Medical Mission 2003 to Jamaica
Incorporates Interdisciplinary Approach to Patient Care - page 24
Dean’s Message

Over the past four years, the pages of COM Outlook have comprehensively chronicled the myriad achievements and enhancements that have helped place our college at the forefront of osteopathic medical education. However, the College of Osteopathic Medicine is simply one successful component of NSU’s broad-based campus family, which continues to expand and achieve widespread recognition on an almost daily basis.

To understand how explosive and diversified NSU’s growth has been in recent years, you need only look at a sampling of recent nationwide statistics that illustrate how far reaching the university’s success has been. According to the U.S. News & World Report 2004 college rankings edition, NSU currently ranks as the fourth most diverse institution in the National Universities-Doctoral category. NSU also placed 11th nationally in the percentage of enrolled international students.

NSU has also been identified as the 10th largest independent, not-for-profit, post-secondary institution in the United States based on enrollment of 21,619 students for the fall 2002 term. NSU currently ranks behind the University of Pennsylvania (9th place) and in front of Columbia University in New York (11th place). The data, which is collected by the Integrated Post Secondary Education Data System, includes all U.S. regions.

Additionally, for the second consecutive year, NSU reigned supreme as the number one producer of African American doctorates among traditionally white institutions and historically African American colleges, according to a survey published in a recent issue of Black Issues in Higher Education. NSU awarded 89 doctoral degrees to African American students between July 1, 2001, and June 30, 2002. Howard University, one of the nation’s premier African American colleges, ranked second, conferring 82 doctoral degrees. NSU also ranked No. 2 in doctorates in education awarded to Hispanic students.

Without question, these are exciting times for our university. The construction of the acclaimed Alvin Sherman Library, Research, and Information Technology Center, the creation of and relocation from the east campus of the new H. Wayne Huizenga School of Business and Entrepreneurship, and the establishment of the progressive Jim & Jan Moran Family Center Village further substantiate NSU’s excellence as an educational institution. These achievements also coincide with NSU’s mission to serve as “a dynamic, not-for-profit independent institution dedicated to providing high-quality educational programs of distinction from preschool through the professional and doctoral levels, as well as service to the community.”

Whether it be the elevation of NSU’s intercollegiate athletic program to NCAA Division II status or the impending construction in the fall of 2004 of University Center—a 140,000-square-foot multiplex recreation and athletic complex in the center of our campus—it’s abundantly clear that NSU’s collective strategic plan is paying handsome dividends.

The 16 schools, colleges, and centers that comprise our campus have evolved into recognized and respected entities thanks in large part to the forward-thinking leadership of individuals like NSU President Ray Ferrero and Health Professions Division administrators such as Dr. Morton Terry and Dr. Fred Lippman. Individually and collectively, NSU’s success is a direct reflection of its students, alumni, administrators, faculty, and staff, who operate as the university’s heart and soul.

There’s an old adage that says, “If you don’t know where you’re going, it doesn’t matter how fast you get there.” Fortunately, it’s a maxim that doesn’t apply to the keen visionaries at NSU and the Health Professions Division, who have created a dynamic environment that promotes creativity, fosters excellence, and inspires individuals to both reach and maximize their limitless potential. This enriching philosophy allows the College of Osteopathic Medicine to investigate bold new educational vistas and implement programs that continually produce additional esteem for the Health Professions Division and the university.

2

COM Outlook · Fall 2003
The Health Professions Division of NSU has planned a most ambitious agenda for the 2003-2004 academic year. Along with teaching responsibilities and curriculum development, our academic and clinical research initiatives, student mentoring opportunities, and community outreach programs are only a sample of the complex array of activities we have undertaken.

The year began on August 10, 2003, when the Health Professions Division hosted its annual Orientation Day for the colleges of osteopathic medicine, pharmacy, optometry, and dental medicine. Nearly 2,000 new students, family members, and friends attended the opening exercises. The College of Osteopathic Medicine received approval for the new class size of 200 students from the AOA Predoctoral Council and Bureau of Professional Affairs. These excited students took part in The White Coat Ceremony, initiating them into the professional study of medicine and caring for mankind.

We congratulate Dr. Anthony Silvagni on his election as chair of the Florida Council of Deans, which features representation from all the Florida medical schools. Additionally, we congratulate Dr. Lawrence Jacobson, appointed vice dean of NSU-COM, Dr. A. Alvin Greber, new associate dean for program development, and Dr. Ronnie Martin, associate dean for academic affairs. We have great confidence in the leadership abilities of these distinguished faculty members.

As October is national Breast Cancer Awareness Month, we are proud to acknowledge the work funded by the Kenyon Family Trust (primary care cancer-related research) and a U.S. Public Health Service grant. An interactive CD-ROM has been produced that provides instruction and health education for women in regard to breast cancer prevention. This was developed as part of an innovative student program NSU-COM has with the Florida Department of Corrections. Within the next few months, an article will be appearing in the prestigious journal Academic Medicine, describing the college’s unique program for third-year medical students conducting a clinical rotation in the prison system.

We again congratulate Dr. Steve Zucker, associate dean for community affairs, and his staff for an extraordinary AHEC Program. Recently, our AHEC Program hosted a three-day statewide Florida AHEC Network Conference in Martin County. This conference included the launching of a major AHEC network strategic planning effort as well as a special ceremony to honor Florida Senator William G. “Doc” Myers for his longstanding support of our AHEC efforts.

The executive administration is proud to oversee this model of interdisciplinary education we call the Health Professions Division. Our success is due to the enthusiastic cooperation of our deans, faculty, student body, administration, and staff. Please feel free to let us hear from you—our office is open to all.
FEATURES

Political Process Provides Eye-opening Insight - 8
M-2 students Victoria Hutto and Thomas Corson, who serve as president and vice president of NSU-COM’s Student Government Association, received a crash course in osteopathic politics when they traveled to Chicago, Illinois, last July to participate in their first Council of Osteopathic Student Government Presidents quarterly caucus.

Mini Medical School Project Targets Seniors - 10
In October, NSU-COM launched the latest of its community-based initiatives with the establishment of the Mini Medical School Project, which aims to educate various segments of the public about the medical school environment and provide information about timely health topics.

Dr. Jon Dodds Trades Globetrotting for Public Health Happiness - 16
Throughout the 1990s, Dr. Jon Dodds led the sort of life that—on the surface—would make most people green with envy when he embarked on a globetrotting odyssey with his wife, Janee.

NFL to NSU: The Many Lives of Claude Jones - 20
For M-3 student Claude Jones, the road to NSU-COM has been fraught with amazing highs and agonizing lows, including a brush with gridiron greatness as a player for the University of Miami Hurricanes.

Medical Mission to Jamaica Embraces Interdisciplinary Approach - 24
With its focus firmly fixed on integrating a true interdisciplinary approach to health care, the 76-member contingent comprising this year’s Medical Mission to Jamaica headed to the Caribbean country armed with good intentions—and a surfeit of supplies.

Dynamism Defines Osteopathic Principles and Practice Department - 28
Over the past three years, the OPP department has been busy establishing a reputation for excellence that extends to everything from its teaching facilities and research efforts to its ability to evolve with the times and implement essential pre- and postgraduate educational opportunities.

Ramsey and Rachel Pevsner Make Medicine a Family Affair - 31
The timeworn phrase “like mother, like daughter” definitely applies to Ramsey and Rachel Pevsner, both of whom decided to pursue D.O. degrees from NSU’s College of Osteopathic Medicine.

DEPARTMENTS
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M-3 students John Coppola and Karthik Krishnamurthy were recently accorded a prestigious honor when they were invited to serve as NSU Presidential Knights during the 2003-2004 academic year. The purpose of the Presidential Knights Program is to provide services that promote pride in—and increased understanding of—NSU and all its functions.

In May, Krishnamurthy (left) and Coppola (right) were the recipients of the Dr. S. Kenneth Burnell Student Research Award, which recognizes students who conduct noteworthy research in either clinical medicine or biomedical science. The award highlights students who year after year demonstrate excellence in research and who tend to be role models for their peers. Coppola and Krishnamurthy are likely serving in their roles to continue to set the example for other students.

In 2002, first- and second-year students interested in pursuing a career in rural medicine mobilized to form the NSU-COM Rural Medicine Club. At the end of last semester, club members gathered for a commemorative photo to mark the conclusion of the student group's successful first year.

NSU-COM's Student Dermatological Association (SDA) recently presented Stanley E. Skopit, D.O., clinical associate professor of dermatology, with an appreciation award to recognize his ongoing contributions to the student organization. "Every year, Dr. Skopit, who serves as our club sponsor, takes the time to lecture to our members about residency programs, running a successful practice, and all of the facets of the field of dermatology," said M-3 student John Coppola, who served as the 2002-03 SDA president. Proof of Dr. Skopit's prodigious dermatological skills was recently illustrated by his election as president of the American Osteopathic College of Dermatology.

In August, Charlotte Paolini, D.O., who served as assistant professor and chair of the college's Division of Geriatrics, was honored at an emotional farewell ceremony, which allowed her colleagues to share their feelings of affection. Dr. Paolini, who joined the NSU-COM faculty in April 1999, recently relocated to Maine to accept a position within the Division of Aging at the University of New England College of Osteopathic Medicine.

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M.P.H. student Daniel Ukpong had the honor of making a poster presentation at the Florida Public Health Association/Florida Association of Public Health Nurses Association Annual Educational Conference, held in August at the PGA National Resort and Spa in Palm Beach Gardens. Ukpong's presentation centered on the trenchant topic "Assessing Satisfaction of Dental Services Provided to HIV/AIDS Patients at the Broward County Health Department.”

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On August 2, Frank Mulick, who served as the first financial officer of Southeastern College of Osteopathic Medicine (SECOM) in North Miami Beach, died at the age of 81 at his home in Atlanta, Georgia. Mulick, who also served as comptroller at Osteopathic General Hospital (the forerunner to SECOM and NSU-COM), played a major role in establishing the college’s financial office and fiscal policies.
NSU Health Professions Division faculty members have published *An Interdisciplinary Approach to Geriatric Care Manual*, which was made possible by a predoctoral training in primary care grant from the Health Resources and Services Administration. Contributors to this manual comprising nine geriatric cases are Charlotte Paolini, D.O., NSU-COM, Shari Rone-Adams, D.B.A., Physical Therapy Program, Ferol Ludwig, Ph.D., Occupational Therapy Program, and Loretta Graham, Ph.D., NSU-COM.

