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COM Outlook Fall 2010

College of Osteopathic Medicine

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Fall 2010

COM Outlook

Nova Southeastern University College of Osteopathic Medicine

Integral Intervention:

**Student Assistance
Program Provides
Crucial Support**





Dean's Message

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

In an election year dominated by health care reform, the need to have additional physician representation at both the state and national legislative level is more imperative than ever before. Fortunately, as the fall election cycle draws near, it's become increasingly evident that physicians across the nation are responding to this clarion call.

According to a *USA Today* article that appeared in its April 20 issue, 47 physicians—41 Republicans and 6 Democrats—are running for the U.S. House or Senate this year, which is nearly three times the number of physicians (16) serving in Congress today. By comparison, 30 physicians ran in the 2008 general election, while only 22 ran for congressional seats in 2006. Currently, physicians comprise only three percent of the U.S. Congress.

In Florida, three physicians are currently serving in the state's House of Representatives—Ron Renuart, D.O., (the first osteopathic physician ever elected to the Florida House), Paige Kreegel, M.D., and Ed Homan, M.D., while in the Florida Senate, Durrell Peaden, M.D., is our lone physician voice. In the upcoming November elections, two osteopathic physicians are running for state and national seats: Rudolph Moise, D.O., who is running for the U.S. Congress, and Robert McCann, D.O., who is campaigning for a spot in the Florida House of Representatives.

One fact is certain: Physician candidates have the distinct political advantage of voter confidence when it comes to dealing with the country's unwieldy health care system. A Gallup Poll conducted in March 2010 unearthed the fact that 77 percent of Americans trust doctors to "do the right thing" on health policy, compared with just 32 percent for Republican leaders and 49 percent for President Barack Obama.

Having increased physician representation at the state and national level is vitally important for the simple reason that health care is primarily regulated by the legislative process. It's no secret that the majority of legislators simply don't grasp the complexity and personal idiosyncrasies involved in patient care when they draft legislation that regulates the health care industry. For example, they can misjudge what is involved in the perception and performance of an office procedure. In addition, they may misjudge the impact of health care delivery or where the real costs are when they're trying to implement cost-cutting measures that actually hinder instead of improve the way the medical profession delivers care.

One striking illustration of this involves the issue of shrinking physician reimbursement payments. Additionally, legislators as a whole may not truly comprehend the escalating costs involved with running a medical practice today. Beyond the issue of burgeoning malpractice insurance fees, additional clerical support is required just to respond to the insurance companies that submit multiple inquiries before they will provide reimbursement. As we are all aware, processing a never-ending stream of paperwork has become a burden, as has the overall lack of understanding in the legislative process that the practice of medicine is not just a job but actually a way of life for the many physicians who are frequently on call and work excessively long hours.

This lack of understanding also extends to the realm of medical education. Over the past several years, new medical schools have seemingly opened at whim without legislators really comprehending the crucial need for also providing increased graduate medical education opportunities. Similarly, there is a paucity of funding to accommodate those health professionals who selflessly choose to work in medically underserved areas of the United States where there is inadequate revenue to support them. Consequently, is it any wonder that these medical professionals are having difficulty paying back their approximately \$200,000 in medical school loans?

The facts I have discussed in this message illustrate the need for health practitioners, especially physicians, to realize how important it is for them to become significantly more involved in the political process. This is especially important for those individuals who possess the ability and desire to actually pursue national or state House and Senate opportunities. Once elected, they can work toward ensuring the American people continue to get the best health care in the world at an affordable price with reasonable safeguards by educating their fellow legislators and sponsoring or supporting progressive and sound health care legislation.

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Based on her medical pedigree, Dr. Jessica Hilst, a 2010 NSU-COM graduate, certainly was predisposed to becoming a physician, especially when you consider that her father and both her grandfathers are physicians, as were several of her uncles.



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HPD Chancellor's Communiqué

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

I have discussed this topic numerous times in *COM Outlook*; however, I think it needs to be reiterated as to what is happening in our health care system relative to the landmark health care reform legislation that was passed earlier this year.

Whether you agree or disagree with it, the 2010 Health Care Reform Act is really just an extension and expression of what has been occurring in health care delivery of this nation. In fact, if you look carefully at the various academic health care institutions in terms of their curricular changes and the adaptation of their teaching programs, you'll notice that this shifting educational paradigm predates the actual passage of the 2010 Health Care Reform Act by about five years.

That's certainly been the case here at the NSU Health Professions Division colleges, which are the standard bearers for some of the elements that have been presented as law to the people of this nation. For example, we've discussed wellness and prevention before. I'm mentioning it again because prevention has been an integral part of the osteopathic medical creed since the inception of the profession in 1874. And it's certainly been the backbone of each of the HPD colleges' individual missions. The Health Care Reform Act actually mirrors this commitment to prevention by investing \$12.9 billion over 10 years for the Prevention and Public Health Fund, which would require the public and private insurers to automatically provide health screenings and immunizations without there being any deductibles or copayments for the insured party.

It's particularly interesting because, for the first time, the Medicare system is now mandated to provide comprehensive annual checkups without there being any costs involved. But whether it's people over the age of 65 on Medicare or a young adult, I believe every person should be seeing a physician at least once a year for a medical checkup. What you're going to start seeing is the true element of prevention, which will involve providing knowledge and instruction to patients, especially senior citizens, to help them achieve wellness and prevent or at least attenuate morbidity, thereby reducing overall health care costs in regard to this large group of individuals. This would involve the early diagnosing of serious conditions such as diabetes, high blood pressure, cardiovascular disease, and prostatic cancer and having other age-appropriate screenings performed such as colonoscopies.

I think the various educational enhancements we have placed into our curricula, such as our small-group teaching and simulation environments, will have a major impact on the comparative effectiveness issue, which will determine

the qualities and disparities involved in the manner in which people are receiving health care services. So you're going to see the application of knowledge to provide for what I feel is a more measurable quality outcome for the patients. The reason that's important is because it will potentially reduce the number of hospitalizations related to quick onset morbidities and diseases.

The Health Care Reform Act also creates a national quality improvement strategy as well as a public/private institute to analyze the comparative effectiveness of certain treatments and a patient safety research center to promote the adoption of best practices. That's really what happens here at NSU-COM. Through our simulation labs, small-group teaching modalities, and the application of electronic medical records in our clinics, we are promoting exactly what this patient safety research center will be analyzing. We're looking at a number of opportunities not only programmatically but also with technology to improve patient safety, prevent medical error, and enhance the delivery of health services to the person who's affected the most: the patient.



Additionally, the new health care law stresses the importance of providing care in rural and underserved areas. Consequently, if you start to apply all the things I've just discussed to the whole health care delivery system, including the application of technology, we're going to be able to bring enhanced medical care directly to patients, physicians, and allied health professionals in these rural and underserved areas. At NSU-COM, many of our graduates traditionally

spend their professional lives working in communities comprising 40,000 individuals or less. Consequently, the College of Osteopathic Medicine is already at the focal point of where the Health Care Reform Act is pointing. It's always been a part of our mission's fabric, which is something Dr. Moron Terry envisioned when he established the college in 1979—to ensure our graduates would be trained to work in rural underserved areas, whether it be in the mountains of North Carolina or federally designated underserved areas in the middle of a city.

When you review the voluminous health care bill, it appears as if somebody looked at NSU's Health Professions Division, and specifically at the College of Osteopathic Medicine, because we are where we need to be because we have all the required components in place. Everyone from the dean's office to the dedicated faculty and staff members needs to be commended and appreciated for the fact that the college has not stood still. It would have been very easy to remain programmatically stagnant, to not revise the curriculum or implement new teaching methods, which is why I thank everyone not only on behalf of myself but on behalf of the university, and particularly on behalf of Dr. Morton Terry.

Chinese Physicians Participate in Osteopathic Medicine Training

In late August, the College of Osteopathic Medicine hosted a four-day training event for four Chinese physicians/educators in the area of primary care physician training, which marked the second consecutive year that NSU-COM coordinated this education program.

In an effort to enhance primary care medicine and patient care in China and meet the challenge of large differences in quality and access to health care, the Chinese Central Government established an edict requiring there be one family medicine clinic for every 50,000 people by 2010. Organized by the American Osteopathic Foundation and the American College of Osteopathic Family Physicians in partnership with Heart to Heart International, the Chinese physician delegation visited the United States to learn from American osteopathic physicians what they know best—how to provide enhanced health care to more people using limited resources.

During their stay, the Chinese physicians participated in an eclectic mix of activities ranging in nature from academic to social. To make their South Florida experience as memorable as possible, the visiting physicians were exposed to a jam-packed agenda that included



- HIPAA privacy training
- family medicine residency curriculum design presentations
- hands-on exposure to family medicine practice in ambulatory and continuity care settings
- introduction to osteopathic manipulative treatment
- discussions on the integration of osteopathic philosophy and manipulative medicine into family medicine training
- information sharing about the college's Master of Science in Biomedical Informatics, Master of Public Health, and Master of Science in Medical Education programs

On the social front, the visiting physicians were treated to a driving and water taxi tour of downtown Fort Lauderdale, a trip to the Miami Seaquarium, dinner in South Beach, a shopping expedition to the world-famous Sawgrass Mills outlet mall, and an authentic American barbecue hosted at the home of Ronnie and Robert Oller, D.O., who serves as CEO of the NSU Division of Clinical Operations.

