM didn’t commence until 1987, when several of the college’s administrators approached Sun Coast with an idea to become a rotation site for third- and fourth-year students. The partnership would prove to be an immense success, resulting in an even more formal arrangement six years later.

“After working with the College of Osteopathic Medicine for five or six years, I was approached by Dr. Morton Terry, Dr. Arnold Melnick, and Dr. Matt Terry and asked if Sun Coast would be interested in forming a tighter relationship where we would actually become their designated West Coast Academic Center,” said Dr. Ottaviani, who earned an M.PH. degree from NSU-COM in 1997. “Once that occurred, I was approached about becoming regional dean for the college in 1993 and overseeing the students. Over the past decade my role has continued to grow since we have developed graduate residency programs in family medicine, dermatology, internal medicine, anesthesia, and general surgery.”

The selection of Sun Coast Hospital—a 300-bed acute care facility—to serve as NSU-COM’s West Coast Academic Center proved to be a prudent decision based on the hospital’s sterling national reputation. In addition to serving as NSU-COM’s West Coast Academic Center and as current president of the college’s Consortium for Excellence in Medical Education (CEME), Sun Coast Hospital has maintained formal academic affiliations with Des Moines College of Osteopathic Medicine and Surgery in Iowa and Western University of Health Sciences/College of Osteopathic Medicine of the Pacific in Pomona, California.

As the largest osteopathic teaching hospital in the southeastern United States, Sun Coast is dedicated to providing the highest quality medical education for the students, interns, and residents who come to Sun Coast Hospital from the nation’s 20 osteopathic medical schools. Annually, Sun Coast provides training to an average of 50 house staff physicians, including 20 interns and more than 40 medical students. Additionally, there are 45 residency positions available in the aforementioned residency programs.

“Sun Coast Hospital has been a key player in academic medicine in this community for years,” said Dr. Ottaviani, who was named Physician of the Year by the Florida Osteopathic Medical Association and the Pinellas County Osteopathic Medical Society in 1995. “I attribute this ongoing success to Sun Coast’s physician faculty, medical education department, administration, and employees who continually foster an excellent teaching and learning environment. Partnering with NSU has helped us further enhance our programs because we remain a very sought-after campus across the nation for undergraduate and postgraduate education. In fact, we’re the last nonprofit, freestanding osteopathic teaching facility in the southeastern United States.”

In his role as regional dean, Dr. Ottaviani acts as the link between Sun Coast Hospital, the West Coast Academic Center, and NSU’s Health Professions Division—a responsibility that includes representing the HPD in its west coast relationships with the University of South Florida and the Bay Pines Veterans Affairs Medical Center. “I greet all students that come to this campus and welcome them on behalf of NSU-COM,” said Dr. Ottaviani, whose daughter Laura graduated from NSU-COM in 1992. “I help oversee the students’ curriculum as well the lecture programs at this institution, all the while making sure we provide the kind of input we want for our students, interns, and residents.”

One of his proudest achievements was helping to bring NSU-COM’s Master of Public Health Program to Sun Coast. “Thanks to the use of interactive television and video, we had 11 of our physicians and nurses graduate from that program,” stated Dr. Ottaviani, who serves on the NSU-HPD Board of Governors. “Because of the success of the M.PH. Program, we’re currently trying to bring other NSU programs to this campus, including physical and occupational therapy.”
During the first weekend of February 2003, more than 125 community-minded students and faculty members representing various sectors of NSU’s Health Professions Division showcased their compassionate nature by participating in the AMSA/AHEC Florida Rural Mission for Health. During the two-day health fair, which was hosted on separate days at Belle Glade Elementary School in Belle Glade and the Hendry Regional Medical Center in Clewiston, over 1,000 patient screenings and examinations were conducted at the two sites.