Each case consists of the patient’s medical information in chart form. Five of these cases include standardized patient materials. Evaluation tools are presented to assess students on each case, to have students evaluate the program itself, and for standardized patients to assess the students. The manual will be available for purchase by all U.S. medical schools at the NSU-COM Web site (www.medicine.nova.edu) in hardcopy or CD format. For additional information, please contact Dr. Loretta Graham at (954) 262-1477.

On August 10, over 1,000 friends, family, and faculty turned out to support the class of 2007 at the White Coat Ceremony, which was held at the Signature Grand in Davie and on the Health Professions Division campus. For the 203 students comprising the class of 2007, the White Coat Ceremony served as an auspicious experience that officially marked their entry into the medical profession.

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

**AHEC Update**

The Area Health Education Center (AHEC) Program has received a state funding contract award of $2,587,847 for fiscal year 2003-2004 from the Florida Department of Health. The program has also received a federal grant award of $630,000 for the same period from the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) for its Statewide Florida Border Health Education and Training Center (HETC) Program. Additional funding support for fiscal year 2003-04 is expected from HRSA for AHEC’s model projects, as well as from the Florida Department of Health for special tobacco and obesity prevention initiatives.

The NSU HETC Program continued to spearhead a statewide Community Health Worker (CHW) Initiative focusing on bringing culturally sensitive health education programming to predominantly minority communities. Over the past year, 140 CHWs trained through this effort have provided over 270 educational presentations on cardiovascular disease prevention to nearly 2,300 participants from these communities.

AHEC continues to work closely with the College of Dental Medicine in the expansion of the AHEC Rural Dentistry Initiative. Through this effort, AHEC is actively addressing the serious and nationally recognized access to dental care problems in rural safety net sites throughout the region.

Over the past few months, more than 720 informational requests were handled through the NSU AHEC Library Without Walls System. In the past year, the library system processed and responded to over 3,000 library and informational requests from primary care and public health safety net sites located throughout South and Central Florida. These sites included over 30 county health departments and community health centers as well as several other rural health care sites.

The Department of Osteopathic Principles and Practice conducted 150 pre-participation physicals for 150 NSU student athletes on August 13 and August 29. The physicals were performed in conjunction with the colleges of optometry, pharmacy, and dental medicine and NSU sports athletic trainers such as Shane Levenson, who is pictured conducting a caliper test on a student athlete.

During the Florida Osteopathic Medical Association (FOMA) 2003 Mid-Year Seminar in Tampa last September, Ronnie Martin, D.O., associate dean for academic affairs, and Anthony J. Silvagni, D.O., Pharm.D., NSU-COM dean, posed for a photo with FOMA’s governmental relations director, William Hightower (right). Dr. Martin and Dr. Silvagni currently serve as FOMA trustees.

M.P.H. Faculty Finds Time to Focus on Research

The Master of Public Health faculty is currently involved in a range of ongoing research projects that include:

- **Evaluating Hispanics’ Satisfaction with Hospice Care**
  Principal Investigator: Alina Perez, J.D.
  Co Investigator: Jennie Q. Lou, M.D.

- **The Life Enrichment Project: A Study of the Effectiveness of Wellness and Rehabilitation Programs for People Living with Multiple Sclerosis, Phase III**
  Principal Investigator: Jennie Q. Lou, M.D.

- **A Case Control Study to Evaluate Serum Levels and Dietary Intake of Vitamin D in Patients with Multiple Sclerosis**
  Principal Investigator: Jennie Q. Lou, M.D.

- **Family Wellness and Health Education Center: A Community Needs Assessment**
  Principal Investigator: Jennie Q. Lou, M.D.

- **Insulin Secretion, Insulin Action, Cardiovascular Disease Risk Assessment in Youth with Type II Diabetes Mellitus Study**
  Principal Investigator: Neslihan Gungor, M.D.
  Co Investigator: Ayleen Godreau-Atiles, M.D., M.P.H.; Kim Sutton Tyrell, Dr. P.H.; Silva Arslanian, M.D.

- **Ocular Biometry: Integration of Vision Into the Pediatric Primary Care Setting**
  Principal Investigator: Eugenie Hartmann, Ph.D.

- **Determining Key Differences in Preschool Vision Screening**
  Principal Investigator: Stacey Coulter, O.D.

- **Vision Screening of Preschool Children at Nova Southeastern University**
  Principal Investigator: Stacey Coulter, O.D.
Political Process Provides Eye-opening Insight for NSU-COM Student Leadership

Pictured at the AOA House of Delegates meeting are (from left): Robert Blackburn, D.O., FOMA director-at-large; John Crosby, J.D., AOA executive director; Ronnie Martin, D.O., NSU-COM associate dean for academic affairs; Thomas Corson; and Joel B. Rose, D.O., FOMA immediate past president.

2 students Victoria Hutto and Thomas Corson, who serve as president and vice president of NSU-COM’s Student Government Association, received a crash course in osteopathic politics when they traveled to Chicago, Illinois, last July to participate in their first Council of Osteopathic Student Government Presidents (COSGP) quarterly caucus.

The COSGP caucus, which was held in conjunction with the American Osteopathic Association’s annual House of Delegates meeting, provided Hutto, Corson, and student government leadership from the nation’s 19 other osteopathic medical schools a chance to discuss various topics and voice their opinions on issues that will have a future impact on the profession.

“We discussed all the resolutions that were slated to be voted upon later that week during the AOA House of Delegates meeting, and we conferred with each other and formulated our opinions regarding each resolution so we could share them at the meeting,” said Corson, who is considering applying for a position in the Osteopathic Health Policy Intern Program in Washington, D.C. “It was very interesting and quite motivational. Plus, it was great to see how big a voice we, as students, have in the political process.”

Hutto also had the privilege of serving as a member of the Professional Affairs Committee, which reviewed the student resolutions, as well as being the designated student delegate for the Florida Delegation during the week. “Serving on the Professional Affairs Committee was quite an experience because I was the only student member,” Hutto explained. “And this particular committee reviewed all the resolutions that dealt with student issues, including several resolutions dealing with the COMLEX patient exam.

“I was so happy that both Dr. Ronnie Martin and Dr. Morton Morris spoke during the meeting in favor of several student resolution issues,” she added. “Dr. Martin was a major advocate of the students’ concerns dealing with the logistics of the COMLEX patient exam. And Dr. Morris supported our suggestion that states without D.O. schools that want to have a student delegate position within their delegation should require a student to attend our student caucus each year to maintain a unified student voice.

“One item I would really like to emphasize is how proud I am that Dr. Martin and Dr. Morris are from our school,” she said. “They are great student advocates who are well known and respected by their peers within the profession.”

NSU Cracks Top 10 List of Private Nonprofit Universities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SCHOOL</th>
<th>ENROLLMENT</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. New York University</td>
<td>38,096</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Brigham Young University</td>
<td>32,408</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. University of Southern California</td>
<td>30,682</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Boston University</td>
<td>28,982</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Harvard University</td>
<td>24,969</td>
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<td>6. Northeastern University</td>
<td>23,357</td>
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<tr>
<td>7. DePaul University</td>
<td>23,227</td>
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<tr>
<td>8. George Washington</td>
<td>23,019</td>
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<tr>
<td>9. University of Pennsylvania</td>
<td>22,769</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Nova Southeastern University</td>
<td>21,619</td>
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Source: Integrated Post Secondary Education Data System
M.P.H. Students Celebrate at July Ceremonies

In July, students from the Master of Public Health Program had a chance to celebrate the end of their matriculation at separate weekend ceremonies. On July 12, the NSU-COM Master of Public Health Program honored student excellence at its Senior Awards Dinner Dance, which was held at the Signature Grand in Davie. On July 13, M.P.H. graduates proudly received their diplomas at a commencement ceremony held at the Broward Center for the Performing Arts.

During the pre-graduation dinner dance, the following awards were presented:

**Chancellor's Award**
Recipient: Joanna Greenblatt, M.P.H.
Presenter: Fred Lippman, R.Ph., Ed.D.

**Public Health Student Association Service Award**
Recipient: Christopher Siano, D.O.

Class of 2003 M.P.H. Graduates

Master of Public Health

*JoEllen Alvarez
Betty Jean Baker
Anisa Tapan Daftari
Joanna Lauren Greenblatt
Ceme Jean-Baptiste
Marisel Segarra-Neenham
**Elizabeth Ann Stewart

Bachelor of Science in Physician Assistant and Master of Public

Festus Addo Agyekum
*Martina Marie Allen
Glenda Yanira Alvarez
Daniela Bacia
Venice Lazaro Bagalso
Simona Emanuela Bartos
Jeanelyn Berges
Michelle R. Bratt
Jessica Denise Burhans
Effie Ellen Burke
Maysel Correa
Sharon Elizabeth Delahanthty
Margaret Ann De Los Santos
Sandra Patricia Farmer
Brian Todd Fretwell
*Sonya Michelle Goodner
*Miri am Elizabeth Gothardt
Mia Tobin Hart
Amy Lynn Heesch en
*Diana Lynn Hertel
Jessica Ann Hugh ey
*Doreen Lynn Johnson
Tiffany S. Kaufman
Andrea Patricia Krasniansky
Jacqueline Marie Levin

*Gina M. Lowy
Mark Mathew Lucero
Kimberly Ann Mazor
Odille Amber McCoy
Joseph Patrick McLoughlin
*Jennifer Mary Moon
*Shawn Michael O'Keefe
Sherri Lynn Parker
Maria Paula Pazmino
*Victoria Perez
Carlos Manuel Pernas
Jana Kathleen Ray
Rodney Baruch Rengifo
Edward Christopher Rivero
Rebecca Gail Roberts
James W. Rodriguez
Silvia Grace Stopha
Mercedes Rivero Suarez
John Anthony Torres
Tara Sivan Udelson
Nikisha Nicole Walker
Sandra Jean Williams
Julie Ann Wisse
Jaimie Lynn Woolfe
Leticia Spokas Worsham
Cheryl E. Young

*Graduated with academic honors
**Graduated with highest academic honors

During the pre-graduation dinner dance, Golden Apple Awards were presented to the collective M.P.H. faculty and staff and to Charles Lewis, M.P.H., assistant professor of public health, who earned the Professor of the Year accolade.