"The Chinese physician delegates were very motivated by what they learned here at NSU's College of Osteopathic Medicine," said Jennie Lou, M.D., M.Sc., professor of public health and internal medicine and director of the Master of Science in Biomedical Informatics program, who also served as one of the local coordinators of the visit along with Susan Ledbetter, D.O. "I'm proud to say that NSU-COM is helping make a difference in shaping the world's health care system."



Pictured (top row from left) are: **Susan Ledbetter, D.O.**, assistant professor of family medicine and program director of the family medicine residency at Palmetto General Hospital; **Marti Echols, Ph.D.**, assistant professor of internal medicine and assistant dean of medical education; **Robin Jacobs, Ph.D.**; assistant professor of preventive medicine and psychiatry; **Elaine Wallace, D.O., M.Sc.**, professor of osteopathic principles and practice and executive associate dean; and **Jennie Lou, M.D., M.Sc.**, professor of public health and internal medicine and director of the Master of Science in Biomedical Informatics program. Bottom row (from left) are: **Bai Xuesong, M.D.**, deputy department chief and deputy chief physician at Dazhou Central Hospital; **Dr. Zhou Taiguang, M.D.**, professor at The Affiliated Hospital of Luzhou Medical College; **Anthony J. Silvagni, D.O., Pharm.D., M.Sc.**, NSU-COM dean; **Tian Yingwei, M.D.**, vice principal and deputy chief physician at Nanchong Health School of Sichuan Province; and **Zhang Heping, M.D.**, physician in charge at The Affiliated Hospital of North Sichuan Medical College.



HELPING OTHERS

CMDA Students Forego Spring Break Fun to Provide Medical Care in the Dominican Republic

As the college's Christian and Dental Medical Association (CMDA)-sponsored medical team met in preparation for its March 27-April 3 spring break medical outreach trip, there were a few questions the team tried to work through: Do we strive to serve the most destitute areas? What about the areas that are still underserved, but are more likely to have medical follow-up?

This ethical dilemma doesn't allow for easy answers, but medical teams have to deal with the reality that they are often giving at most 30 days of medication for patients that often need long-term medical attention. So, what does a team value: meeting a medical need for about 30 days, knowing that follow-up care is unlikely, if not impossible, or meeting a medical need in an area where follow-up care is feasible?

Initially, our team had decided to go to Mission of Hope in Haiti, hoping to provide care for some of the most underserved, while helping at an already functioning, yet overwhelmed, medical clinic. After the earthquake on January 12, the medical need in Haiti grew exponentially overnight, and our medical team could hardly establish contact with the leading medical facilities in Haiti. We also found it to be a true logistical nightmare. As the trip dates rapidly approached, we desperately hoped the door would open for us to come serve, but we finally had to opt for Plan B.

With the help of Dr. Elaine Wallace and Dr. Rogerio Faillace, the CMDA was able to scramble together airplane tickets, housing, supplies, and medicine to go to Santiago, Dominican Republic. We served alongside America Developing Smiles (ADS), which had just formed a new partnership with NSU. Somehow everything came together, and a month later our team

*By Austin Holmes, husband of OMS-III and
trip coordinator Chelsey Holmes*

of 12 students, Dr. Faillace, Dr. Almos Trif, Dr. Mark Cohen, and Marysel Sierra arrived in Santiago to serve a lower-class community of Dominican families on the outskirts of Santiago, which lies in the northwest corner of the Dominican Republic, roughly 60 miles from the Haitian border.

Once we arrived, a clinic was set up to operate from 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., Sunday through Thursday, out of a local school and medical clinic. The network of local ADS leaders, known as the Damas, organized the school and managed the crowds of people that lined up at our doors every morning. Their services and organization were vital to the provision of medical care from our doctors and students. We saw the necessity of local leadership as our team worked alongside the Damas and a few Dominican doctors who gave up their time to serve. Long-term care and lifestyle changes were the goal, and through our service, approximately 680 Dominican patients were brought under the medical network organized under the Dominican leaders.

As one can see, medical outreach trips seldom go according to plan. Often they require a great deal of flexibility and the realization that U.S. logistical demands and organization don't necessarily conform to the developing world. Thus, in addition to a great deal of hard work, our team had to realize the necessity of working with/by/through the existing networks of local leaders, which can often be trying and uncomfortable.

Our trip was full of excitement, fun, and bonding, so we were happy to have the chance to strengthen an existing network of medical care in Santiago. After a trip to the beautiful mountains of the Dominican Republic and a last day of glorious horseback riding—which included more chafing than anyone wants to know about—we found ourselves returning home with hearts full of love and compassion for a culture of people very different from us, an understanding of our equality, and an appreciation of their joy and perseverance amidst economic hardship.

Apples and Oranges—or More Bloods Versus Crips?

Examining the debate over the COMLEX-USA Level 1 and the USMLE Step 1 board exams

One of the most prominent questions facing second-year osteopathic medical students is if they should take the optional allopathic USMLE in addition to their required osteopathic COMLEX-Level 1 board exam. While facing one daunting eight-hour exam based on two years of medical knowledge, they also need to figure out if they are going to want to apply to any allopathic residencies requiring a second exam score—the USMLE.

This leads me to ask the question, what is the true difference between the COMLEX and the USMLE? Are they really just **apples** and **oranges**, the same yet a little different and possibly interchangeable since they assess similar content and skills? Or are they more like the difference between the notorious gangs called the Bloods and the Crips, with the allopathic and osteopathic sides having good reason to hold tightly to their red and blue bandana colors?

Past studies regarding the question result in a mixed bag of both fruit and gang members: There was nothing that would satisfy my hunger but also no present research that would shoot up my theory that there is, in fact, a definable relationship between the two tests' scores. Slocum and Louder in 2006 concluded from their study of 155 OMS-IV students that there is a positive relationship between the scores, and they even developed a formula to describe it. In 2010, Chick et al expanded the study's idea to include 588 students applying to internal medicine residencies and confirmed Slocum's findings. They found an above-average score of 560 on the COMLEX equating to an average score of 209 on the USMLE (COMLEX mean = 500 out of 800; USMLE mean = 210-220 out of 300). However, later in 2010, Sarko et al looked at a small sample of 90 students who applied to emergency medicine residencies and found almost identical results to those in the Slocum and Chick studies, but the concluding results were interpreted quite differently.

Sarko's study determined that while students with a score of 560 on the COMLEX had a performance average of 208 on the USMLE, that average is actually calculated from a wide range of reported USMLE scores from 188 to 227. A 188 on the USMLE is a minimum-passing score, and a 227 is an above-average score. Sarko concluded that in his study, a COMLEX score is only 62.3 percent predictive of an outcome on the USMLE; in the Slocum study, it was only 68 percent predictive. This shows that while there is **some** relationship present, the proposed formulas to relate a COMLEX score to a USMLE score are not yet reliable. However, Sarko, Chick, and Slocum all seem to agree that larger studies are truly worth investigating, especially as osteopathic applicants to allopathic residency programs continue to rise alongside the growing number of osteopathic graduates.



If a relationship between scores on the COMLEX and the USMLE is eventually solidified, the next question to ask is if allopathic residencies would want to use it in considering D.O. applicants with only COMLEX scores, or in other words, abandon their occasional recommendation that we take their test to be accepted into their programs? Osteopathic leaders show overwhelming support for our profession to retain the right to our own licensing exam in order to enter residency, says a 2001 study by Graneto, and it could be assumed that allopathic leaders support a similar standpoint in their profession. Thus, the content tested on the COMLEX and USMLE might be similar and the tests might have some predictive value of one another's scores, but for now, each camp has reason to hold onto the assessments of its own schools' unique curricula as an important part of its profession's identity.

In the end, it's possible these board exams really are apples and oranges, but the trees need these fruit to help define what kind of flora they are. Thus, the licensing boards are really not that far off from the Bloods and the Crips in the way they want to maintain their character, distinctiveness, and unity among those who eat their fruit. Our best bet as D.O. students is to keep increasing our exposure and marketing our extremely special skills and philosophies, wrapped up with the beautiful red and blue ribbons of COMLEX scores, to all the residency programs we are interested in. The more we get out there, the more likely there will be greater acceptance of our D.O. ways and exam scores. Outreach and initiative will prove to others that both apples and oranges can be equally good to eat. Until then, we should continue to enjoy the deliciousness of being in the D.O. profession, keep devoting ourselves to the "bandana in the wind" ways of A.T. Still, and, if we run into anyone throwing up gang signs, help them see that red and blue can mix to make a brilliant shade of purple.