The medical outreach effort, which was coordinated by NSU-COM’s Area Health Education Center (AHEC) Program and the college’s American Medical Student Association (AMSA) chapter, specifically targeted children and adults from the migrant farm-worker population in Belle Glade, Clewiston, and surrounding communities. Attendees also benefited from the tremendous local and regional support provided by the 125 or so community organizations on hand at the Florida Rural Mission for Health, which was sponsored by an array of organizations, including:

- Agouron Pharmaceuticals
- Glades Planned Approach to Community Health (PATCH)
- Hendry Regional Medical Center
- Lake Okeechobee Rural Health Network
- Pfizer Pharmaceuticals
- Southern Gardens
- Wal-Mart
“This program is a superb example of interdisciplinary collaboration between the HPD colleges, students, and faculty—of working together to serve community needs in outlying rural communities,” said Steven Zucker, D.M.D., M.Ed., associate dean for community affairs and AHEC Program director. “The fact that over 125 students and faculty from the HPD gave freely of their time to provide over 1,000 patient examinations is testimony to the great spirit of community service that has been engendered by our Health Professions Division.”

During the rural medical mission—which consisted of the Rural Education, Awareness, and Community Health (REACH) Fair in Belle Glade and the Hendry/Glades Community Health Fair in Clewiston—representatives from eight HPD programs were on hand to dispense valuable health care education and vital medical services to the rural migrant community. NSU-HPD programs represented were dental medicine, public health occupational therapy, optometry, osteopathic medicine, pharmacy, physical therapy, and physician assistant.

Unlike most health fairs, which offer little more than basic preventative education and cursory health screenings, the Florida Rural Mission for Health provided underserved patients with a rare opportunity to receive comprehensive medical care—complete with follow-up services. From the moment they registered until the time they completed their day with a stop at the physician checkout station, patients were able to benefit from a diverse array of medical services, including focused physical exams and various blood and urine screenings. If follow-up care was required, patients were referred to the Lake Okeechobee Rural Health Network, the Palm Beach County Health Department, or one of the other 125 community organizations represented throughout the weekend.

The importance of events like the AMSA/AHEC Florida Rural Mission for Health was underscored repeatedly throughout the weekend. Because the migrant population rarely has access to even basic health care services, a large number of patients were diagnosed with uncontrolled diabetes and hypertension and sent for subsequent follow-up care. One particular female patient, who may have endured a fatal outcome without medical intervention, registered a shockingly high blood-sugar level of 700 during her initial screening. Further examination revealed even more troubling news: peripheral neuropathy and advanced kidney disease.

“That’s why the physician checkout station was such an important aspect of the health fair,” said M-2 student Chelsea Jerry, who serves as president of NSU-COM’s AMSA chapter. “Once the patients completed the examination process, they met with one of the physicians and three or four students at the checkout station for a final consultation. If a particular patient was suffering from uncontrolled diabetes, the medical team explained what that meant in terms of that person’s future health and provided vital education.”

In addition to functioning as a tool to assess the patients, the checkout station served as an invaluable, hands-on learning opportunity for the students. “Our medical students were able to complete progress notes, using the SOAP (Subjective Objective Assessment Plan) procedure they learned in class,” said Camille Bentley, D.O., an assistant professor of family medicine who serves as medical coordinator of the NSU-COM Health Education and Training Center (HETC) Program. “Students had the opportunity to read the notes written by other students and review the exam findings, patient histories, and lab results. Sometimes, based on their reviews, they had to
alter or adjust the treatment initially proposed."

Another key component of the two-day event revolved around educating attendees about the importance of preventive medicine, which was accomplished via an innovative educational exhibit coordinated by the M.P.H. students. "They didn't just sit idly and hand out material," explained Debbi Cohn Steinkohl, who serves as AMSA faculty advisor and administrative director of the Interdisciplinary Generalist Curriculum (IGC) Program. "The students created a lively, interactive booth where the children and adults were able to play games like Wheel of Fortune while learning about important topics like tobacco cessation and awareness, sun exposure, nutrition labels, germ prevention, and breast cancer."

"This is really the only opportunity for us to do mission work in a local rural setting that's affordable as opposed to doing an international mission," stated Jerry, who was responsible for ensuring student participation from NSU-COM and the other HPD colleges. "We rarely get to work with the other disciplines like optometry or dental, so that was an aspect the medical students really enjoyed. We do gain some rural awareness through the IGC Program and our own volunteer work, but we don't actually get to go into the community. During this event, we got to stay for the entire weekend and see what rural life is really like. It opened my eyes to the rural experience; in fact, I would definitely consider a career in it now."