Dean's Award recipient Elizabeth Stewart, M.P.H., and Public Health Student Association Leadership Award winner Nadia Govanlu-Pearson were not present to receive their awards.
In early 2004, NSU-COM will launch the latest of its community-based initiatives with the establishment of the Mini Medical School Project, which aims to educate various segments of the public about the medical school environment and provide information about timely health topics.

The nine-week pilot program, which is initially being marketed to senior citizens, features evening lectures from various NSU-COM faculty members on topics ranging from breathing problems to skin cancer. Cost for the lecture series ranges from $60 per person to $100 per couple. “Our goal is to make this lecture series informative as well as entertaining and have it provide a real service to the community,” said David Thomas, M.D., J.D., who serves as professor and chair of the Department of Surgery. “Hopefully, after attending these seminars, people will better understand the decision making process physicians go through.”

In addition to providing the public with vital health information, attendees will have an opportunity to tour the impressive Health Professions Division campus. “The Mini Medical School Project will also serve as a way to showcase what we have here at NSU,” said Leonard Levy, D.P.M., M.P.H., professor and associate dean of education, planning, and research. “Many people don’t even know we exist since we are a young university and an even younger Health Professions Division and medical school.”

**Mini Medical School Project Lecture Topics**

**Becoming a Physician: The Long Road to Practice**
Includes a tour of NSU-COM that provides participants with an inside look at where doctors study

**Anatomy and the Basic Sciences**
An overview of the anatomy of the human body as the doctor sees it

**The Epidemic of Skin Cancer**
A look at what skin cancers are, how to avoid them, and what is done today to treat these problems

**Bedroom Stories**
Sleep and mood disorders and issues of sexuality in older adults

**Looking After the Grandkids**
Common health problems that children have and what modern medicine does for them today

**Tales of the Heart and a Breath of Fresh Air**
How heart disease may be prevented, diagnosed, and treated in tandem with a discussion of breathing problems

**War on Bugs**
Modern approaches to the fight against infection

**We All Have Some Nerve**
Understanding diseases of the brain and nervous system

**Feeling Out of Joint**
New approaches to the diagnosis and treatment of arthritis and osteoporosis
On August 8, NSU-COM kicked off the new academic year in fun-filled fashion at its annual Osteoblast on Dania Beach, which is coordinated by the Student Osteopathic Medical Association (SOMA) to welcome the entering M-1 class. The event, which featured a sumptuous beach luau and numerous surfside competitions, serves as a lighthearted way for the osteopathic newcomers to get acquainted with the M-2s, faculty, and administration.

In the tug-of-war contest, the M-1 women emerged triumphant; however, the M-2 men evened the score by winning their division for the second consecutive year, while M-2 student Bonnie Watson earned the title of undefeated hoola-hoop queen. "SOMA would like to thank all the members of the M-2 band Last Kid Picked for keeping everyone entertained all night," said M-2 student Brooke Sliger, who serves as SOMA national liaison officer. "We also extend our thanks to all the faculty, family, students, volunteers, and friends who helped make Osteoblast such a success."
In August, Naushira Pandya, M.D., C.M.D., joined the college as chair of the Division of Geriatrics. Dr. Pandya received her medical degree from the University College and Middlesex Medical School, University of London in 1979. She completed her internship in London before relocating to the United States to conduct her residency. She is board certified in internal medicine, holds a certificate of added qualifications in geriatrics, and is a certified medical director for long-term care facilities. In addition, Dr. Pandya has received fellowship training in geriatrics and endocrinology at the University of Michigan. She has been actively involved in clinical practice as well as academic medicine and has served as an assistant professor at the University of Missouri in Kansas City and as a faculty member of the Geriatrics Fellowship Program at Beaumont in Detroit. Her current interests include dementia, diabetes, and nutrition problems in the elderly. She also serves as chair of the Clinical Practice Guidelines Project, which is sponsored by the American Medical Directors Association.

Joining Dr. Pandya in the Division of Geriatrics are Monica Warhaftig, D.O., and Susan Ledbetter, D.O. Dr. Warhaftig, who earned her D.O. degree in 1998 from Des Moines University College of Osteopathic Medicine and Surgery, joined the college faculty in July. Dr. Warhaftig, who is board certified in family medicine, completed her internship training at Miami’s Westchester Hospital and recently received fellowship training in geriatrics at the University of Miami. Dr. Ledbetter, who came on board in September, received her D.O. degree in 1999 from the Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine, where she recently completed a geriatrics fellowship.

On July 1, Michelle Fiorella, D.O., became chair of the Department of Psychiatry. Prior to joining the NSU-COM faculty, Dr. Fiorella served as a practicing psychiatrist in Louisville, Kentucky, where she specialized in the treatment of post-traumatic stress disorder. Dr. Fiorella, who earned her D.O. degree in 1987 from the University of Osteopathic Medicine and Health Sciences (now Des Moines University) in Des Moines, Iowa, completed her residency training at the University of Louisville School of Medicine.

On August 4, Raymond Ferrero, III, J.D., came on board as assistant professor of family medicine (law). Mr. Ferrero, who earned his law degree from NSU’s Shepard Broad Law Center, will be involved with teaching students, assisting with affiliation agreements and curriculum development, participating in the Impaired Student Program on behalf of the college, and providing consultation on content pertaining to NSU-COM handbooks, catalogs, and protocols. Mr. Ferrero is a licensed Florida attorney and is an active member of the Florida Bar Association. Prior to joining the NSU-COM faculty, Mr. Ferrero was in private practice in Fort Lauderdale, where he focused on criminal and civil defense as well as employment and labor law.

In August, Pablo Calzada, D.O., M.P.H., who graduated from NSU-COM in 1993, joined the Department of Family Medicine and is based at the university’s North Miami Beach clinic. Dr. Calzada received his M.P.H. degree from the University of South Florida in 2001. He conducted his internship at Naval Hospital Jacksonville and completed his residency training at St. Vincent’s Medical Center in Jacksonville, Florida.
Kenneth Johnson, D.O., who serves as director of NSU’s Women’s Health Center and assistant professor of obstetrics and gynecology, was featured on the New Florida cable television program to discuss the pros and cons of hormone replacement therapy (HRT). Also appearing on the program was Dianna Silvagni, J.D., who candidly discussed her experiences with the controversial treatment.

Joseph DeGaetano, D.O., FAAFP, assistant professor of family medicine and director of clinical curriculum and graduate medical education, was recently selected to serve on the Editorial Board of the JAOA (Journal of the American Osteopathic Association). In this role, he will be reviewing submitted articles and writing editorial commentary based upon the journal’s monthly theme. Earlier this year, Dr. DeGaetano was the recipient of the NSU-COM/North Broward Hospital District Family Medicine Attending Physician of the Year Award for the 2002-03 academic year. He was also elected to serve a two-year term on the Florida Society of the American College of Osteopathic Family Physicians Board of Directors.

Edward Packer, D.O., FAAP, FACOP, associate professor and chair of the Department of Pediatrics, published an article in the August 2003 issue of The Florida Pediatrician that chronicled the enhancements that have occurred within NSU-COM’s pediatrics department. In addition, Dr. Packer played a key role in the annual multidisciplinary Health Professions Division Back To School Physicals Kickoff event for pre-kindergarten through 12th-grade students. Representatives from osteopathic medicine, optometry, dentistry, audiometry, and speech screened children in anticipation of the new school year.

Anjali Noble, D.O., assistant professor of internal medicine, recently had an article accepted for publication in the Journal of Correctional Health Care, which is the only national peer-reviewed scientific journal to address correctional health care issues. Dr. Noble’s paper addresses the topic “Breast Cancer and Women in Prison: Preventive Attitudes and Risk Factors-A Pilot Study.”

Ronnie Martin, D.O., FACOFP, who serves as professor and chair of the Department of Family Medicine and as associate dean for academic affairs, was selected as chair of the Predoctoral Committee of the American Osteopathic Association’s Bureau of Professional Education. In July, he served as a delegate at the AOA’s House of Delegates meeting and presented a lecture on “Competency Evaluation of Students and Residents” at the Florida Society of the American College of Osteopathic Family Physicians 24th Annual Convention and Seminar in Orlando. Dr. Martin has also been selected to chair the AOA’s 2004 Osteopathic Medical Education annual conference, which will be held next July in Chicago, Illinois, and center on the effects of education on the quality of medicine and medical errors.

Robert B. Contrucci, D.O., clinical assistant professor and chair of the Division of Otorhinolaryngology, recently presented a workshop on “Voice and Articulation Disorders” at the Florida Language and Speech and Hearing Association convention in Marco Island, Florida. Earlier this year, Dr. Contrucci made his second appearance with health specialist Marilyn Mitzell on WSVN 7’s Doc Talk segment to discuss “Burning Mouth Syndrome.”
In October, Stanley Cohen, Ed.D., vice provost of the Health Professions Division, presented a lecture at the 33rd Annual Association for the Behavioral Sciences and Medical Education Meeting held in Charleston, South Carolina. Dr. Cohen’s seminar centered on the topic “Understanding and Improving Teacher Verbal Classroom Behavior.”

Robin McFee, D.O., M.P.H., assistant professor of preventive medicine and director of NSUCOM’s Center for Education and Research in Bioterrorism and Weapons of Mass Destruction Preparedness, was an active presence on the lecture circuit this summer. In addition to presenting a seminar and two research projects at the North American Congress of Clinical Toxicology, Dr. McFee was a speaker at the North Broward Hospital District’s Forensics Conference. Her topic? “Can the Dead Tell You Who Poisoned Them? Yes...if You Look Carefully!” She also co designed the curriculum and served as co presenter at 14 Florida Department of Health leadership risk communications programs held throughout the state. Dr. McFee’s active agenda, which included authoring articles on topics ranging from nuclear terrorism to adolescent health, also featured a speaking engagement at the annual Toxicological Historical Society in Chicago, Illinois, where she discussed “The Myth and Mystique of Lucretia Borgia.”