By OMS-III Emily Young, Predoctoral Research Fellow



Pictured (from left) are Charles Cascio, OPAC political director, OMS-III Emily Young OMS-I Deepal Darhia, OMS-I George Gray, OMS-II Stefanie Haynes, OMS-III Jason Hardwick, Dr. Rudy Moise, OMS-II Kobi Hano, OMS-I Erik Hoffman, and OMS-I Mark Liwanag.



*By OMS-II Stefanie Haynes
and OMS-II Kobi Hano*

SOMA Showcases Political Activism

Every year, in conjunction with the AOA's House of Delegates in Chicago, Illinois, the National Osteopathic Student Caucus (NOSC) serves as a forum to unify the voice of osteopathic medical students about matters concerning the osteopathic profession and education. At the convention, AOA resolutions are presented, debated, and voted on by Student Osteopathic Medical Association (SOMA) chapter leaders from each osteopathic medical school. The decisions made are then presented to the AOA by our voting members at the AOA House of Delegates.

Many of the resolutions discussed will directly impact the future of our student physicians here at NSU-COM, which is why topics such as tort reform, student loans, and safety were all discussed and voted on at the NOSC. A few important resolutions of note included Resolution H-206, which involved the availability of postgraduate medical education positions. We passed this resolution to support the AOA in encouraging all colleges of osteopathic medicine to make medical students aware of the potential shortage of postgraduate training positions and the effects this may have on their future profession.

Another resolution, H-633, opposed the provider tax some states are considering imposing on physicians in order to pay for Medicaid and other health care services. We voted to support that the AOA oppose any effort by a state or federal government to impose a provider tax of any kind. Lastly, we voted to support resolution H-636, which would put pressure on lawyers and society members to reduce frivolous lawsuits against physicians. As a component of tort reform, this would allow physicians who are victims of lawsuits to recover all out-of-pocket expenses, lost income, and damages for emotional pain and suffering as well as incorporate reprimand and sanction on lawyers who file frivolous lawsuits.

Overall, the NOSC gave students a chance to have a voice at the AOA House of Delegates on pertinent issues in medicine. "I really feel as though I made an impact on the decisions being made about our future as physicians" said OMS-II Stefanie Haynes in regard to being an NOSC voting member. "It is important to be a part of the discussion, rather than being left out of an important decision that could potentially affect the rest of our lives."

Not only are SOMA members getting students involved on a national level, but we also created a D.O. for Congress event on August 20 right here in South Florida. The recent congressional election season was an exciting time for the medical profession—and particularly for the osteopathic medical field. For the first time in history, two osteopathic physicians ran as congressional candidates, one in Nevada and the second right here in Florida's 17th congressional district: Dr. Rudolph "Rudy" Moise, who was born in Port-au-Prince, Haiti, and moved to the United States at age 17.

The college's SOMA chapter hosted the D.O. for Congress event with the help of Charles Cascio, who serves as director of political affairs and OPAC (Osteopathic Political Action Committee) of the American Osteopathic Information Association, which is the political arm and the sole political action committee representing osteopathic physicians on the federal level. Thanks to Cascio's help, a group of NSU-COM students representing the OMS-I, II, and III classes were able to get involved in Dr. Moise's campaign.

At his campaign office, the students advocated for a non-career politician to bring solutions to create more jobs and ensure health care reform works for the people of District 17 by bringing a new voice with real-world experience to Washington, D.C. Our students made a major contribution to Dr. Moise's campaign by manning the phones, knocking on doors, and participating in promotional motorcades.

Although Dr. Moise finished second in the primary election held in August, the continued need for engaged physicians and students is required to continue our efforts to improve the quality of health care.



Belinda Collias: Giving Back to a Nation in Need

We all know that medical school is a full-time job, with the graveyard shift included. However, it's also important for each of us to remember to maintain our side jobs, the ones that make us unique—such as being a parent, an athlete, or in my case, running a non-profit organization.

I began The MOSA Project with the help of my family and friends during the two years I spent in Lesotho as a Peace Corps Volunteer from 2007 through 2009. Lesotho is a tiny, mountainous kingdom, completely landlocked by the Republic of South Africa, which not many people know about despite its recent publicity for having one of the highest HIV/AIDS rates in the world.

Living in a one-roomed cinderblock house in a rural village up in Lesotho's highlands for two years taught me many things—how to survive without electricity, ride a donkey across a river, and speak a new language were among them—but the most important by far was the blatant realization of how unequal our world is.

As a Peace Corps Volunteer, I traveled to distant villages to do HIV education and prevention, worked at an AIDS clinic, and taught life-skills classes to teenagers. The hardest part of my job was bearing witness to my friends



and neighbors suffering the effects of poverty, HIV/AIDS, and endless challenges that hindered them from living to their fullest potential. It was devastating to see many of my brightest students leave school when they could not afford the fees, or little ones from the Children's HIV Center in my village pass away due to chronic malnutrition.

This prompted me to launch The MOSA Project—originally a sponsorship program by which my American friends could offer scholarships to disadvantaged high school students that were HIV-positive or orphans. I have continued to run the organization from the United States with the help of my trusted colleagues and volunteers from the village who manage the program in Lesotho. We have now expanded aid to small children living with HIV and other community-building projects such as restoring rural elementary schools and building libraries.



The point is, people all over the world have the same basic aspirations—happiness, financial success, self-sufficiency, and family—sentiments common to all human beings. The sad fact is, only a select few had the sheer luck to be born in a wonderful country like ours, where dreams and opportunities are our reality. I feel we have a responsibility to offer a hand up, to share our abundant resources with those who don't have them, and to give them a chance at education, and a better future.

My goal is to continue The MOSA Project indefinitely and expand the programs to reach children in Lesotho through educational opportunities. Because I would like to get the NSU community involved, I'm excited to be presenting information to the college's Medical Outreach Committee about possibly adding a medical outreach trip to Lesotho in upcoming years. I welcome collaboration and sharing of ideas with like-minded individuals. For additional information or to help out, please visit The MOSA Project Web site at www.mosalesotho.org or email me at Belinda@aidforkids.org.

By OMS-I Belinda Collias

In Memoriam: Ruth Chery-Dimonnay



OMS-III Ruth Chery-Dimonnay, who also was pursuing her M.P.H. degree, passed away unexpectedly at the age of 25 during the weekend of July 10. She arrived on campus in the fall of 2007 after being accepted into the Master's in Biomedical Science program and quickly garnered admiration from her professors and respect from her peers for her good-natured attitude and peerless work ethic following her entrance into NSU-COM's class of 2012.

According to her peers, Chery-Dimonnay was one of the most active students in the college, serving in leadership positions in various organizations, including the Student National Medical Association (SNMA) and the Public Health Student Association (PHSA).

She served on the PHSA Executive Board in the role of co-health education and research chair and on the SNMA Executive Board in the role of fund-raising and activities co-chair.

A quote from an NSU faculty member about Chery-Dimonnay aptly sums up her attitude both within and outside of the classroom: "She was not ordinary, but extraordinary."

Students Receive American Osteopathic Foundation Acknowledgment

Three NSU-COM students—OMS-IV Candace White, OMS-III Hashem Azad, and OMS-II Aldene McClymont—were awarded grants from the American Osteopathic Foundation (AOF) Board of Directors for their academic excellence and commitment to the osteopathic profession.

Azad and White received Welch Scholars Grants, which are accompanied by \$2,000 cash awards and are presented annually to students who were selected by their colleges and approved by the American Osteopathic Foundation. Students are chosen based on their financial need, academic achievement, participation in extracurricular activities, and commitment to osteopathic medicine.

McClymont received the Russell C. McCaughan, D.O., Education Scholarship, which comes with a \$400 prize and is awarded to one osteopathic medical student from each AOA-approved college/school of osteopathic medicine. Recipients of this scholarship must be committed to osteopathic medicine, excel academically, and demonstrate financial need to cover the cost of their osteopathic education.



NEWS BRIEFS

A group of OMS-II students recently had the opportunity to travel to the Port of Miami to **tour the USS Iwo Jima aircraft carrier**. The students were invited to tour the ship by Ken Schor, D.O., M.P.H., of the National Center for Disaster Medicine and Public Health, while it was docked in Miami prior to embarking on a humanitarian relief mission that included 10 days in Haiti and additional missions in Central America. *Pictured (from left) are Ighel Vegue, Calvin Krom, Dan Murchison, Ben O'Neil, Zach Virgin, Lauren Westafer, Ashlie Arthur, James Hu, Sholem Palevsky, and Erin Nichol.*



On August 27, the **student chapter of the Association of Military Osteopathic Physicians and Surgeons (AMOPS) was treated to an insightful presentation on active duty military medicine by James Boyd, M.D., M.P.H.**, who serves as a colonel in the United States Air Force (USAF). The visit was coordinated by John Pellosie, Jr., D.O., M.P.H., FAOCOPM, assistant professor of preventive medicine and public health and chair of the Department of Preventive Medicine, who is a former USAF senior flight surgeon and graduate of the USAF residency in aerospace medicine.