The exhaustive efforts that began last summer to coordinate all facets of the AMSA/AHEC Florida Rural Mission for Health clearly paid considerable dividends for the patients and the Health Professions Division medical team that donated its time and talents to the health outreach campaign. "This is the largest HPD interdisciplinary program where students have an opportunity to learn about each other's disciplines," Steinkohl stated. "It's a perfect example of fostering a team atmosphere to do a common good. It also illustrates what the HPD can accomplish when we work together as a unified team."
According to Henry David Thoreau, “We need the tonic of wilderness and nature” to replenish our souls and revitalize our lives. The more time we spend outdoors, and the further away from cities we go, the greater our knowledge level needs to be in order to prevent and treat injuries and illnesses inherent to such adventures. What should you do if you are caught in an avalanche, attacked by a mountain lion, or your diving regulator gets ripped out of your mouth at 50 feet below sea level? These and many other questions were answered for M-2 student Fred Trayers and myself in February 2003 at the 18th Annual Winter Wilderness Medicine Conference.

The entire event was a sensation, with wilderness medicine experts presenting riveting lectures on field-related topics. We were reassured that our lifetime commitment to medicine would prove to be exciting, fulfilling, and fun. All of this took place at the Snow King Resort in Jackson Hole, Wyoming—a setting so beautiful that it is surreal. Bold, 13,000-feet peaks of the Teton Range rise from the expansive plains of the West, and the valley is afire with orange and crimson brush that lines the riverbanks. This wonderland was blanketed with the whitest and purest of snow, which fell gently on the fir trees while visions of powder days danced in our heads.

Amidst this frosty splendor, Fred and I were greatly educated on the prevention, treatment, and pathophysiology of many entities. Some of the topics covered were avalanche safety, altitude illness, frostbite, and hypothermia. We particularly enjoyed “North American Wild Animal Attacks.” We were shocked by video footage of tourists and hikers being gored by bison, trampled by moose, and stalked by cougars or bears. We learned how each species of animal must be handled differently in a surprise encounter: play dead for grizzlies, show aggression to black bears, and fight a cougar for your life because he is after a meal. And don’t try to pet the bison!

Since there is more to outdoor medicine than winter-related activities, other topics such as barotrauma, venomous arthropods and snakes, and traveler’s diarrhea were presented. Some tips from snakebite experts: don’t incise the wound or attempt to suck out the poison, as this will likely trigger greater tissue necrosis. The key to pit viper bite therapy is antivenin. “Prevention and Management of Lightning Strikes” was especially edifying for Fred, who still lives in Florida—the lightning strike capital of the United States. We were advised to seek shelter immediately if flash-to-bang time is less than 30 seconds. If outside, crouch down on the balls of your feet and don’t touch the ground with your hands.

Hands-on clinics and evening programs were two of many conference highlights. I attended an overview of scuba diving injuries before joining Fred for “Dislocation and Fracture Management in the Backcountry,” an hour-long session during which a demonstration was presented on how to craft various splints from available materials such as ski poles, sticks, climbing cord, and webbing. I was also given the opportunity to practice using an avalanche transceiver to locate a simulated victim in the snow. In the evenings, special presentations filled us with wonder as speakers related their experiences of living in remote areas.

Wildlife photographer Tom Mangelsen presented his love of nature in pictures, and mountaineer Brent Bishop described growing up in Tibet and on Mount Everest.

Contrary to popular belief, wilderness medicine is not just for park rangers, heli-skiers or rock climbers—it is for everyone. The health of humanity is directly connected to the health of the environment. Dr. Paul Auerbach, who is a founding member of the Wilderness Medicine Society, summed it up perfectly during the conference when he said, “Major environmental issues should be of concern to all physicians. Pollution, deforestation, and reduction of biodiversity lead to malnutrition, cancer, and epidemic disease.”