James Howell, M.D., M.P.H., professor and chair of the Department of Rural Medicine, was a featured panelist at the Florida Public Health Association/Florida Association of Public Health Nurses Association Annual Educational Conference. During the August symposium, Dr. Howell addressed the topic “Meeting Needs of Public Health Workforce: What Are Our Schools of Public Health Doing?”

Michael M. Patterson, Ph.D. professor and assistant chair of the Department of Osteopathic Principles and Practice, recently presented a paper at the Society for the History of Neuroscience Annual Meeting in England. Dr. Patterson’s paper detailed the historical development of the current animal stereotaxic apparatus in the United States by the Kopf Instrument Company and the contributions of this apparatus to the development of brain research. In addition, Dr. Patterson and William Brooks, D.O., of Kansas City, Missouri, recently received a $75,000 grant to support the activities of their Restorative Care Foundation, which supports research and scholarly activities that further the development of osteopathic diagnostic and treatment techniques for chronic pain patients.

Rosebud Foster, Ed.D. M.S., special assistant to the executive vice chancellor and provost, was invited to participate in the Wye River Group on Health Care’s national summit entitled Communities Shaping a Vision for America’s 21st Century Health and Health Care. She was also selected to serve as a member of the National Health Leadership Community Leaders Round Table and as chair of the Closing the GAP Advisory Council.

In August, Jennie Q. Lou, M.D., M.Sc., associate professor of public health, was the recipient of a Decade of Achievement in MS Award from the Betaseron Champions of Courage in Washington, D.C., in recognition of her contributions to the multiple sclerosis community. Dr. Lou, who was nominated for the award by her research colleague at the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minnesota, also received exposure in the summer issue of MS Focus regarding her work on the Life Enrichment Research Project.
"One of the things I was thinking of when we decided to create this club was to open up membership to the other Health Professions Division colleges," said Patel, who served as AAAPS president in the 2002-03 academic year. "When you talk to other HPD students, they will cite the problem that although we’re in the same building, we have our own groups and rarely get to interact with each other. Creating this club was a way to try to bring everybody together a little bit more. And it has definitely helped bridge the gap between students throughout the programs."

To more accurately depict its diverse membership, which consists of 120 M-1 and M-2 as well as 65 non-D.O. students within the Health Professions Division, the club recently changed its name to the International Professional Students Association. However, although the club’s name may have been altered, the focus remains firmly fixed on serving as a pivotal link for all health professions students.

"In its inaugural year, our hope was to build a solid organization that would provide its members the opportunity to expand their understanding of the true nature of the various Asian cultures in order to further their level of cultural competency," explained Patel, who is proud of the club’s healthy mix of Asian and non-Asian students. "In the Islamic religion, women wear hajabs or headscarves, and they are not allowed to be alone in a room with a man unless that person is their husband or son. So if you have a male nurse, physician, or x-ray tech that comes to see the patient, she is going to feel very uncomfortable if she’s alone. These are simple facts we as physicians need to be aware of."

The tenets of the International Professional Students Association dovetail nicely with the college’s ethnocultural medicine course, which students are required to take during the second semester of their M-1 year. "I really appreciate the fact that NSU-COM has a cultural awareness course because it helps open people’s eyes as to the different cultures they are going to encounter when they’re in the hospital or clinic setting," Patel explained. "It’s important to be aware of cultural differences so you don’t do something unknowingly inappropriate or improper during an examination."

During its first year of existence, the club incorporated a mix of educational and altruistic activities that included regular visits to a senior citizens facility called the West Broward Care Center and the creation of an International Food Fair and Fashion Show. "The event was a major success, and it actually turned out to be much better than we expected," said Patel of the cultural extravaganza, which was held last April at NSU’s Rose and Alfred Miniaci Performing Arts Center. "Over 200 people attended, and we had about 25 food items from various countries for the attendees to sample.

"Since there was so much enthusiasm after the first International Food Fair and Fashion Show—even the undergrads said they want to work with us—we can now coordinate a couple of events university wide," he added. "Our goal is to do two cultural events each academic year, one in the first semester and another in the second. We’re also thinking about establishing a sports tournament in conjunction with the Sports Medicine Club, something along the lines of an HPD Olympics."

Finding the time to craft such an ambitious agenda may seem like a daunting task, but Patel insists he and his fellow club members relish the challenge. "One of the things we face in our lives as students is redundancy," he admitted. "It’s easy to fall into the same old class, lab, come home, eat, hit the books, and go-to-sleep mentality. But there comes a point when you need to unwind and do something different. The extracurricular activities we do through our student organizations help us improve ourselves, help others, and make a difference."
Dr. Jon Dodds Trades Globetrotting for NSU Public Health Happiness

By Scott Colton
Director of Education Communications

Throughout the 1990s, Jon Dodds, Ph.D., M.P.H., who serves as an assistant professor and assistant director of the Master of Public Health Program, led the sort of life that—on the surface—would make most people green with envy.

When his wife, Janee, was offered lucrative job opportunities in far-flung locales like Costa Rica, Greece, Germany, and France, Dr. Dodds dutifully sacrificed his thriving public health career to accompany his wife on her globetrotting career odyssey. Living in semi-retirement, Dr. Dodds was free to spend his days relaxing, swimming, or doing whatever those who live a life of leisure do to creatively make use of their time.

It may sound like an idyllic situation to most, but for Dr. Dodds, the allure of waking up late and having endless stretches of free time quickly faded. "I tried to make the best use of my time, but after a while I felt kind of useless being unemployed," he admitted. "I felt a little depressed,"
and I started looking around for things that needed to be done to occupy my time.”

Consequently, when Janee was offered an opportunity to return to the United States in 1998 and accept a position in Miami, Dr. Dodds was more than happy to put his passport away and revive his dormant public health career with a rewarding role in the Master of Public Health Program at Nova Southeastern University.

**Itinerant Lifestyle Has Childhood Roots**

Dr. Dodds’ exposure to a nomadic way of life actually began during his childhood, when he and his brother, Peter, received a real-life geography lesson thanks to their father, who served in the U.S. Army during the Korean War. “Shortly after I was born in Beaver Falls, Pennsylvania (also the birthplace of football great Joe Namath), we moved to Fort Campbell, Kentucky, and lived on a military base,” he explained. “Then my dad was reassigned to El Paso, Texas, which is where we lived for several years.”

Once the war ended, Dr. Dodds’ father resumed his teaching career—and re-launched the family’s peripatetic adventures. “When my dad landed a teaching job at a junior college in California, we got in our old black Plymouth and drove from Texas to California,” said Dr. Dodds, who would soon follow in his father’s footsteps and pursue a similar career course. “We then moved to Aurora, Illinois, where my father became a political science professor in government studies at Aurora College. After that, we traveled east when my dad was hired to teach at King’s College in New York.”

Like many teenagers, Dr. Dodds wasn’t exactly sure where his professional destiny lay, so he enrolled in the State University of New York in Stonybrook and majored in biology. It would prove to be a shrewd decision, for it was during his matriculation that he met his wife, Janee, who was pursuing an economics degree. “We met in biology lab because she needed someone to help light her Bunsen burner,” he recalled. “As you can imagine, we made a lot of jokes about that.”

Once he earned his B.A. degree in biology in 1969, Dr. Dodds and Janee relocated to Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, where he became a special education teacher and pursued a master’s degree in special education from Temple University. During this time, Janee received a fellowship to study economics in a doctoral program at Syracuse University. So once he earned his master’s degree from Temple University in 1971, he and Janee relocated to Syracuse, New York.

While Janee conducted her fellowship, Dr. Dodds added another academic notch to his resume by earning his Ph.D. in curriculum development from Syracuse University in 1975. However, despite all the academic acumen he had accrued, Dr. Dodds had yet to find his professional niche. “I was still kind of wandering at that point,” he admitted. “We were running out of money and needed to find employment. I knew I wanted to become a professor in an education program at some university, so I applied to the State University of New York in Potsdam and was hired to teach in the new competency-based teacher education program.”

**Relocation to Florida Proves Fruitful**

After spending four rewarding years at the state university in Potsdam, New York, Dr. Dodds heard about an interesting job opportunity at the new federally funded Teacher’s Center at Radford University in Radford, Virginia. Thanks to his varied academic background, Dr. Dodds was hired as director of the Teacher’s Center, which comprised a comprehensive training program for teachers in western Virginia.
In 1981, yet another location change was in store for the Dodds family, which now included two young sons—Philip, now 29, and Sean, now 26. “Both my and Janee’s parents were becoming quite elderly, so we decided to move closer to Janee’s, who lived in West Palm Beach, Florida, and look for employment,” said Dr. Dodds, who eventually landed a teaching position at Glades Central High School in Belle Glade.

However, after spending more than a decade in the teaching field, Dr. Dodds felt the time had come to chart a new career course. “By 1984, I was experiencing a sense of burnout from teaching high school, so I decided to apply to the Palm Beach County Health Department. I was always interested in water purity and how it could be protected. Unfortunately, the health department didn’t have any openings in the water-purity area, but I was hired to work in another section of the environmental health division.”

During the next seven years, Dr. Dodds metamorphosed into a respected and well-informed public health expert as he conducted inspections for the prevention of foodborne illnesses and injuries in child and adult daycare centers, nursing homes, prisons, schools, restaurants, supermarkets, and food-processing plants. “During the inspections, we were dealing with everything from rats and cockroaches to something as basic as hand washing,” said Dr. Dodds, who was responsible for the training and supervision of other inspectors and facility managers. “It’s still a battle that goes on every day between the necessity and the cost of maintaining sanitary and safe conditions versus the benefits, which are largely taken for granted by the public until something goes wrong.”

Dr. Dodds also reaped an unexpected benefit during his stint with the Palm Beach County Health Department when he was offered the opportunity to pursue a master of public health degree at the University of Miami. “The health department came to me and said it would pay my tuition and give me one day off a week to attend classes in Miami,” said Dr. Dodds, who received his M.P.H. in 1989. “It proved to be a lot of fun.”