Col. Boyd, who serves as chief of flight medicine at the Air Force Special Operations Command located at Hurlburt Air Force Base in Okaloosa County, Florida, graciously flew his own aircraft from North Florida to make his engagement at NSU-COM. During his presentation, Col. Boyd answered questions and provided a brief personal history of his military career and experiences, especially within flight medicine as well as through deployments into combat areas, and covered topics such as military residencies, pay scale, and what to expect from military life. *Pictured (from left) are Dr. John Pellosie, Col. James Boyd, and OMS-II Charles Blackwell, president of the college's AMOPS chapter.*





CONSORTIUM FOR EXCELLENCE IN MEDICAL EDUCATION

Larkin Hospital Affiliation Reaps Residency Training Rewards

Thanks to its affiliation with Larkin Community Hospital in South Miami, NSU-COM will be providing additional residency training opportunities for medical school graduates in the coming years through its Consortium for Excellence in Medical Education.

Larkin, which recently established both a family practice and a psychiatry residency program, is planning to add new residency programs in the areas of neuromusculoskeletal medicine, physical medicine and rehabilitation, and internal medicine in 2011. In 2012, the hospital plans to unveil new residency programs in general surgery, anesthesiology, and neurology.

These new postgraduate programs will be complemented with the establishment of the only hospital-affiliated neuromusculoskeletal outpatient center featuring non-interventional osteopathic manipulation treatments for back pain and other neuromusculoskeletal ailments in Miami-Dade County. Currently, Miami-Dade County citizens are traveling to the NSU Davie campus in Broward County to receive these types of services.

Largo Medical Center Earns Statutory Teaching Hospital Status

In August, Largo Medical Center (LMC), which serves as NSU-COM's West Coast Academic Center, was designated as a statutory teaching hospital by the Florida Agency for Health Care Administration. "This is indeed a monumental achievement for Largo Medical Center, as we become the eighth such designated facility in the state of Florida and the only osteopathic program to have such designation in the state," said Richard H. Satcher, LMC president and chief executive officer.

"I must commend and congratulate Dr. Anthony Ottaviani, Betsy Bomar, Christine Hanna, the entire GME staff, and our program directors and teaching faculty for their hard work, due diligence, and never-say-never attitude," he added. "As we further develop our teaching programs and initiatives, we will take full advantage of and respectfully uphold our position as a statutory-designated teaching hospital."

Bethesda Welcomes NSU-COM Students

Bethesda Memorial Hospital in Boynton Beach, Florida, which has served as a clinical training site for NSU-COM students over the past five years, recently welcomed 10 class of 2012 students who will spend their time doing one- and two-month rotations with members of Bethesda's medical staff in both hospital and office settings. Areas of rotation include internal medicine, obstetrics/gynecology, pediatric ER, outpatient pediatrics, family medicine, surgery, psychiatry, geriatrics, and emergency medicine.

PBCGME Announces New Psychiatry Residency

The Palm Beach Centre for Graduate Medical Education (PBCGME) recently had its new psychiatry residency accredited by the American Osteopathic Association. The residency, which involves an affiliation with the West Palm Beach VA Medical Center, is based at University Hospital and Medical Center in Tamarac and will officially launch on July 1, 2011.

PBCGME also will be establishing a combined internal medicine/pediatrics residency training program next year that will be based out of PBCGME/Columbia and PBCGME/Palms West Hospitals, as well as a palliative care fellowship that will be linked to Columbia's internal medicine residency program. PBCGME is now accredited for 109 training positions in 8 different programs.

In addition, PBCGME/Palms West Hospital and Miami Children's Hospital have entered into an affiliation to provide pediatric emergency care in Palm Beach County. Starting October 1, 2010, physicians from Miami Children's Hospital's emergency room will be providing pediatric care at Palms West Hospital. This affiliation will not only enhance the already exceptional level of pediatric emergency room care at Palms West Hospital, but also provide outstanding opportunities for PBCGME residents training in its pediatrics, IM/PEDS, and emergency medicine programs. PBCGME also has an affiliation with Miami Children's Hospital for its dermatology fellowship.

Slovak Medical Students Complete Four-Week Rotation at NSU-COM



Slovak students Martin Sangala and Ivana Suchaova watch as Dr. Favreau confers with a dermatology patient.

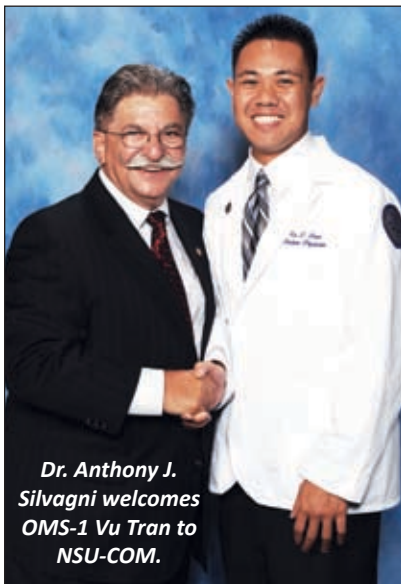
Two fifth-year medical students from Comenius University in Bratislava, Slovakia, completed a four-week primary care rotation in the osteopathic manipulative medicine and dermatology clinics located at NSU's Sanford L. Ziff Health Care Center. **Ivana Suchaova** and **Martin Sangala** were the first students to visit the United States under a memorandum of agreement

between NSU-COM and Comenius University Faculty of Medicine.

Although the medical school curriculum in Slovakia is delivered in the English language, students rarely receive an opportunity to converse in the language, so this rotation provided Sangala and Suchaova with the opportunity to speak English on a daily basis.

During their stay, the Slovak students studied under the guidance and leadership of Tracy Favreau, D.O., assistant director of clinical dermatology, and Mark Sandhouse, D.O., associate professor and chair of the Department of Osteopathic Principles and Practice, while Cecilia Rokusek, Ed.D., executive director of education, planning, and research and Slovak Honorary Consul for Florida, graciously hosted the students at her home. The students described their NSU-COM experiences as "outstanding," "enriching," and "memorable."

White Coat Ceremony: Class of 2014 Joins Osteopathic Family



Dr. Anthony J. Silvagni welcomes OMS-1 Vu Tran to NSU-COM.

On August 8, the class of 2014 was officially welcomed into the osteopathic profession at the **30th Annual White Coat Ceremony**, which was held at NSU's University Center. For the 247 students comprising the class of 2014, the White Coat Ceremony served as an auspicious experience that officially marked their entry into the medical profession.

In the presence of family, guests, and faculty members, the students were welcomed into the medical community by leaders of the osteopathic profession and ceremonially "cloaked" with their white coats. By establishing this meaningful ritual at the beginning of medical school, the intent is to make students aware of

their responsibilities from the first day of training and convey the message that doctors should "care" as well as "cure."

Key Knowledge Imparted at Rural Medicine Retreat

On June 18-20, the college's Department of Rural Medicine hosted its annual conference and recognition weekend for physicians, physician assistants, nurses, and administrators from its network of rural/underserved training partners. These clinical centers participate in the education of NSU-COM medical students and afford them the opportunity to render service in medically underserved communities.

The **Rural Medicine Retreat**, held at the Lago Mar Resort Hotel and Club in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, was coordinated and hosted by James Howell, M.D., M.P.H., professor and chair of the rural medicine department, and Delia Celestine, M.P.H., assistant professor of public health and rural medicine administrative director. The retreat, which is part of the college's AHEC mission to extend academic resources to rural/underserved safety net sites throughout the state, brings NSU-COM faculty members together with primary care physicians and other providers from various community health centers, the Florida Department of Corrections sites, and private physicians' offices to provide continuing education on vital health issues.

A number of germane topics and hands-on demonstrations were presented at this year's retreat, including

- "Acute Care of the Elderly" – Naushira Pandya, M.D., CMD
- "Practical OMT in the Field" – David Boesler, D.O., M.S.
- "Developing the AHEC Tobacco Cessation Program at Your Site" – Dennis Penzell, D.O., M.S.
- "Teaching in the Clinical Setting" – Janet Hamstra, Ed.D.
- "AHEC Update" – Steven Zucker, D.M.D., M.Ed.
- "Treatment of Depression in Primary Care" – Raymond Ownby, M.D., Ph.D., M.Ed., M.B.A.



Dr. Boesler demonstrates an osteopathic manipulative treatment for a Rural Medicine Retreat participant.

NSU-COM Earns High Social Mission of Medical Education Ranking

In a report titled “The Social Mission of Medical Education: Ranking the Schools” published in the June 15 issue of the *Annals of Internal Medicine*, **NSU-COM ranked in the top 30 nationally** in regard to producing primary care physicians, having a strong social mission, and producing quality physicians who work in health professional shortage areas.

In the report, 141 U.S. osteopathic (D.O.) and allopathic (M.D.) medical schools were ranked based on the Medical Education Futures Study, which evaluated the colleges on their contributions to the social mission of the country’s medical education system. The study’s authors evaluated 60,043 physicians in active practice, who graduated between 1999 and 2001. Data were analyzed to rank the physicians’ alma maters in areas such as primary care physician output, physicians practicing in health professional shortage areas output, and ratio of underrepresented minority graduates. The scores were then tabulated to create a composite social mission score for the medical schools.