Conservation issues are not separate from medicine, but rather intricately linked. The earth is our ecosystem—our lives depend on its preservation. As a member of the Wilderness Medical Society, I encourage you to become an environmental advocate, incorporate conservation into your practice, and educate your patients. As a physician, you can help inspire the public to live in an environmentally responsible manner. I also invite you to attend an upcoming conference. It will change your life.
Robin McFee, D.O., Sets Ambitious Agenda for Bioterrorism Preparedness Center

By Scott Colton
Director of Education Communications

On August 23, 2002, NSU-COM further cemented its reputation as a cutting-edge institution when it established the Center for Education and Research in Bioterrorism and Weapons of Mass Destruction (BWMD) Preparedness to serve as a vital education, training, and resource initiative for the health care community and the community at large.

It’s an ambitious undertaking that will undoubtedly bring additional esteem to NSU and the College of Osteopathic Medicine, especially now that Robin McFee, D.O., M.P.H., assistant professor of preventive medicine, has been appointed as the center’s director. “My vision is to be a cutting-edge resource for the community, which we can accomplish by pulling together a team of experts not just from the osteopathic college but also from the university’s other schools,” said Dr. McFee, a renowned toxicologist who joined the NSU-COM faculty a few weeks before the September 2001 terrorist attacks.

“What happened on 9/11 was not just an aberration,” she stressed. “It took Al Qaeda a number of years, from 1993 until 2001, to plan and execute their next attack on the United States. The fact that we haven’t seen or identified something related to Al Qaeda since 9/11 is irrelevant because the threat is out there. We have done a lot of talking and appropriated money, but, as a nation, we’re not at the point where we can sit back and say we can feel good about ourselves because we properly prepared against another attack and it never happened. The bottom line is we’re not adequately prepared, so we’re not at the point where we can or should feel good about ourselves.”

To address these concerns, NSU-COM has assumed a multifaceted leadership role that includes partnering with the state’s four other medical schools to brainstorm and problem solve. “We’ve formed an alliance that’s truly unique in this country,” said Dr. McFee, who foresees a day when the center will actually consist of a standalone structure housed on the NSU campus. “No one else has been able to orchestrate a scenario where you get all the medical schools to sit down in a room. We’re sitting together and looking at this dilemma from a problem solving perspective—not as a money-grab opportunity.”

NSU-COM and the University of Miami School of Medicine have already assumed a leadership role in this alliance by collaborating on a project that will examine and address the behavioral health issues surrounding the trauma caused by bioterrorism. “What we’re looking at is across domains,” Dr. McFee explained. “For example, how do you incorporate bioterrorism-related trauma in your differential diagnosis? Drug and alcohol use have escalated since 9/11. Those of us in the field knew it would happen, which is why health care professionals need to be able to identify it in themselves, in their colleagues, and in their patients. They need to help build resiliency before an event occurs.
That’s the center’s motto, and it reminds us that we must worry and wonder. McFee envisions a global view for the center, but there are definitely things we can learn from colleagues that I’ve worked with in Israel, so we’re going to tap into their expertise, and they’re going to tap into ours because there are definitely things we can learn from each other.”

On a curricula level, Dr. McFee has already made significant headway by involving NSU-COM students in mock drills and assorted research projects. “I’m currently working with some great students on a variety of bioterrorism and toxicology studies and manuscripts. Jim Suozzi, Chris Racant, and I are looking at an emerging threat from a novel weight-loss product that has been understudied in spite of increased abuse of this product,” she explained.

“How is it that certain cultures or countries, like Israel, deal with the constant uncertainty of terrorism? What I want to do is build some bridges with our international colleagues who have more experience in this realm,” she added. “I have colleagues that I’ve worked with in Israel, so we’re going to tap into their expertise, and they’re going to tap into ours because there are definitely things we can learn from each other.”

On a broader scale, Dr. McFee’s ambitious goals for the center include having it serve as a pivotal resource for the community—an objective that will come to fruition as knowledge of the center’s existence and expertise spreads throughout South Florida. “We’re at a point where we are ready to market ourselves and establish an identity that people will recognize,” Dr. McFee stressed. “As we gain some financial independence, we’ll be able to bring in more team members, more expertise, and we’ll be able to address our mission even faster. As the center grows, we’ll be able to provide value in terms of security, risk assessment, and site development for preparedness as we work with local cities, hospitals, and chambers of commerce to make a community safer.”