**Confronting Life in Costa Rica**

While Dr. Dodds was busy establishing a successful career at the health department, his wife, Janee, was carving out her own niche as a high-level accountant at the financial headquarters of the Dole Fresh Fruit Company in Boca Raton. However, when Dole decided to close its South Florida office and open separate divisions in California and Costa Rica, the Dodds family was forced to confront several life-altering decisions.

“Dole basically gave Janee three options—quit, move to California, or relocate to Costa Rica and receive a major promotion that would make her director of accounting for Dole’s Latin America division,” recalled Dr. Doods, who was willing to support whatever decision his wife made. “After much discussion, we decided it would be a great opportunity for her to go and work in Costa Rica. So I put my public health career on hold and we moved to Central America in 1991.”

Uprooting the family from South Florida would prove to be somewhat problematic, especially since Dr. Dodds’ older son, Philip, had no desire to leave his West Palm Beach pals. “Philip was in his senior year at Wellington High School and was very upset about the prospect of leaving to go to some strange place,” Dr. Dodds explained. “So we allowed him to remain with a friend’s family, who had an extra room in their house, so he could graduate in South Florida. Our younger son, Sean, was only a freshman in high school, so he came with us to Costa Rica.”

For the next six years, Dr. Dodds lovingly subjugated his professional aspirations for the sake of Janee’s career. But he is the first to admit that a life of semi-retirement is not all it’s cracked up to be. “I could not get a work permit in Costa Rica because the government didn’t like professionals coming in from other countries to take jobs another Costa Rican might be able to do,” said Dr. Dodds, who befriended a psychiatrist and stayed active by...
voluntarily assisting her with statistical studies regarding mental illnesses in Costa Rica. “We also collaborated on a depressive psychosis study, which involved traveling around the mountains and coffee plantations, knocking on doors, and collecting blood samples.

“My wife was supporting us, and since I couldn’t officially work, I tried to make the best possible use of my time,” he added. “I know some men wouldn’t feel comfortable with their wives being the breadwinner, and I did sometimes get depressed or feel useless being unemployed. That’s why, besides doing the psychiatric epidemiology, I also found an opportunity to do some volunteer work with local orphanages and group homes for children who had been removed from their families due to abuse and neglect.”

In 1997, Dole needed an individual to serve as controller of its European division and offered Janee the position. With both Philip and Sean now happily ensconced at the University of Florida in Gainesville, Dr. Dodds and Janee agreed to leave Costa Rica and embark on an exciting new chapter of their lives. “Dole’s European headquarters were in Paris, but the company decided to have Janee serve as an accounting troubleshooter in different countries throughout Europe before we settled in France,” said Dr. Dodds, who spent the next few years living in exotic destinations such as Greece and Germany.

“Initially, we spent a summer at a hotel in Greece, where I was able to walk to the neighborhood supermarket once a day to buy groceries or go swimming. It was a lovely life, but I felt horrible,” said Dr. Dodds, who yearned to return to the United States and resume his public health career. “When we finally moved to France and started looking for a house to rent, I was miserable because I didn’t foresee any possibility of finding any sort of work. From an intellectual standpoint, I was suffering.”

**Return to South Florida Brings Satisfaction**

Fortunately, fate once again intervened in 1998 when Dole bought four small flower companies in Miami and consolidated them into one large business. When the controller position in Miami became available, Dr. Dodds understandably urged Janee to inquire about a transfer to the new South Florida office. “Once Janee’s transfer was accepted, we moved to Cooper City,” said Dr. Dodds, who was both thrilled and relieved to be back in the United States. “Upon disembarking from the plane, and thereafter whenever I passed a Wal-Mart, I had the urge to break into a spirited verse of ‘God Bless America.’”

Once Dr. Dodds readjusted to his much-missed South Florida state of mind, he began plotting his return to the public health arena. “I thought it would be fun to teach epidemiology, so I called up a couple of universities, including NSU,” he recalled. “The secretary I spoke with at NSU said, ‘We don’t have any openings in epidemiology, but we do have one in biostatistics. And we need somebody right away to teach an M.P.H. summer course. Can you do that?’ I said sure, so I was hired as an adjunct professor in the summer of 1999 and enjoyed it a great deal.”

In the summer of 2000, Dr. Dodds, who was also teaching research methods courses at Miami’s Florida International University, became a full-time faculty member in NSU’s Master of Public Health Program. Over the past three years, Dr. Dodds has become an invaluable asset to the program. In addition to developing the program’s practicum course, he currently teaches an online biostatistics course and works with local public health agencies to get them involved with various facets of the college’s M.P.H. Program.

“The most rewarding aspect of working here at NSU occurs when a student expresses appreciation and says, ‘Hey, Dr. Dodds, you’ve been a great help to me.’ I also get a tremendous sense of satisfaction from knowing that when various students go out into the community, they take with them a better understanding for the public aspect of health,” said Dr. Dodds, who also coordinates the monthly public health seminars and chairs the Curriculum Committee. “We’re showing clinicians that maintaining the health of one patient helps to preserve the health of other people who are not their patients, particularly in the case of infectious diseases.”
NFL to NSU: The Many Lives of Claude Jones

By Scott Colton
Director of Education Communications

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

And then there are others, like M-3 student Claude Jones, who have had to master the crucial art of survival in order to endure the ferocious winds of change that chaotically whip through their personal and professional lives.

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

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

Exemplifying the cliché "practice makes perfect," Jones soon became a local hero thanks to his on-field exploits at Dillard, which soon caught the attention of a major coaching legend: Jimmy Johnson. "I had become a pretty good player by my senior year, so Jimmy Johnson, who was then coach of the Miami Hurricanes, came to our home, talked to my mom, and said he wanted me to come play for him."

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

Jones, who is quick to debunk the myth that most college athletes get a free academic ride while they are bringing their school national sports glory, says he toiled just as hard for exams as he did for game day. "I'm sure there were some guys who got good grades because they had someone do their work for them, but it certainly wasn't that way for me," stated Jones, who met his future wife and became the proud father of two sons—Claude, Jr., and Evander—during his University of Miami playing career. "I had to fight my way through college. I would go to school in the morning, and then from noon until 9:00 at night it was all about football."

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

**Trying Times Test Jones' Spirit**

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

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

After earning his certification, Jones made a triumphant return to his high school alma mater in 1996 to teach world and American history. It may have seemed like a wise idea at the time, but Jones soon realized the passion he had for football had failed to translate to the classroom. "I was sitting at my desk one day when I started thinking to myself, 'Is this really what I want to do with my life?' I was still a young guy, and I just couldn't see myself doing it 20 or 30 years down the road. I was always an ambitious person who wanted to do more, but I wasn't quite sure what that something was."

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Claude Jones shares a moment of levity with Renee Alexis, M.D., (left) and Kenneth Johnson, D.O., during his OB/GYN clinical rotation at NSU’s Women’s Health Center.

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

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

When it became time to investigate possible medical school options, Jones applied to a number of institutions, including his alma mater—the University of Miami. Jones, however, was resolute in his desire to matriculate at his optimal choice—NSU’s College of Osteopathic Medicine. “I really wanted to go to a D.O. school because Dr. Barr had told me what the profession was all about,” Jones said. “I didn’t know what a D.O. was at first, but after he told me about the incorporation of osteopathic principles and practices and the holistic approach, I knew that’s what I wanted to pursue. So I basically put all my eggs in one basket and turned down interviews at other colleges because I wanted to come here so badly.”

Family Crisis Leads to Emotional Meltdown

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

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

While trying to deal with the enormity of his wife’s gut-wrenching decision, Jones’ life soon began spinning out of control as he plunged into a seemingly bottomless depression. Due to financial constraints, Jones and his three kids were forced to move in with his mother as he struggled to maintain his sanity. “The first thing I did was take a leave of absence from NSU-COM in 2000,” said Jones,
who received ample support from Larry Newbree, the college’s former director of student services. “When we were talking one day, I broke down in tears because I just couldn’t believe what had happened to my life.”

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

Although he had taken a temporary leave from the D.O. program, Jones remained enrolled in the college’s Master of Public Health Program at the urging of its director, Cyril Blavo, D.O., M.P.H. & T.M. “I talked to Dr. Blavo, and he convinced me to continue because he cared about me and knew how important it was for me to stay involved in school. So I continued on with the degree and graduated in 2001.”

He also managed to swallow his male pride and seek therapy and assistance from the NSU community, which proved to be a pivotal step on his road to academic, emotional, and financial recovery. “At first you’re in denial and you don’t want to talk about it. You keep it within, which is the worst thing you could ever do,” he stressed. “Talking to people really helped me to cope. I also reconnected with my religious faith and began to understand that ultimately everything falls to God.”

Road to Recovery Paved with Good Intentions
As his psyche slowly began to heal, Jones found unexpected support from an array of unlikely NSU sources, including the Women’s Resource Institute. “I was allowed to work in the Horvitz Administration Building as a student employee, which proved to be the best of both worlds because I was able to continue with school and earn some money at the same time,” he said. “I was still a bit down in the dumps because I had no money to buy my kids Christmas presents. That’s when someone put me in contact with NSU’s Women’s Resource Institute.”

Women’s Resource Institute provides information and referral services for problems that may be interfering with quality of life (e.g., domestic violence, substance abuse, career changes, financial crises, etc.) and offers emergency loans for NSU employees. “At first, I felt kind of foolish asking them for help, especially since I was a guy. But they were great and gave me a loan as well as food, clothing, toys, and video games for my kids. Thanks to the Women’s Resource Institute, my kids had a great Christmas that year.”

In 2002, Jones ended his sabbatical from osteopathic medicine and returned to NSU-COM to begin his second year of study. “If it wasn’t for me being at the school and being around people who were motivating me, I don’t know what I would have done. It made a big difference,” said Jones, who is currently performing his required third-year rotations. “I didn’t know I had that many people behind me, that so many people here were rooting for me to succeed. It was just amazing to me. At first I felt totally alone. Then all of a sudden it seemed like everyone was saying, ‘Come on, Claude, you can do it.’”