NSU’s College of Osteopathic Medicine ranked in the top 30 in the following categories:

- **No. 20** – Health Professional Shortage Area Physician Output
- **No. 27** – Social Mission Score
- **No. 29** – Primary Care Physician Output

The study was widely covered in the popular media, where a variety of stories focused on the fact that such prestigious institutions as Vanderbilt (ranked last in the study), Stanford (ranked



No. 123), and Duke (ranked No. 124) fared poorly. The study was funded by the Josiah Macy, Jr., Foundation. In their analysis, the researchers utilized data from the American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine, the Association of American Medical Colleges, and the American Medical Association.

Osteopathic Medical School Grad Numbers Continue to Rise

In the spring of 2010, **U.S. osteopathic medical schools graduated 3,845 seniors**—a number that has grown steadily over the past decade. These graduates will help mitigate the nation’s physician workforce shortage as the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (PL 111-148) and the Health Care and Education Reconciliation Act (PL 111-152) are implemented. Provisions in these acts are expected to allow coverage for a projected 32 million uninsured Americans.

The number of osteopathic medical school applicants has risen from 8,396 in 2000 to more than 13,380 in 2010. Over the past 10 years, total enrollment at the nation’s colleges of osteopathic medicine (COMs) has grown from 10,388 students to more than 18,000. As a result of the

recent significant growth, the number of new doctors of osteopathic medicine (D.O.s) has increased annually since 1999 when just 2,169 seniors graduated from the nation’s COMs.

Twenty percent of new U.S. medical students are training to be D.O.s. There are currently 26 schools of osteopathic medicine offering instruction at 34 locations in 25 states; by 2015, COMs will graduate more than 5,300 osteopathic physicians. As the numbers of osteopathic medical schools, applicants, and students grow, osteopathic medical school graduates will constitute an increasingly larger percentage of the nation’s physician workforce.

The American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine (AACOM) recently conducted a survey of the

2009 graduating seniors at the nation’s COMs. The findings include data on self-reported graduating student debt, students’ satisfaction with their medical education, and graduate medical education and career plans. Of special note: 24 percent of respondents consider themselves most likely to work in a primary care specialty (defined as family practice, internal medicine and pediatrics). Fourteen percent of respondents plan to pursue emergency medicine.

For more information, please visit <http://www.aacom.org/about/fastfacts/Pages/default.aspx>.

(Source: AACOM)



Pediatric Club and Sigma Sigma Phi Spread a Little Sunshine

By OMS-II Jennie Berkovich, Peds PALS Chair, and OMS-II Courtney Allen, Pediatric Club President

When OMS-III Angela Fickel first contacted Broward General Medical Center's Child Life Department in August 2009, it was simply to inquire about having medical students from NSU-COM's Pediatric Club volunteer at Chris Evert Children's Hospital in Fort Lauderdale. Each month, a club member was responsible for organizing, scheduling, and initiating an event at the hospital, which ranged from arts-and-crafts activities to holiday-themed projects. As the volunteering grew and the events became more frequent, Fickel named the program **Peds PALS (Peds Provides a Little Sunshine)**.

Last year, the Pediatric Club joined forces with the college's Sigma Sigma Phi student chapter, which allows the organizations to work together via two co-chairs, who organize and plan a Peds PALS event each month and invite members of both groups to participate. "Once I was accepted into Sigma, I wanted the program to be a joint one between Peds and Sigma to encourage more volunteers and events for the children since I know how much they enjoy having us visit" said Fickel.

According to OMS-II Matt Uhde, who serves as Sigma Sigma Phi president, "One of the missions of Sigma is to foster community involvement, and Peds PALS is a perfect venue through which we can get involved and give back," he explained.

Medical students typically spend between one to two hours in a designated pediatric ward. Some students stay in a play area, assisting children with the day's activity. Others visit patients in their rooms, bringing the activity to the children. Projects have ranged from trick-or-treat bag decorations and hand turkeys to animal masks and homemade piggy banks. This year, Peds PALS has expanded to serve Baptist Children's Hospital in Miami and Joe DiMaggio Children's Hospital in Hollywood.

As the program continues to grow, it benefits not just the patients, but the students who come to volunteer. "Even if I only get to see just one kid smile when we are at the hospital, I know we have

done something good," said Courtney Allen, who serves as Pediatric Club president. "Sitting in a classroom, it is often easy to lose track of the reasons we entered osteopathic medicine. Sitting in a child's hospital room and hearing laughter serves as a reminder of the true nature of compassion, osteopathic philosophy, and the strength of a child's spirit."

For more information on Peds PALS, please visit <http://medicine.nova.edu/aboutus/peds-pals.html>.

NEWS BRIEFS

On July 22, longtime dean's office employee **Edith Charpentier** left the college to open up her own home health agency and pursue a nursing degree. Charpentier, pictured second from left, who served as assistant to the director of administrative operations, was honored at a farewell party that included (from left) fellow dean's office personnel *Yennifer Ceron* (administrative assistant), *Johneta Goodwin* (director of administrative operations), *Mirlyn Hurry* (assistant to the dean), and *Annette Clarke, M.B.A.* (program specialist and faculty credentialing).



Thanks to the expertise of **John Pellosie, Jr., D.O., M.P.H., FAOCOPM**, assistant professor of preventive medicine and public health and chair of the Department of Preventive Medicine, NSU is now home to the **Aviation Medical Examiner Clinic**, which provides Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Class II and Class III flight physicals.

The clinic, which is located at the university's Sanford L. Ziff Health Care Center in Davie, will be overseen by Dr. Pellosie, who has been designated by the FAA as an aviation medical examiner to conduct flight physicals. All pilots are required to get flight physicals to assure they are able to safely pilot an aircraft without being a hazard to the public, passengers, or themselves.



Melnick Memories: Looking Back...at Some Applicants

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

One of the most interesting—yes, sometimes frustrating—aspects of medical school administration is the opportunity to interview applicants. When we look back, we realize that these applicants come in three sizes:

good, bad, and run-of-the-mill. And for anyone who has engaged in this process, there are always some memorable or illustrative ones. Here are a few of mine.

Early on, before this type of question was banned, Mort Terry asked a candidate, “How are you going to pay for your schooling?” Immediately, the young man replied, “Oh, my father promised to take care of all my bills. Plus, my uncle said he would help out if there were any problems.” That satisfied the interviewers, until the applicant rose to leave, then turned back and asked, “By the way, where is the Financial Aid Office?”

On another occasion, which involved our dental school, it illustrates a specific point so well. An applicant had arranged a preliminary meeting with the dean, who advised him to go through the usual application procedures. After this young man was interviewed by the committee, he was then assigned to a student/guide to give him a tour of the school and answer questions. At one point, the student guide, attempting to describe something the applicant would encounter in school, said, “If you get accepted...” The applicant stopped him in mid-sentence, and in good braggadocio style, interjected, “Not IF I get accepted; it’s WHEN I get accepted.” Fortunately, this outburst was reported back to the committee, and there was no IF or WHEN—he was rejected. Arrogance rarely pays off.

Of course, not every candidate acts this way. One osteopathic applicant, a Florida resident, in answering a question at his interview, casually “dropped” the name of an osteopathic physician to promote his candidacy. The name was that of a former colleague of mine in Philadelphia and a longtime personal friend. Wondering about the connection between a Florida applicant and a Philadelphia physician, I asked, just as casually, “How do you know Dr. X?” Being an honest person (as I assumed then and later confirmed), he replied, “I don’t really know him, but I know his daughter well and she said I could use his name.” (In addition, the daughter had been a pediatric patient of mine.) What honesty! I then explained my relationships with Dr. X (to the amusement of the rest of the interview team), and I think he quietly breathed a sigh of relief. We accepted him; he did well and is now a successful practitioner in Florida.

Philosophic postscript: The contrast between the last two incidents is obvious. The major purpose of an interview is to evaluate the “person” as an individual and as a human being, not to review the credentials. Having been called in for an interview tells us that he/she probably has the ability to do medical school work. Nor do we interview to ask vapid or self-serving questions. It is to determine, as far as humanly possible, what kind of doctor an applicant would make and whether we would want this individual in our school.

Or as our founder Dr. Mort Terry always said, “Would I be willing to send my mother to this applicant?” So far, we’ve done pretty well.

(Dr. Melnick is the founding dean of Southeastern College of Osteopathic Medicine (now NSU-COM). His insightful columns serve as a humorous and important bridge to the past and remind us of how far our college has come in a relatively short period of time.)



LIBRARY LINK Getting to Know... Kaye Robertson



When **Kaye Robertson, M.L.S.**, executive director of the Health Professions Division (HPD) Library, is asked why she decided to work in libraries, she answered quickly by saying, “I was born to be a librarian. I always knew I wanted to be in a profession to help others, and librarianship provided that outlet for me.”