When discussing the importance of bioterrorism disaster preparedness, Dr. McFee is quick to point out that communities need to address local vulnerabilities and not just terrorist-related scenarios. “What if a car goes out of control and hits a chlorine tanker? Most hospitals are ill prepared to handle something like that, and I’ve been to enough HAZMAT (hazardous materials) drills and enough hospital chemical drills to know that even though people will be well-meaning, there won’t be enough communication or enough antidotes,” she stated. “Even the most well-meaning and engaged people are lacking in certain skills. We all have to be willing to have the mindset to adapt to a changing world.”

While it’s an admittedly audacious agenda, Dr. McFee is confident that a combination of old-fashioned patience and perseverance will prove to be the key to success. “If we accomplish a few of our goals progressively, we’ll eventually get to everything we want to do,” she stated. “Ultimately, though, when people think of bioterrorism preparedness in South Florida, I want them to think of NSU.”
Student Organization of the Month
Undergraduate American Academy of Osteopathy

When M-2 student Shirley Chen assumed the presidency of the NSU-COM Undergraduate American Academy of Osteopathy (UAAO) chapter last fall, she did so with several specific goals in mind, including increasing membership, improving fundraising efforts, and educating others about the profession and its manipulative medicine aspect.

“Our focus as a club is primarily on the osteopathic manipulative medicine aspect, which differentiates us in my opinion from the allopathic profession and other fields of medicine,” stated Chen, who says the organization is more generally referred to as the OPP Club because of its emphasis on manipulation. “Our general goal is to promote further understanding of osteopathic medicine and increase public knowledge. Even now there are still many people who don’t understand or know what osteopathic medicine is.”

While many student organizations focus their attention on community service activities, the UAAO is primarily concerned with providing its members with perpetual exposure to hands-on manipulative techniques via various lunchtime and evening meetings. “We want to give our members as much opportunity as possible to get together, practice, and maintain that passion they have for osteopathic medicine,” stressed Chen. “Last year we only had a limited amount of evening meetings, so we’ve remedied that by incorporating regular lunchtime meetings in the OPP Lab.”

In addition to providing extracurricular educational opportunities, Chen investigated and implemented an inventive way to boost the club’s fundraising efforts, which have generally revolved around tried-and-true tactics such as bake sales or the selling of edited OPP Lab tapes. “This year we coordinated a portable OPP table sale,” she explained. “I did some online research and eventually found a company that was willing to sell us the tables at a very good price. We sold about 20 tables and were able to raise a significant amount of money.”

Unlike many of the college’s student organizations, which require no membership fee to join, the UAAO does impose a $70 charge, which covers all local and national conference fees throughout the members’ four-year NSU-COM matriculation, including the national AAO Convocation, which was held in Ottawa, Canada, this past March. “It’s very different than other conventions, where you usually go to attend lectures and have some fun,” Chen stated. “Convocation is a lot more hands-on because we have lecture series that have a lab portion. There’s also a session called Evening with the Stars where they bring in various doctors who either have their own practices or are affiliated with a school’s osteopathic manipulative medicine department.”

Although community outreach is not one of the UAAO’s hallmarks, its members are committed to promulgating the osteopathic philosophy to the next generation of physicians. “We are working in conjunction with Sigma Sigma Phi to teach the Pre-Doc Program, which is where we visit different high schools several times a semester and explain what osteopathic medicine is and what distinguishes us from the allopathic profession to the students who are thinking about pursuing a medical career,” Chen said. “Our goal is to educate the students and let them know about the osteopathic option.”

As her run as president draws to a close, Chen is understandably proud of the contributions she and her fellow officers have made to the college’s UAAO chapter. However, there is one goal she would like to see come to fruition in the next few years—an outreach philosophy that expands on the Pre-Doc Program. “We need to visit the undergraduate colleges and get the premed students interested in and educated about osteopathic medicine,” she explained. “That’s where I found about it, but it was very late in my senior year. People should know sooner than that what their options are. One way we could accomplish that is by having our students go back to their alma maters and visit some of the different premed clubs and societies.”