Now that he’s emerged from a tumultuous few years with an even stronger sense of self, Jones resists the temptation to revisit his recent past, choosing instead to focus on the good fortune that currently pervades his life on a daily basis. “I feel so blessed now,” he admitted. “In many ways, my life has been a fairytale. “I have done things most people will never do, like going to the White House three times, meeting two presidents, winning three national titles, playing for the NFL, and earning a master’s degree,” he said. “In spite of everything I’ve gone through, I’m still here. The key is to surround yourself with positive people, talk about your problems, and accept the fact that we’re all human and all need help from time to time.”
Medical Mission to Jamaica Embraces Interdisciplinary Approach to Patient Care

By Scott Colton
Director of Education Communications

With its focus firmly fixed on integrating a true interdisciplinary approach to health care, the 76-member contingent comprising this year’s NSU-COM Medical Mission to Jamaica headed to the Caribbean country armed with good intentions—and a surfeit of supplies.

During the 2003 humanitarian pilgrimage to Jamaica, which took place June 10-20 and provided medical assistance at five separate sites, over 1,900 patients were screened and treated for a range of ailments. However, what made this mission particularly significant was the interdisciplinary mix of health care participants, who represented the disciplines of osteopathic medicine, pharmacy, dental medicine, occupational therapy, physical therapy, and public health.

“This year, we were able to have one pharmacist and two pharmacy students at each site, and we were fortunate enough to have a lot more occupational and physical therapy students,” said Paula Anderson-Worts, D.O., an assistant professor of family medicine who serves as coordinator of the annual medical missions to Jamaica.
In the past we would separate and visit the different sites, but we didn’t always have representation from so many disciplines at each site."

Dr. Anderson-Worts was particularly impressed with the ingenuity offered by the occupational therapy health care providers, who helped make life easier for many of the ailing Jamaican patients. "While we, as physicians, just treat the people for their medical conditions, the occupational and physical therapy professionals can construct vital adaptive equipment for the patients," she explained. "There was a gentleman who had been diagnosed with a deteriorating muscle disease, which we figured might be muscular sclerosis. He had significant weakness in his arms and had difficulty holding a spoon or a fork."

To ameliorate the situation, the occupational therapy students crafted an adaptive device for the patient that involved cutting the handle off a gallon jug container and sticking the eating utensils in it. "That made it a bulkier item so the man could grasp it and actually feed himself, which is something he wasn’t able to do for months," said Dr. Anderson-Worts, who also participates in NSU-COM’s medical missions to Guatemala.

"His wife happened to be recently diagnosed with breast cancer, so she’s had to care for him while dealing with the burdens of her own disease," she explained. "Fortunately, we were able to give them a wheelchair, which we had brought with us, to help him move around more easily."

The occupational therapy aspect paid dividends again when the mission participants came in contact with an elderly gentleman and his wife, who were suffering from various degrees of vision impairment. "They gave them tape to line their stairs, so the patients would be able to have a color differentiation to prevent them from falling," Dr. Anderson-Worts explained. "They also gave them colored tape to put on the stove temperature dials since they couldn’t see the numbers anymore."

Because access to medical care is severely hampered in the rural regions of Jamaica, the mission participants frequently encounter patients whose ailments have escalated to a perilous level. During this year’s expedition, Dr. Anderson-Worts confronted just such a scenario when a 21-year-old man suffering from osteomyelitis—an infectious inflammatory disease of the bone that is often of bacterial origin and marked by local death and separation of tissue—was brought in for treatment by his understandably concerned brother.

"He had already had a portion of his foot amputated when he was in his teens because of the condition, but for some reason he had recently developed difficulty urinating," she explained. "He had visited the local hospital, where they inserted a Foley catheter (a catheter with an inflatable balloon tip for retention in the bladder to help void the urine). When he came to us two weeks later, with the catheter still implanted in his bladder, he was so weak he could barely hold his head up. When I evaluated him, I figured he was suffering from sepsis, which is a toxic condition resulting from the spread of bacteria from a focus of infection."

Upon further examination, Dr. Anderson-Worts discovered some major inflammation at the tip of the man’s penis, caused by the catheter’s unsanitary condition. "His penis was very swollen, so we removed the catheter, cleaned him up, and put in a new catheter because we didn’t have time to fully assess whether he could urinate on his own," she said. "When he initially visited the hospital, the medical staff never discovered the cause of his problem, so they simply sent him home with the catheter. Normally, you would tell the patient to follow-up with a doctor within a couple of days and then they would remove the catheter."

"I put him on the strongest antibiotic"
we had, which was Levaquin, and gave him a note stating that if his body temperature didn’t go down or he felt worse, he was to return to the hospital as soon as possible to be treated with what I suspected to be early sepsis,” she added. “If I didn’t write the note, he would probably sit in the emergency room for hours or days because he would not be considered a serious case. They respect a doctor’s note. I also told him to follow-up with a particular physician I had connections with in the area. It’s gratifying to know we made a significant difference in the life of this patient because he was no longer eating and felt weak and lethargic.”

In addition to providing a vast array of health-related services, the medical mission affords participants an opportunity to conduct new research as well as follow-up on previous studies, such as an award-winning one initially prepared by M-3 students Seth Politano and Tirdad Zangeneh following their participation in last year’s Jamaican mission. “Three students—Manuel Rodriguez, Luzan Phillpotts, and Andrea Ali—did a follow-up on Seth and Tirdad’s study comparing the prevalence of sexually transmitted diseases among rural and urban communities in Jamaica,” Dr. Anderson-Worts stated. “In addition, Dr. Michelle Powell-Cole, who serves as an assistant professor of family medicine at NSU’s North Miami Beach clinic, collaborated with several students on a study comparing body mass index (BMI) and diet among patients in rural and urban Jamaica.”

As the Jamaican mission program heads into its fourth year, plans are already underway to improve efficiency by utilizing electronic databases to quickly download patient information at all sites. “We started using palm pilots last year to electronically enter patient information, but there were some glitches, mainly due to lack of electricity,” she explained. “We tried it again this year at one site, and it proved to be very successful. In the future, we may bring powerful batteries with us that can maintain the computers long enough to download all the information we need daily at each site.”

Future objectives also include making a concerted effort to educate the patients about the benefits of adopting a preventative approach to basic health care. “As time goes on, we’re trying to make more of a difference from an educational standpoint,” Dr. Anderson-Worts stressed. “When it comes to chronic disease, it’s hard to treat the patients effectively in a week. We can really make a difference by changing their lifestyles and educating them about the disease process. I think that’s what we’re going to focus on in upcoming trips.”

**Health Care Providers**

- Sultan Ahmed, M.D.
- Paula Anderson-Worts, D.O.
- Dawn Brown-Cross (physical therapy)
- Octavia Cannon, D.O.
- Melanie Coombs, M.D.
- Cindy Cork, O.D.
- Karen Daniel, R.Ph.
- Alice Gandell (occupational therapy)
- Maribeth Gidley, D.O.
- Joel Hauptman, D.M.D.
- Noel Henry, O.D.
- Allen Horowitz, D.D.S.
- Ruth Nemire, Pharm.D.
- Alexander Owens, D.O.
- Michelle Powell-Cole, D.O.
- Julia Shipman, D.O.
- Denise Vedrenne, D.M.D.
- Ceressa Ward, Pharm.D.

**NSU-HPD Students**

- Delcine Abraham (osteopathic medicine)
- Andrea Ali (osteopathic medicine)
- Fabiola Arguello (pharmacy)
- Laura Benedict (pharmacy)
- Jocelyn Bienaime (pharmacy)
- Dominic Carollo (osteopathic medicine)
- Timothy Chen (dental)
- Brett Chapman (dental)
- Clarence Clarke (osteopathic medicine)
- Anne Douglas (osteopathic medicine)
- Michael Duers (dental)
- Ann Duskin (osteopathic medicine)
- Michael Escoto (osteopathic medicine)
Reynold Franco (pharmacy)
Rose Ann Habib (dental)
Alan Haspel (dental)
Tameka Jackson (public health)
Heather Kaas (occupational therapy)
Sheeja Kanacheril (osteopathic medicine)
Seema Kapur (osteopathic medicine)
Samara King (occupational therapy)
Carol Kitay (osteopathic medicine)
Nancy Labrador (osteopathic medicine)
Lisa Luckey (osteopathic medicine)
Marsha Mallett (pharmacy)
Moya Martin (osteopathic medicine)
Carol Morris (osteopathic medicine)
Lavaughn Neymour (occupational therapy)
Tasha Perkins (occupational therapy)
Luzanne Philpotts (osteopathic medicine)
Todd Pobiner (dental)
Bobby Raber (dental)
Maureen Roach (dental)
Manuel Rodriguez (osteopathic medicine)
Srilatha Sankarappan (osteopathic medicine)
Jesse Schaffzin (dental)
Richard Serianni (physical therapy)
Randall Silver (dental)
Kevin Takao (physical therapy)
Choung Van (pharmacy)
John Venezia (osteopathic medicine)
Chris Villanueva (dental)

**Volunteers**
Jasmin Ahmed
Millicent Anderson
Yolanda Benitez
Kalil Cole
Yolande Colson
Clive Cork
Marie Cork
Julie Cork
Don Daly
Nicole Dixon
Natalia Jimenez
Lashonda Linton
Elizabeth Raber
Lance Raber
Ryan Shipman
Christine Weise

NSU-COM
Medical Mission
to Jamaica
June 10-20, 2003

Participants: 76
Patients Seen: 1,900+
Dynamism Defines Department of Osteopathic Principles and Practice

By Scott Colton
Director of Education Communications

Over the past three years, NSU-COM’s Department of Osteopathic Principles and Practice has been busy establishing a reputation for excellence that extends to everything from its teaching facilities and research efforts to its ability to evolve with the times and implement essential pre- and postgraduate educational opportunities.

Since coming on board in 2000 to direct the college’s OPP department, Elaine Wallace, D.O., who serves as professor and chair, and Michael Patterson, Ph.D., professor and assistant chair, have made numerous departmental enhancements, including the addition of key faculty like Eric Shamus, Ph.D., and Louis Hasbrouck, D.O. “The addition of Dr. Shamus, who previously worked in the Physical Therapy Program at the College of Allied Health, has allowed for a greater diversity in the OPP department, both in the teaching and clinical aspects,” Dr. Patterson stated. “He brings to our teaching program a new insight into manipulation and the rehabilitation aspects of medicine and is working side by side with the clinicians in the department over in the OPP Clinic so we can supply both the manipulative and rehabilitation aspect in the same area. This has turned out to be a very symbiotic relationship for our clinical staff.”