Robertson, who has two grown children, said she always liked to read and that her school library was a welcoming place. At age 15, she became a library aide at her local high school, which is an experience that increased her commitment. Library science, at that time, was not available as an undergraduate college major, so she studied education at Eastern Illinois University and then went on to earn her master’s degree in library science at the University of Illinois. In 2000, she joined NSU as a reference librarian and brought with her 30 years of experience in public school libraries in Illinois, Georgia, and Ohio.

Since being appointed executive director of the HPD Library in 2005, Robertson has expanded the library’s services. She is responsible for all areas of library operation, including budget and personnel, and sees the director’s role as the person who sees “the big picture” and takes the “broader view.” She feels it is important to know what her staff members are doing and make sure they have the support they need.

One of the biggest challenges Robertson finds in managing the HPD Library is keeping pace with ever-increasing technological changes and being able to provide the information users need in the format they desire. “We have ejournals, ebooks, indexes, and other reference materials that should not stand alone on the library’s Web site,” she explained. “Rather, electronic learning provides the library with an opportunity to integrate library collections and services into the virtual and physical classrooms.”

The challenge of creating a user-friendly library atmosphere where students and faculty members feel comfortable seeking information and where staff members like coming to work keeps Robertson motivated. She enjoys helping people and appreciates the feeling that her work makes a positive difference each day.



Jay Fleisher, Ph.D., associate professor of public health, was quoted in a June 30 article entitled “Summer Bummer: Ocean Swimming Can Make You Sick” that was featured on *msnbc.com*. He also coauthored an article entitled “Traditional and Molecular Analyses for Fecal Indicator Bacteria in Non-Point Source Subtropical Recreational Marine Waters” that was published in *Water Research*, which is a journal of the International Water Association. In addition, he coauthored an article entitled “Survey of Tobacco Control Among Florida Dentists” in a recent issue of the *Journal of Community Health*.

Robert Hasty, D.O., FACOI, assistant professor of internal medicine and program director of the Palmetto General Hospital Internal Medicine Residency Program, had his article entitled “Seven Considerations for Moving to the Electronic Health Record (EHR)” published on the American Osteopathic Association Web site.

Robin Jacobs, Ph.D., assistant professor of preventive medicine and psychiatry, coauthored several articles that are being published in four separate publications. They are: “Perceptions About Homelessness, Elders, and Community Responsibility” in *Educational Gerontology*; “Depression, Care, and Prevalence in HIV-Positive Individuals” in the *Journal of Neurobehavioral HIV Medicine*, coauthored with **Raymond Ownby, M.D., Ph.D., M.Ed., M.B.A.**; “Factors Associated with Favorable Attitudes

Towards End of Life Planning” in the *American Journal of Hospice and Palliative Medicine*, coauthored by **Heather Ruff** (OMS-III and research fellow), **M. Isabel Fernandez, Ph.D.**, **G. Stephen Bowen, M.D., M.P.H.**, and **Hilary Gerber** (OMS-III and research fellow); and “Development of an Easy to Use Tool to Assess Adolescents’ HIV Treatment Readiness in Clinical Care Settings” in *AIDS and Behavior*, coauthored by Dr. Fernández and the Adolescent Medicine Trials Network.

Ian Jeffries, M.D., clinical associate professor of pediatrics, was invited to present his poster on “Short-Term Outcomes with Use of Chlorhexidine Gluconate and Povidone-Iodine in VLBW Infants with Percutaneously Placed Central Venous Catheters” at the 3rd Congress of the European Academy of Paediatric Societies held October 23-26 in Copenhagen, Denmark.

Kenneth Johnson, D.O., FACOOG, chair and associate professor of OB/GYN and director of the NSU Women’s Health Center, coauthored an article with Mark B. Sobell, Ph.D., and Linda Carter Sobell, Ph.D., from the Center for Psychological Studies. The article, entitled “Using One Question to Identify Women at Risk for an Alcohol-Exposed Pregnancy,” was published in the July issue of the *Journal of the American Osteopathic Association*.

Leonard A. Levy, D.P.M., M.P.H., professor of family medicine/public health and associate dean of educa-

tion, planning, and research, discussed the topic “Training Primary Care Providers to Assume a Role in Genetic/Genomic Medicine” at the 13th Annual National Coalition for Health Professional Education in Genetics (NCHPEG) on September 23 in Bethesda, Maryland. The NCHPEG is a national effort to promote health professional education and access to information about advances in human genetics and genetic medicine. Among its founders are the American Medical Association and the National Human Genome Research Institute (NHGRI) of the National Institutes of Health (NIH). Dr. Levy serves as a member of the NIH-NHGRI panel called Developing a Blueprint for Primary Care Physician Education in Genomic Medicine, which is trying to facilitate the training of primary care providers in genetic/genomic medicine.

Naushira Pandya, M.D., CMD, professor and chair of the Department of Geriatrics, made numerous local, national, and international presentations on geriatric-related topics throughout the summer. These include lectures on “Delirium and Acute Care of the Elderly” for Broward Homebound Program care managers, “COPD in Long-Term Care Residents” for the National Association Directors of Nursing Administration, “Diabetes in Long-Term Care” for the New Jersey Medical Directors Association, and “Collaboration of Academia and an Area Agency to Promote Geriatric Education” at the National Association of Area Agencies in

Aging 35th Annual Conference. She also traveled to Tabor, Czech Republic, to participate in the 25th World Congress of the Society of Arts and Sciences, where she lectured on “Geriatrics Fellowship Training: Slovak and U.S. Comparisons” and “Diabetes Management in the Elderly” and served as panelist to discuss “Current Issues in Geriatric Medicine Across the Atlantic” and “Educational Challenges in Geriatric Education: Comparison Between U.S., Czech, and Slovak Education.” Additionally, Dr. Pandya was reelected to the board of directors of the American Federation for Aging Research Florida Affiliate and appeared on the cable TV program *Spotlight on Seniors* that is produced by the Aging and Disability Resource Center of Broward County to discuss “Falls and Their Effect on Elders.”

Cecilia Rokusek, Ed.D., executive director of education, planning, and research, along with Dr. Pandya and **Sona Hromulak, M.Sc., M.B.A.**, administrative project manager for the college’s GREAT GEC, served as panelists (see Dr. Pandya’s information above) at the 25th World Congress of the Society of Arts and Sciences in Tabor, Czech Republic. Dr. Rokusek also presented two papers entitled “Nutrition for Positive Aging: A Comparison to the U.S. and the Czech and Slovak Republics” and “Volunteerism for Emergency Situations: Lessons Learned and Translated Across the Atlantic.” **Diane Ede-Nichols, D.M.D. M.P.H.**, adjunct associate professor of public health,



OMS-II Kasprzak



Dr. Levy



Dr. Ownby



Dr. Pandya



Dr. Rokusek



OMS-II Tonsor



OMS-III Wong

also presented a paper at the conference on “Current Research in Dental Medicine.”

Students

OMS-II Michael Kasprzak had his abstract entitled “Engineering a Waste-Management Nuclease to Overcome Melanomas Resistance to Apoptosis” presented at the 2010 Pan American Society for Pigment Cell Research Conference in Vancouver, Canada, in September.

OMS-II Michael Tonsor coauthored an article entitled “Acute Responses to Estradiol Replacement in the Olfactory System of ApoE-Deficient and Wild-Type Mice” that was published in the July 2010 issue of *Brain Research*.

OMS-III Richard Wong coauthored a paper entitled “Psychosocial Functioning Among HIV-Affected Youth and Their Caregivers in Haiti” during his research fellowship at Harvard Medical School in 2009. The paper was published in the March 2010 issue of *AIDS Patient Care and STDS*.

Residents



Dr. Moore

Julian Moore, D.O., a third-year resident in the NSU-COM/Broward General Medical Center Dermatology Residency, received the national Daniel

Koprince, D.O. Educational Award in Dermatology for his clinical case presentation on “Bullous Sweets Syndrome” at the annual American Osteopathic College of Dermatology Mid-Year Meeting and Scientific Seminar held in Sedona, Arizona, on April 15.

The Koprince Award, touted as the highest honor for a resident in dermatology, is a highly coveted accolade reserved for one outstanding resident case presentation each year. After careful review by the evaluation committee, Dr. Moore was selected from more than 100 applicants as the award’s recipient.

The case presentation came as a result of a dermatology consult from Broward General Medical Center. Sweets syndrome, also known as acute febrile neutrophilic dermatosis, is an uncommon condition and can be an indication of more serious underlying conditions, including an association with hematologic malignancy. Dr. Moore quickly realized the gravity of the consult and, along with his colleagues, effectively diagnosed and treated the patient.

“Dr. Moore’s achievement is testament to the quality of our residency training program, highlighting the rich clinical experience that benefits our dermatology residents throughout their years of training at Nova Southeastern University and Broward General Medical Center,” said Stanley Skopit, D.O., who serves as director of the residency training program. “We are proud that Dr. Moore represents our residency training program and hospital.”

In June, three individuals—**Samantha Alford-Morales, M.D., M.P.H.**, **Tanvir Mahtab, M.D., M.P.H.**, and **Pedro Oyuela, M.D., M.P.H.**—graduated from the NSU-COM/Palm Beach County Health Department Preventive Medicine/Public Health Residency.