A more immediate priority for Chen and the other officers is ensuring that the club’s future leaders stay true to the UAAO’s ultimate mission. “If we can impart the same amount of passion and motivation for osteopathic medicine as we have to the M-1 class that will be the leaders next year, I will be extremely happy,” she admitted.
Alumni Corner...Alumni Corner

Alumni Association Executive Committee

2003-2004 Officers
Dr. Glenn Moran, President (1988)
Dr. Kenneth Johnson, President Elect (1991)
Dr. Ronald Renuart, Vice President (1990)
Dr. Steven Cimerberg, Secretary (1987)
Dr. Gregory James, Treasurer (1988)

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Dr. Daniel McBath – Fundraising Chair
Dr. Tamer Gozleveli – Webmaster
Dr. Michael Gervasi – Editor

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

Join the NSU-COM Listserv
(listserv@list.nova.edu or nsucom_alumni@list.nova.edu)
You may also access Listserv at the alumni Web page by clicking on the “Join Our Listserv” link.

Past Presidents
Dr. John Geake (1993)
Dr. Tamer Gozleveli (1987)
Dr. Michael Gervasi (1987)
Dr. Orlando Garcia (1994)
Dr. Jeffrey Grove (1990)
Dr. Daniel McBath (1990)
Dr. Isidro Pujol (1994)

Susan Yahia, D.O., a 1991 NSU-COM alumnae who currently serves on the Dean’s Alumni Advisory Council, was recently named president of the National Board of Osteopathic Medical Examiners.

100th Annual FOMA Convention
NSU-COM Alumni Reception
February 21, 2003
Hyatt Regency Pier 66
Fort Lauderdale, Florida
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) 262-1029. Following are the altruistic individuals who have contributed to NSU-COM's Alumni Association Fund since its inception:

2002-2003 Donors

Heritage Circle – represents donors who have made a significant deferred gift to the college via life insurance policies, inheritances, or trusts.

$500,000 life insurance policy donated by Dr. Jeffrey Grove (1990) and his wife, Karen.

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Dean's Council ($1,000-$4,999)

$3,000 Contributors
- Glaxo SmithKline

$2,000 Contributors
- Pace Travel

$1,500 Contributors
- Forest Pharmaceuticals
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$1,000 Contributors
- *Dr. Jeffrey Grove (1990)

500 Club ($500-$999)

Dr. Roger Boyington
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*Dr. Robert Klein (1991)
Dr. Robert Simmartino (1990)

250 Club ($250-$499)

Dr. Janet Bradshaw (1992)
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Century Club ($100-$249)

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*Dr. Kenneth (1991) and Michelle Johnson
Dr. Stephen Mac Donald (1990)
Dr. Stuart Sandler (1986)
Dr. Theodore A. Spevack (1986)
Dr. Donald Teplitz (1985)

*Dr. Richard C. Wolonick (1991)

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Friends ($99 or less)

- Dr. Paul Avadanian (1994)
- *Dr. Melissa Broadman (1998)
- Dr. Joseph Corcoran (1996)
- Dr. Paul Friedman (1996)
- *Mr. Eric Hegel (1996)
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- Dr. Tracie Leenhardt (1992)
- Dr. Robert Nisenbaum (1990)
- Dr. Isidro Pujol (1994)
- Dr. Steven Sager (1990)
- Dr. Joseph Stasia (1991)

*Contribution made in honor of 2003 Living Tribute Award winner Arthur Snyder, D.O.

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Cumulative List of Donors (1999-2001)

Dean's Council ($1,000-$4,999)

$2,000 Contributors
- Dr. John Geake, Jr. (1993)
- Dr. Jeffrey Grove (1990)

$1,000 Contributors
- Dr. Tamer Gozleveli (1996)
- Dr. Michael J. Rush (1996)
- Dr. Isidro Pujol (1994)
- Dr. Robert Nisenbaum (1990)
- Dr. Joseph Stasia (1991)

500 Club ($500-$999)

Dr. Kenneth Johnson (1991)
Dr. Isidro Pujol (1994)
Dr. Stanley S. Zimmelman (1991)

250 Club ($250-$499)

Dr. Joseph Corcoran (1996)
Dr. Armando L. Hassun, Jr. (1992)
Dr. John H. Potemski, Jr.