Dr. Hasbrouck’s wealth of experience also adds a higher level of proficiency for the students, who benefit greatly from his estimable OPP aptitude. “Dr. Hasbrouck is one of the leading experts in cranial diagnosis and treatment,” Dr. Wallace said. “His treatments and
According to Dr. Wallace, patient flow at the OPP Clinic, which is housed in the Sanford L. Ziff Health Care Center, has increased dramatically over the past few years—a direct reflection of the OPP faculty’s growing reputation. “The clinicians are now fully booked, sometimes three or four weeks in advance, and it’s now evolved into an extremely productive clinical operation thanks to referrals and positive word of mouth,” she explained. “Since 2000, the department has added two evening clinics and a new ‘Executive Care Clinic’ for academic professionals.”

In addition to its trademark OPP services, Dr. Wallace practices acupuncture, while Dr. Sandhouse provides prolotherapy treatment, which is a non-surgical ligament reconstruction that serves as a remedy for chronic pain. Prolotherapy is useful for many different types of musculoskeletal pain, including arthritis, back and neck discomfort, fibromyalgia, sports injuries, unresolved whiplash injuries, carpal tunnel syndrome, chronic tendinitis, partially torn tendons, ligaments and cartilage, degenerated or herniated discs, TMJ, and sciatica.

In terms of curricular augmentations, the department has significantly improved student-learning opportunities by upgrading its OPP lab through the acquisition of new teaching tools and cutting-edge audiovisual equipment. Students also benefit from participating in the optional one-year OPP Fellowship program, which has gained in popularity under the auspices of Associate Professor Mark Sandhouse, D.O.

“Last year we had an extremely active fellowship application program; in fact, 25 students applied for four positions,” Dr. Sandhouse said. “These were all very good students, and we had great difficulty choosing the four fellows. The program we have for the fellows has changed dramatically because they now spend the whole year working with us here on campus instead of splitting the fellowship into two six-month segments. The fellows work at NSU’s OPP Clinic and do rotations in gerontology, physical medicine and rehabilitation, sports medicine, and radiology.”

According to Dr. Wallace, one of the department’s true strengths is its diversity of educators, which allows the faculty to present a practical and global view of OPP to the students. Although four of its faculty members are certified in OPP, the department also shares the knowledge of certifications in

- **family medicine** (Barbara Arcos, D.O., Dr. Sandhouse, and Dr. Wallace)
- **pediatrics** (Hilda DeGaetano, D.O., and Arthur Snyder, D.O.)
- **physical medicine/rehabilitation** (Ron Tolchin, D.O.)
- **psychology/physiology** (Dr. Patterson)
- **strength/conditioning/physical therapy** (Dr. Shamus)
- **sports medicine** (Dr. Wallace and Dr. Shamus)

In addition to upgrading existing programs, the OPP department recently expanded into the sports medicine realm with the establishment of the Sports Medicine Subspecialty Residency Program and its affiliation with both NSU and various South Florida professional athletic teams. “We’re now connected with the sports programs at NSU, and our OPP faculty is serving as team physicians,” Dr. Patterson said. “We have also developed a relationship with some of the professional sports teams in South Florida, which allows us to provide additional opportunities for our physicians and fellows.”
Because we have developed a strong working relationship with NSU’s athletic trainers and the new Bachelor’s of Athletic Training Department, we will be working side by side with them in both health care and research in the soon-to-be-built NSU athletic sports complex,” said Dr. Shamus, who serves as an assistant professor in the OPP department.

The creation of the osteopathic sports medicine residency program, which will commence in January 2004 and be overseen by Dr. Wallace, is especially noteworthy because it provides a critical boost to Florida’s graduate medical education environment. “We expect to have two fellows per year in this program, who will work with us in the OPP Clinic and in NSU’s overall sports medicine program.” Dr. Wallace said. “The inclusion of this new sports medicine residency will greatly enhance opportunities for our students as well as for research.”

Because of its continued growth, the Department of Osteopathic Principles and Practice was recently restructured to include three separate subdivisions that are housed under the OPP departmental umbrella. The new classifications are:

- **Division of Sports Medicine** - chaired by Dr. Wallace
- **Division of Osteopathic Manipulative Medicine** - chaired by Dr. Sandhouse
- **Division of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation** - chaired by Dr. Tolchin

“The new delineation incorporates our three thrust areas, with OMM being our basic teaching area,” Dr. Patterson explained. “The Division of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation, which had been a division of the Department of Family Medicine, was transferred to us because it’s a natural marriage with OPP. It also goes along with sports medicine very well, so those three areas functioning together form a continuity of both teaching and care that I think will be very profitable.”

In addition to the aforementioned areas, the Department of Osteopathic Principles and Practice is currently engaged in a number of diverse research projects under the direction of Dr. Patterson. These include:

**Efficacy of Cranial Osteopathic Treatment on Visual Function**
Principal Investigator: Dr. Sandhouse

**Validation of Osteopathic Manipulation for the Lumbar Spine**
Principal Investigator: Dr. Shamus
Co Investigators: Dr. Wallace and Dr. Patterson

**Inter- and Intra-Examiner Reliability Research Program**
Principal Investigator: Dr. Patterson

**Determination of Forces Used in Palpatory Diagnosis and Manipulative Treatment by Osteopathic Physicians and Physical Therapists**
Principal Investigator: Dr. Patterson
Co Investigators: Dr. Shamus and Dr. Wallace

**Relationships between Osteopathic Palpatory Diagnosis Findings and Traditional Acupuncture Auricular Findings**
Principal Investigator: Dr. Wallace

**The Effect of Cervical Spine Position on the Modified Fingertip-to-Floor and Double Inclinometer Measurements of Lumbar Spine Flexion**
Principal Investigator: Dr. Patterson
Co Investigator: William Brooks, D.O.

“The success of the Department of Osteopathic Principles and Practice can be attributed to one vital element—we truly like and respect one another,” Dr. Wallace explained. “We are a collegian of educators who believe in the profession. And when good people share a vision, great things happen.”
Ramsey and Rachel Pevsner Make Medicine a Bona Fide Family Affair

By Scott Colton
Director of Education Communications

Throughout history, there have been countless examples of children following in their parents' footsteps when it comes to choosing a career path, especially in the acting profession where a celebrated dad (e.g., Kirk Douglas and Henry Fonda) passes his talent and passion on to his equally eminent offspring (i.e., Michael Douglas and Jane Fonda).

Although the same scenario has also occurred countless times in the medical profession, chances are it has rarely featured a storyline as compelling as the one starring Ramsey Pevsner, D.O., Ph.D., and her daughter, Rachel.

In May 2003, Dr. Pevsner proudly strode across the stage of the Office Depot Center in Sunrise, Florida, to receive her D.O. degree while daughter Rachel—a current M-3 student—voiced her enthusiastic approval from the audience.

To make the situation even more surreal, Dr. Pevsner's other daughter, Deborah—who is a third-year radiology resident at Jackson Memorial Hospital in Miami—had the honor of hooding her mother during the ceremony. "It has become a family tradition," said Rachel, who recently began performing her third-year clinical rotations. "My
father, who is a radiologist, hooded my sister at her graduation, then my sister did my mother at hers. And, if I ever make it through the next two years to my graduation, my mom will hood me.”

Prizewinning Book Makes Lasting Impression
As a child growing up in Indiana in the 1950’s, Dr. Pevsner always harbored a desire to pursue a career in the medical field—an aspiration that took on added significance as a teenager when she read Sinclair Lewis’ Pulitzer Prize-winning novel *Arrowsmith* about a physician whose dedication leads to triumph and tragedy in his life.

“That book truly had a major impact on me,” explained Dr. Pevsner, who recently began a combined internship and residency program in psychiatry at Miami’s Jackson Memorial Hospital. “But women of my generation were somewhat discouraged from going into medicine, so I went into nursing instead and became a psych nurse.”

While attending college in Chicago, Dr. Pevsner met her future husband, Henry, who was studying to become a physician. Consequently, the next few years would prove to be itinerant ones for Dr. Pevsner as she accompanied her husband on a nomadic journey throughout the United States as he completed his internship, residency, and military commitments. “I had so much trouble earning my bachelor’s degree because we moved around so much,” recalled Dr. Pevsner, who was relieved when the couple finally settled down in South Florida.

Nursing Takes Back Seat to Psychology
Although she found some fulfillment in her nursing endeavors, Dr. Pevsner yearned to take her career to the next level. Despite the demands that come with raising two young children, she seamlessly blended motherhood and matriculation to earn a Ph.D. in psychology from Nova Southeastern University in 1981. After relocating from Hollywood, Florida, to West Palm Beach, Dr. Pevsner established a thriving psychology practice comprising four offices.

Still, despite her obvious success, Dr. Pevsner knew her career odyssey wouldn’t be complete until she took the final step and realized her childhood dream of earning a medical degree. “I wanted to be able to write the scripts for medications for my patients, which is something I couldn’t do as a psychologist,” she explained. “When you send a patient to somebody else, you run the risk of losing control of the patient or disagreeing with the prescribed treatment.”

In 1999, Dr. Pevsner began the ultimate metamorphosis from psychologist to psychiatrist by matriculating at NSU-COM. Two years later, daughter Rachel joined her mom at NSU-COM to create a truly memorable familial milestone.

Like Mother, Like Daughter
“I always knew I wanted to be a doctor because of the environment I grew up in,” said Rachel, whose husband and high school sweetheart, Thom, received his Ph.D. from NSU in neuropsychology several years ago. “My father was reading x-rays at home, and my mother was always seeing patients and studying. Both my parents love what they do, so I grew up in a very positive, work-oriented atmosphere.”

Following in her mother’s footsteps has proven to be a fairly painless endeavor, mainly because Rachel has been able to reap the rewards of her mother’s recent educational efforts. “Being two years behind my mom in school has been a blessing in many ways because she saved all her lecture notes and has been able to advise me on what I’m going through because she just experienced everything herself,” she explained. “She also saved all her old books so I didn’t have to buy any, which was great.”