Under the supervision of Alina Alonso, M.D., director of the Palm Beach County Health Department, Ron Wiewora, M.D., M.P.H., director of the residency program, and John Pellosie, D.O., M.P.H., FAO-COPM, chair of the NSU-COM Department of Preventive Medicine, the graduates presented their final research projects. Gabriel Suci, Ph.D., M.S.P.H., associate professor of public health and chair of the Preventive Medicine Research Oversight Committee, mentored the graduating residents on their concluding projects, which are listed below.

“Weight-Related Health Behaviors (WRHB) in High School Students of Palm Beach County (PBC) 2005-2009”

presented by

Samantha Alford-Morales, M.D., M.P.H.

“Analysis of Results from a Substance Abuse Prevention Program for Adolescents in Palm Beach County”

presented by

Tanvir Mahtab, M.D., M.P.H.

“Childhood Brain Tumors in Florida: A Harmless Analysis”

presented by

Pedro Oyuela, M.D., M.P.H.

Behavioral Health Promotion Program

At the invitation of the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), **G. Stephen Bowen, M.D., M.P.H.**, professor of preventive medicine/public health and assistant director of the Behavioral Health Promotion Program, attended the biannual meeting of the Ryan White CARE Act grantees in Washington, D.C., on August 23-25. The meeting commemorated 20 years of leadership and service of the legislation, which was passed by the U.S. Congress in 1989 to provide funds for outpatient medical care and support services for people living with HIV/AIDS in the United States. During the meeting, Dr. Bowen was recognized for his leadership from 1990-95 as the first director of the programs that provide hundreds of millions of dollars annually to cities and states, resulting in reductions in death rates and decreased virus transmission to children and adults.

In addition, from June 18 through July 3, Dr. Bowen traveled to Nigeria at the request of HRSA to participate as the clinical reviewer in an assessment of the HIV/AIDS treatment and prevention programs in the country, which are funded by the U.S. President’s Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR). Nigeria receives \$442 million annually in funds from PEPFAR to provide HIV testing for pregnant women and their



infants as well as medical care for children and adults with HIV and AIDS. The program review was conducted to provide guidance regarding program improvement for the Nigeria Ministry of Health, the Centers for Disease Control in Nigeria, and the Nigerian administrative coordinating partner—AIDS Prevention in Nigeria, LLC—and its partner—Harvard University, as the management of the programs in Africa transition from U.S. to in-country management. PEPFAR began in 2003 and has brought more than three million people into treatment with highly active anti-retroviral therapies. The U.S. Congress provides \$3.6 billion annually to support PEPFAR globally.

M. Isabel Fernandez, Ph.D., professor of public health/preventive medicine and director of the Behavioral Health Promotion Program, was one of five behavioral research scientists invited (along with health department representatives, community organization representatives, and advocates for people living with HIV) to a White House reception hosted by President Barack Obama on July 13. The reception celebrated and publicized the release of the National HIV/AIDS Strategy—the first-ever federal blueprint for control of the HIV epidemic in the United States. Dr. Fernandez had the opportunity to meet President Obama and discuss the strategy campaign with about 200 event attendees.

On April 26-27, Dr. Fernandez served as a featured speaker at the Fenway Institute in Boston, Massachusetts, during a national federally sponsored consultation on the “Sexual Health of Gay Men and Other MSM: HIV/STD Prevention Plus.” The meeting was sponsored by the National Institutes of Health and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention for the purpose of obtaining recommendations from national researchers and experts in prevention for men who have sex with men in the United States. Dr. Fernandez was the only speaker in attendance to address the issue of Hispanic men who have sex with men.

Milestone Achievement: COM Faculty Members Pen Medical Book

Health Matters: The Human Side of Medicine

On July 23, a wine-and-cheese book-signing reception was held at the NSU Faculty Club to commemorate the publication of *Health Matters: The Human Side of Medicine*, which marks the first time in NSU-COM history a medical book was completely edited and authored by a cadre of its own faculty members.

The project was initiated in November 2009 when Cognella Academic Publishing approached Marti Echols, Ph.D., assistant professor of internal medicine and assistant dean of medical education, and Pablo Calzada, D.O., M.P.H., the college’s former assistant dean of clinical operations and graduate education, about its interest in having a book written regarding the humanistic side of medicine. After conferring with various NSU-COM administrators and faculty members, a conceptual idea was submitted to the publishing company, which loved the proposal.

Drs. Echols and Calzada, who served as the book’s co-editors and crafted its title, then approached faculty members that shared a common interest in the

topic and invited them to participate in the book’s writing. “We felt this was a wonderful opportunity for various faculty members to pen individual book chapters as well as strengthen faculty collegiality around a common focus,” Dr. Echols explained. “This truly was a group endeavor made possible by the NSU-COM faculty. It would not have been possible without everyone’s effort and the love and support of family and friends.”

In addition to Drs. Echols and Calzada, the following faculty members served as contributing authors: Paula Anderson-Worts, D.O., M.P.H., Ronald Bekic, D.O., David Boesler, D.O., M.S., Natasha Bray, D.O., Rebecca Cherner, D.O., Stanley Cohen, Ed.D., Raymond Ferrero III, J.D., James Howell, M.D., M.P.H., Heidi Lane, Ed.D., Leonard Levy, D.P.M., M.P.H., Krishnamurti Munoz, D.O., Robert Oller, D.O., Edward Packer, D.O., Naushira Pandya, M.D., CMD, Dennis Penzell, D.O., Cecilia Rokusek, Ed.D., Ariel Schumer, D.P.T., Eric Shamus, Ph.D., Daniel Shaw, Ph.D., Mark Stillman, Ph.D., Amber Stirlen, Psy.D., and David Thomas, M.D., J.D.



Attendees at the book-signing reception included (standing from left): David Boesler, D.O., M.S., Norma Lloyd, M.S. (cover image creator), Edward Packer, D.O., Amber Stirlen, Psy.D., Pablo Calzada, D.O., M.P.H., Daniel Shaw, Ph.D., Cecilia Rokusek, Ed.D., Mark Stillman, Ph.D., Dennis Penzell, D.O., George Hanbury II, Ph.D., Anthony J. Silvagni, D.O., Pharm.D., M.S., and Robert Oller, D.O. Seated (from left) are Marti Echols, Ph.D., Natasha Bray, D.O., Rebecca Cherner, D.O., and Paula Anderson-Worts, D.O., M.P.H.

NSU-COM RECEIVES OVER \$7 MILLION IN EXTERNAL FUNDING



Over the past several months, the college has received a number of new and continuation grants that are adding significant esteem to its already robust educational and community-service initiatives.

AHEC Acquires \$3 Million in Fiscal Support

The college's Area Health Education Centers (AHEC) Program received about **\$3 million** in one-year continuation funding for the 2010-11 fiscal year, including just over \$1 million from the Florida Department of Health to support the State AHEC Contract and another \$2 million from the Department of Health for the Tobacco Training and Cessation Contract. The latter funding will allow the AHEC Program to continue to develop tobacco training programs for health professions' students and community practitioners as well as bring tobacco cessation programming to its South and Central Florida service region.

GREAT GEC Receives \$2.1 Million in HRSA Funding

NSU-COM's Florida Coastal Geriatric Resources, Education, and Training Center (GREAT GEC) received a five-year, **\$2.1 million** grant from the Health Resources and Services Administration of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services to support the services and programs offered by the center.

The center, which is one of over 40 GECs in the United States, is using the grant to provide inter-professional training for health care professionals and students in geriatrics and eldercare throughout the region and is working with community-based partners in South and Southwest Florida. The grant also will be utilized to create a geriatric faculty development program for NSU faculty members who teach geriatrics and provide health care students with clinical geriatrics train-

ing in nursing homes, acute-care hospitals, ambulatory care centers, senior centers, and retirement communities.

The new grant also emphasizes research based on geriatric practices used by health care providers. Naushira Pandya, M.D., CMD, professor of geriatrics and GREAT GEC project director, will start a project to examine patients' abilities to follow guidelines provided by their physicians on personal diabetes care and management.

CBAP Earns \$1.6 Million Hazardous Materials Work Health and Safety Training Grant

In August, the college's Center for Bioterrorism and All-Hazards Preparedness (CBAP) was awarded a five-year grant totaling nearly **\$1.6 million** from the National Institutes of Health's Institute of Environmental Health Sciences to provide nationwide training for hazardous material work health and safety. CBAP is the only new program joining a network of other centers involved in hazardous waste material work safety training.

"This interdisciplinary grant is unique in that it provides targeted training for those in the oil/gas rig and platform industries," said Cecilia Rokusek, Ed.D., CBAP project director. "We submitted the grant in November 2009, and much to our surprise, we are now going to be talking not only about prevention but actual response and recovery to major accidents with hazardous wastes from the oil industry. The timing for this grant was ideal given the recent oil spill off the coast of Louisiana. We were hoping to train on prevention and preparedness, but now we need to add response and recovery when we are dealing with the oil industry. The needs are urgent and ongoing."