Florida Osteopathic Medical Association
Alumni Association Fund Honor Roll

Century Club ($100-$249)
- Dr. Michael Baron (1988)
- Dr. Kenneth E. Bresky (1992)
- Mr. George Campbell
- Dr. Charles Chodorow (1989)
- Dr. Richard Cottrell (1990)
- Dr. Alan David (1992)
- Dr. Bruce David (1986)
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- Dr. Thomas Green (1998)
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- Dr. Richard Herman (1989)
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- Dr. Theodore A. Spevack (1986)
- Dr. Donald Teplitz (1986)
- Dr. Ronald Töchlin (1989)
- Dr. David Thomas
- Dr. Charles A. Wilson (1996)
- Dr. Susan Yahia (1991)

Friends ($99 or less)
- Dr. John G. Allred (1997)
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- Dr. Todd Trites
- Dr. Steve Vanni (1995)
- Ms. Martha Weber
- Dr. Michael Weiss (1986)

Arthur Snyder, D.O., Honored at Alumni Reunion

The Seventh Annual NSU-COM Alumni Reunion and Continuing Medical Education Program, held February 7-9 at the Hyatt Regency Pier Sixty-Six Resort in Fort Lauderdale, provided attendees with a chance to catch up with old friends, honor 2003 Living Tribute Award winner Arthur Snyder, D.O., and attend various CME sessions.

A large contingent of well-wishers showed up for the alumni banquet, where Dr. Snyder was presented with the Alumni Association’s Living Tribute Award. The accolade, which was established in 2002 to honor outstanding faculty/staff members and administrators who have made significant contributions to the college and the osteopathic profession, proved to be a fitting tribute to Dr. Snyder, who has been involved with the College of Osteopathic Medicine since 1981.

Other event highlights included special recognition of the class of 1993 and the selection of new Alumni Association Executive Committee officers.
To succeed in today’s hyper-frenetic world, most physicians have learned to become proficient in the art of multitasking. It’s certainly a skill Tyler Cymet, D.O., has mastered beautifully based on the personal and professional milestones he’s achieved since graduating from NSU-COM in 1988.

After completing a one-year internship/research fellowship at Chicago College of Osteopathic Medicine, Dr. Cymet conducted his primary care internal medicine residency at the prestigious Yale University School of Medicine, followed by a one-year stint as chief resident at Sinai Hospital of Baltimore and associate chief of staff at Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine in Maryland.

Over the past decade, Dr. Cymet has maintained his symbiotic relationships with both Sinai Hospital of Baltimore and John Hopkins School of Medicine, serving as director of osteopathic medical education for the John Hopkins University/Sinai Hospital General Internal Medicine Program and section head of family medicine at Sinai Hospital of Baltimore.

His varied professional agenda, which encompasses patient interaction, student teaching, and various administrative appointments, also includes a significant commitment to conducting valuable medical research. “I try to combine practice and academics,” stated Dr. Cymet, who received the 1998 Physician of the Year Award from the Maryland Association of Osteopathic Physicians and the 1999 National Teacher of the Year Award from the Student Osteopathic Medical Association. “I see patients for four-to-six hours a day just like any other doctor and do patient rounding in the hospital. I spend another two-to-four hours a day, teaching, lecturing, or doing research.”

One of his research projects, which he collaborated on with Ugochi Oyoyo Erondu, D.O., led to a measure of fame for Drs. Cymet and Erondu when they inadvertently discovered a medical condition characterized by a genetic defect that produces tower skull multiple arterial and pulmonary malfunctions. Thanks to their research, the condition was officially dubbed Erondu-Cymet Syndrome.

Unfortunately, his seriocomic attempt to have his name attached to another medical condition ended less successfully despite his most ardent efforts. “I spent four years trying to get a body part named after me—more specifically the little bump that people get on their middle finger from writing,” explained Dr. Cymet, who earned a Certificate of Added Qualifications in geriatrics from the ACOFP. “It has never been named and does not exist in the medical literature. So I did some research comparing findings on people who were literate and illiterate that actually showed it was only found in literate people. I tried to have it named the “Cymet Bump.” However, because it was an acquired body part, the anatomy society would not give me permission to put my name on it.”