Of course, Rachel’s obvious affection for and admiration of her mother extends far beyond receiving test-taking tips and free textbooks. “What’s so interesting about what my mom is going to be doing now that she’s a psychiatrist with a Ph.D. is that she’s going to be able to do everything in terms of taking care of the psych patient,” she proudly stated. “She’ll really have all her bases covered and be able to use her experience as a psychologist to provide her patients with the best possible treatment options.”

Sighseeing was the order of the day for Deborah (left), Rachel (right), and Dr. Pevsner when they vacationed in Sweden.
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http://medicine.nova.edu

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

Upcoming Events

NSU-COM Alumni Reunion and CME Program
February 6-8, 2004
Hyatt Regency Pier 66
Fort Lauderdale, Florida

101st Annual FOMA Convention
February 19-22, 2004
Hyatt Regency Pier 66
Fort Lauderdale, Florida

41st Annual ACOFP Convention
March 10-14, 2004
Tampa Bay Convention Center
Tampa Marriott Waterside Hotel
Tampa, Florida

Alumni Speakers List

The Executive Committee of the NSU-COM Alumni Association, at the suggestion of President Glenn Moran, D.O., FACOFP, would like to create an alumni speakers list. It has been noted at previous alumni reunion CME programs that we have a diverse and distinguished graduate network that possesses the ability to speak on a range of topics. We are constantly searching for additional speakers for our future events. If you present educational lectures, please send in your CV and the subject matter you speak on to Dr. Moran in care of Dr. Howard L. Neer, NSU-COM Office of Alumni Affairs, 3200 South University Drive, Fort Lauderdale, FL 33328.
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:

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**$1,000 Contributors**
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- Dr. Jeffrey Grove
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* *Contribution made in honor of 2003 Living Tribute Award winner Arthur Snyder, D.O.*

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- Dr. Sandy Goldman

Friends (up to $99)
- Dr. Bret Ackermann
- Dr. John Allred
- Dr. Paul Avadian
- Dr. Deidra Bergmann
- Dr. Andrew Biondo
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Alumni Association Fund Honor Roll

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Dr. Francine Carattini-Eley
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February 6-8, 2004

Hyatt Regency Pier Sixty-Six and NSU Health Professions Division

Featuring 7.5 hours of AOA-approved Category 1-A and ACCME-approved Category 1 CME credits.

2004 CME Topics

Saturday, February 7, 2004
Allergic Rhinitis: Treatment Options
Diabetes Treatment Update
Hypertension Management
Irritable Bowel Syndrome
New Options in Treatment of Anxiety
OMT for Common Medical Conditions
Thyroid Replacement: New Controversies
Update on Dermatologic Diagnosis and Treatment

Sunday, February 8, 2004
Back Pain Management in the 21st Century
Colorectal Disease Update
Estrogen Replacement Therapy
Evidence-based Medicine: Understanding the Literature
Medical Education Update: New Concepts
Updates on Lipid Management and Chronic Dermatoses

Please direct all alumni-related correspondence to:
NSU-COM Office of Alumni Affairs
3200 S. University Drive
Fort Lauderdale, FL, 33328
Phone: (954) 262-1029 Fax: (954) 262-2259

Reunion Registration Form

Please complete and return by January 15, 2004

I will attend the Friday evening reception ___Yes ___No
Party of__________________________

I will attend the Saturday morning lectures ___Yes ___No
I will attend the Saturday afternoon lectures ___Yes ___No
I will attend the Saturday evening reception and banquet ___Yes ___No
Party of__________________________ (Limit two people)

I will attend the Sunday morning alumni meeting and lectures ___Yes ___No

If ADA (American with Disabilities Act) accommodation is needed, please specify here

COM Outlook • Fall 2003
Alumni Spotlight - Class of 1986
Robert Blackburn, D.O.

Like so many of his fellow NSU-COM alumni, Robert G. Blackburn, D.O., has brought considerable esteem to the college thanks to his numerous contributions to the osteopathic profession. In July 2003, Dr. Blackburn—a class of 1986 alumnus—was elected president of the Florida Society of the American College of Osteopathic Family Physicians (FSACOFP).

His succession to the FSACOFP leadership position is just the latest in a string of achievements that began several decades ago when Dr. Blackburn was both a standout athlete and student at Clermont High School in Clermont, Florida. In addition to being an officer and member of the National Honor Society, Dr. Blackburn—a native Floridian who was born in Orlando—competed in sports such as football, baseball, and track and won the Middleweight Championship in weightlifting for bench pressing 365 pounds.

After high school, Dr. Blackburn began his pursuit of a medical career by attending Lake Sumter Community College in Leesburg, Florida, followed by a stint at the University of Florida in Gainesville, where he earned his bachelor of science degree in medical technology. During this time, Dr. Blackburn had the privilege of performing research in ophthalmology and renal medicine with James Robert Cade, M.D., the renowned University of Florida professor who invented the popular sports drink Gatorade.

Following his graduation from the University of Florida, Dr. Blackburn enjoyed a fruitful affiliation with Shands Teaching Hospital in Gainesville, where he worked in the departments of pathology and ophthalmology. In 1982, he began matriculating at Southeastern College of Osteopathic Medicine (the precursor to NSU-COM), earning his D.O. degree in 1986. Dr. Blackburn’s affection for his osteopathic alma mater still resonates nearly two decades later, a fact which was evidenced during his inaugural speech as president of the FSACOFP when he paid tribute to Morton Terry, D.O., the founder of SECOM and chancellor of NSU’s Health Professions Division.

Because his love for Florida runs deep, Dr. Blackburn remained in the Sunshine State to conduct his internship at Orlando General Hospital and his residency at Westchester General Hospital in Miami. After completing his residency, Dr. Blackburn practiced in Zephyrhills and Tarpon Springs before settling down in Spring Hill to work in a thriving three-partner family practice office.

Dr. Blackburn, who admittedly thrives upon challenges and derives satisfaction from his osteopathic medical career, is board certified in family practice and geriatric medicine. He is also board certified by the American Society for Clinical Pathology in hematology, microbiology, clinical chemistry, and immunology. His scope of practice is broad-based family medicine and includes geriatrics, sports medicine, minor emergencies, pre-hospital care, and dermatology.

Dr. Blackburn’s comprehensive training and impressive medical background have made him eminently qualified for several statewide appointments by Governor Jeb Bush. These include serving as a generic drug subcommittee member on the Florida Medicaid Pharmaceutical and Therapeutic Committee and as a board member and physician advisor for the Florida Workers’ Compensation Committee. In addition to serving on an array of statewide and national osteopathic committees, Dr. Blackburn acts as medical director of emergency medical services for the Spring Hill Fire Rescue Department and serves as a physician representative on the Hernando County Health Care Advisory Board.

During his infrequent periods of spare time, Dr. Blackburn enjoys collecting civil war artifacts and participating in ping-pong contests. His priority, however, centers on bonding closely with his family, which includes his lovely wife Sarah, daughter Brittany (age 8), and son Zackary (age 6).

“Bob is an optimistic, sincere man with boundless energy who always has a smile on his face and in his voice,” said Howard Neer, D.O., FACOFP, professor and associate dean of alumni affairs. “He is profoundly dedicated to the profession and will proceed on to even greater achievements throughout his career.”
Getting to Know: Ricardo Arriaza
Assistant, Data Coordination, Study, and Analysis

Date of Hire: June 1996

Official NSU-COM Responsibilities: My responsibilities consist of providing administrative and management information system support to the Office of Data Coordination, Study, and Analysis. I assist in developing databases, reports, spreadsheets, and other computer applications as needed. I provide computer technical support for the College of Osteopathic Medicine and also run SPSS programs on raw data, utilize BANNER for locating information, and assist with Web page design and development of Intranet site for data collection. I also maintain databases and MS Office applications, aid the local staff in the conversion of manual to automated systems, and assist in the evaluation of hardware and software for office applications, as needed.

Reasons I Enjoy Working at NSU-COM: I like working at NSU because it provides me with the opportunity to work in the computer field, which is something I truly enjoy. NSU also provides a comfortable atmosphere and great working environment. I also enjoy the relationship I have with my coworkers. They make my life pleasant since they have become such a special part of my life, and I am happy to say that we are comfortable enough to share our happiness and our sadness. Another reason I enjoy my work is that NSU gives you the opportunity to increase your education. I am very proud to say that I just earned my master’s degree in management information systems.

What Did You Do Professionally Before Joining the NSU-COM Staff? I was a well-respected instructor at the Francisco Marroquin University in Guatemala, where I taught different computer courses and worked as a computer lab assistant. After my mother passed away, I decided to move to America. Although I had already earned my bachelor’s degree, as an immigrant, it was not easy to launch a career, so I had to perform all kinds of jobs when I first came to this country. I cleaned offices, worked as a waiter and bartender, parked cars, and worked as a driver for a rich elderly woman. After performing so many side jobs, I decided to work through a temp agency. That was when I started in the computer field working as a data entry clerk. I was initially sent to Southeastern College of Osteopathic Medicine’s North Miami Beach campus to serve as a temp for only two days. However, I ended up working a little longer than expected, and I have been employed with NSU-COM for seven years.

Greatest Achievement in Life: I am still working on my greatest achievement, but one thing I strongly believe is that during our lives we spend too much time thinking about what we want to achieve. We do not spend enough time enjoying what we already have, so I want to pledge to do just that.

My Coworkers Would Be Surprised to Know This About Me: I am a modern but somewhat old-fashioned person in regard to pride and values. I am a neat freak and like to keep my house very clean in spite of my “two children.” I have two beautiful dogs that are very dear to me, so you may say they are “my children.”

Most Frightening Thing That Ever Happened to Me: One day I was invited to a get together at a friend’s house. Suddenly, when I entered the house, someone put a shotgun to my head. He wanted to kill me—and I had no idea who he was. He claimed his brother had disappeared and insisted I knew where he was. I kept trying to tell him that he was confusing me with someone else, but he was under the influence of drugs and alcohol. Fortunately, after fighting with him for awhile, I was able to take the gun from him and get away. By this time, the neighbors realized what had happened and called the police. They took him to jail and charged him with attempted murder and possession of narcotics, among other charges. It is my understanding that he is still in jail and will be for a long time.

Three Words That Best Describe Me: Friendly, honest, and dependable.