His passion for research, which has taken on a bioterrorism slant in the past 18 months, currently includes a range of worthy projects, such as

- epidemiological evaluation of deaths at the Brentwood postal facility following exposure to anthrax
- observational study of the six survivors of inhalational anthrax secondary to occupational exposure from working at the post office
- randomized comparison study of the long-term (two-year) safety and efficacy of pioglitazone HCl or glyburide in subjects with Type 2 diabetes naïve to pharmacological therapy

Despite the demands of a thriving medical career, Dr. Cymet successfully balances his professional commitments without sacrificing personal happiness. In addition to spending time with his fiancée, Holly Berkovits, and planning their upcoming May wedding, Dr. Cymet enjoys testing the boundaries of his athletic endurance by playing tennis and competing in two 26.2-mile marathons each year.

“Dr. Cymet’s fertile mind has produced a very fascinating professional life,” said Howard Neer, D.O., FACOFP, professor and associate dean of alumni affairs. “His achievements are innumerable, and we are certain to hear much more about his accomplishments in the coming years. He is truly a credit to the osteopathic profession.”
**Staff Snapshot**

**Getting to Know: Cassandra Fulton**

*Dean's Letter Coordinator, Office of Student/Administrative Services*

**Family Facts:** I am the proud mother of a baby boy, Jabari Olajawon Broughton.

**Date of Hire:** November 1996

**Official NSU-COM responsibilities:** I work for the Office of Student and Administrative Services and am responsible for coordinating and creating the dean's letter for the fourth-year medical students. I also assist Dr. Bart Whitehead with overseeing the student organizations, travel arrangements for the students, senior week and graduation activities, and the student administrative services newsletter.

**Reasons I enjoy working at NSU-COM:** I enjoy working with the students and the staff because we have a family-oriented rapport with one another. I also enjoy taking advantage of the university's free tuition reimbursement for employees.

**What did you do professionally before joining NSU-COM?** I went to school at Miami-Dade Community College and lived with my parents until I moved out on my own. I also took a computer course at Computer Action Agency where I learned basic WordPerfect 5.1. After finishing the course, I applied for a job at Nova Southeastern University at the North Miami Beach campus. I was hired on the spot by Morton T. Smith, D.O., and have been with the university since then.

**Greatest achievement in life:** For me, it would have to be May 22, 2002, when my son was born. I never thought my life would be so different once I had him. He keeps me so happy inside. Being a mother has changed me overnight. I don’t think there is anything more I could ask for at this stage in my life. If I was asked to turn back the hands of time, I wouldn’t because that would mean me being without my son.

**My coworkers would be surprised to know this about me:** The person that everyone views as serious has a wonderful sense of humor once you get to know me. I also love to dance, but I have no time for that anymore.

**Favorite way to unwind when not at work:** Unwind? I really don’t have much time for myself now, but that’s all a part of being a mother, and I love it.

**If I won the lottery I would:** First, I would pay off all my bills. Then I would buy my mother a beautiful house of her choice. I would put money away for Jabari’s college fund. Then I would travel around the world for one month visiting different countries.

**The most frightening thing that ever happened to me:** Two dates stand out: September 12, 1996, when my brother was killed, and August 21, 1998, when father passed away from cancer. I felt so empty inside and never thought I would get past these tragedies. I still struggle at times with the fact my father and brother aren’t here, but it has made me a stronger person. I have also realized that life is too short and not to take things for granted.

**What makes you happiest in life?** Seeing my son happy. He is my greatest inspiration and motivation in life.

**When I retire I plan to:** I plan to move to South Carolina, live in the country atmosphere, and just relax.

**Three words that best describe me:** Honest, caring, and giving.

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Cassandra’s pride and joy is her son Jabari Olajawon Broughton.
Opportunities Abound at Hospital Day

On March 7, NSU-COM coordinated its annual Hospital Day, which affords first-, second-, and third-year students an opportunity to meet with representatives from various hospitals throughout the United States regarding future rotation, internship, and residency possibilities. Several hundred students attended Hospital Day, which attracted representatives from several dozen U.S. hospitals and organizations, including those comprising the college’s Consortium for Excellence in Medical Education.