CBAP faculty and staff will be working with the maritime industry, law enforcement, and the oil industry in Florida, Louisiana, Missouri, and Virginia to better prepare workers for hazardous materials/hazardous waste management and disaster preparation. This includes the possibility of ships and ports becoming targets for terrorism. CBAP will contract with trainers initially and use the train-the-trainer model to engage trainers in each of the states to assure quality and sustainability. The project's overall goal is to provide safety and health training to those who

work in or with the maritime industry such as law enforcement and offshore workers that may encounter hazardous materials, including weapons of mass destruction, or who may respond to the cleanup of hazardous water.

In fact, the center has been working with one of its partners—Shell Oil Company in Robert, Louisiana—for the past two years on related all-hazards preparedness training programs, which prepare oil rig workers for spills. “This grant is a significant expansion of the training we have been doing with Shell Oil,” Dr. Rokusek said. “We wrote the grant long before the BP oil spill, so we had no idea that the need for this type of training would become so critical.”

Kelley Davis, Ph.D., associate professor of medical sciences and public health and a curriculum developer and trainer for CBAP, will serve as the project’s principal investigator and project director. “Her background in microbiology, immunology, fire safety, and law enforcement makes her the perfect interdisciplinary leader for this project,” Dr. Rokusek said.

The center hopes to train over 40,000 people during the five-year funding period who work in law enforcement and the maritime industry (i.e., workers and supervisors on ships, including cruise ships, docks, ports, oil/gas rigs, or oil/gas platforms) to react quickly to hazardous events and prevent danger to themselves and the community. CBAP will develop and adapt interdisciplinary curriculum focused on the maritime industry, law enforcement, and the oil/gas industry related to hazardous materials/hazardous waste and weapons of mass destruction.

According to Dr. Rokusek, “This grant not only enhances the scope and outreach of CBAP, but it further recognizes the ongoing leadership in the center in providing innovative and state-of-the-art training programs using interdisciplinary professionals from Florida and throughout the nation.”

Psychiatry Department Awarded \$1.35 Million Health Literacy Grant

The college’s Department of Psychiatry was awarded a four-year, **\$1.35 million** grant in August from the National Institutes of Health/National Heart, Blood, and Lung Institute to conduct research related to the development and validation of a computer-administered health literacy measure. The project’s long-term goal involves developing interventions to improve health literacy with patients in clinical practice to provide them with the tools they need to be effective and critical consumers of health care services.

Project objectives include developing a health literacy measure that will be computer-administered, acceptable to diverse groups, and psychometrically equivalent for Spanish- and English-speaking and older and younger persons. As the project progresses, the intention is to validate the new measure by assessing its relation to other measures of health literacy and to measures of reading comprehension, numeracy, and cognitive abilities as well as provide additional evidence of the new health literacy measure’s validity by relating scores on it to health-related quality of life, self-reported health status, and health care service utilization.

New Grant Proposals

“ARRA: Equipment to Enhance Training in Health Professionals”

Submitted by **Naushira Pandya, M.D., CMD**, chair of the Department of Geriatrics, to HRSA
Requested Amount: \$130,538

“ARRA: Equipment to Enhance Training in Health Professionals – Primary Care Training and Enhancement – Academic Administrative Units in Primary Care”

Submitted by **Leonard Levy, D.P.M., M.P.H.**, associate dean of education, planning, and research, to HRSA
Requested Amount: \$300,000

“BJA FY 10 National Initiatives: Enhancing Law Enforcement and Crime Prevention”

Submitted by **Kelley Davis, Ph.D.**, associate professor of medical sciences and public health, to the Bureau of Justice Assistance
Requested Amount: \$600,000

“Establishing the Teaching Scholar Academy: A Model for Schools of Osteopathic and Allopathic Medicine”

Submitted by **Marti Echols, Ph.D.**, assistant dean of medical education, to HRSA
Requested Amount: \$1,582,700

“A New Family Medicine Residency Program in South Florida Serving Diverse Medically Underserved Populations”

Submitted by **Joseph De Gaetano, D.O., M.S.Ed, FAAFP, FACOFP**, associate dean of clinical and graduate medical education, to HRSA
Requested Amount: \$2,022,084

“Nova Southeastern University Interprofessional Joint Degree Program (D.O. and M.P.H.)”

Submitted by **Cecilia Rokusek, Ed.D.**, executive director of education, planning, and research, to HRSA
Requested Amount: \$2,346,392

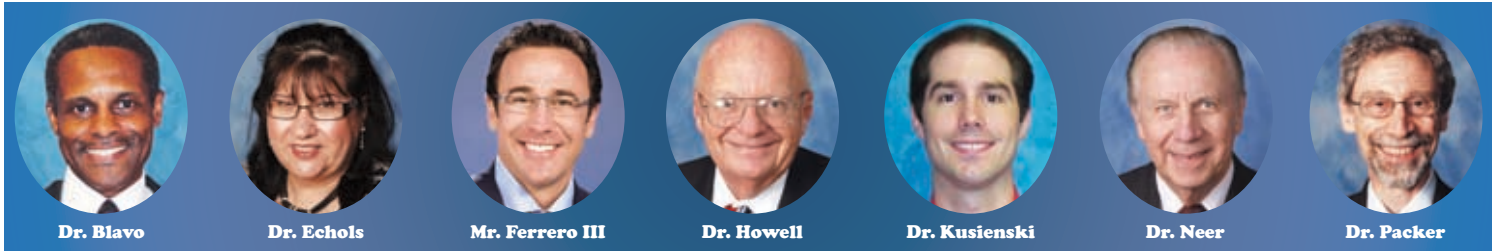
“Expanding Health Information Technology in Osteopathic Medical Education for Students and Practicing Professionals”

Submitted by **Leonard Levy, D.P.M., M.P.H.**, associate dean of education, planning, and research, to HRSA
Requested Amount: \$247,500

“Genetics in Primary Care Training Institute for Primary Health Care Providers (GPTCI)”

Submitted by **Leonard Levy, D.P.M., M.P.H.**, associate dean of education, planning, and research, to HRSA
Requested Amount: \$397,844

(HRSA - Health Resources and Services Administration)



Dr. Blavo

Dr. Echols

Mr. Ferrero III

Dr. Howell

Dr. Kusienski

Dr. Neer

Dr. Packer

Cyril Blavo, D.O., M.P.H. and T.M., FACOP, professor of public health/pediatrics and director of the Master of Public Health Program, was elected secretary of the Broward Regional Health Planning Council Board of Directors. He also was reappointed to a four-year term on the Florida Department of Health's Advisory Council on Genetics and Newborn Screening by the state's surgeon general, Ana M. Viamonte Ros, M.D., M.P.H.

Barry A. Doublestein, D.S.L., clinical assistant professor of family medicine, led the American College of Osteopathic Family Physicians' (ACOFF) Board of Governors through a strategic development session in early July entitled "Becoming a Strategic Leader" that resulted in six major actionable items being examined for implementation by the ACOFF.

Marti Echols, Ph.D., assistant professor of internal medicine and assistant dean of medical education, was appointed to the Association of American Medical Colleges' National Curriculum Project for Medical Education. The appointment is indeed an honor since Dr. Echols is the only one out of 10 appointees representing an osteopathic medical school. In this role, she will help develop a national curriculum database for medical education as well as other national medical education initiatives.

Raymond Ferrero III, J.D., associate professor of family medicine and HPD executive director for intramural health affairs, was interviewed on *Take12Radio.com/KHLT Recovery Broadcasting* in August, where he discussed issues relative to the Hal S. Marchman Alcohol and Other Drug Services Act of 1993, drug and alcohol intervention, assessment, and long-term treatment.

Faustino Gonzalez, M.D., FAAHPM, clinical assistant professor of internal medicine, was named a Fellow of the American Academy of Hospice and Palliative Medicine. He also was appointed vice president of medical affairs of Hospice of Palm Beach County and is serving as a reviewer for the *Journal of Hospice and Palliative Medicine*.

James Howell, M.D., M.P.H., professor of public health and chair of the Department of Rural Medicine, accepted an invitation to serve on the Florida Medical Association's Council on Public Health. He also was elected as chair of the Glades Rural Area Support Board, which governs Palm Beach County's newest hospital—Lakeside Medical Center.

Andrew Kusienski, D.O., assistant professor of osteopathic principles and practice and chair of the Department of Sports Medicine, was featured in an article entitled "What Are Esophageal Spasms?" that appeared on the *cbssports.com* Web site in June.

Morton Morris, D.O., J.D., FAOAO, FACOS, who passed away in 2008 and served as the HPD's executive dean for professional affairs, was posthumously honored in August with the Florida Board of Osteopathic Medicine's Board Chairman's Award. The accolade was bestowed "In recognition and commendation of his many years of outstanding contributions to the osteopathic medicine profession."

Deborah Mulligan, M.D., FAAP, FACEP, clinical professor of pediatrics and director

of the NSU-HPD Institute for Child Health Policy, received the Ralph A. Marrinson Lifetime Achievement Award in June from the Broward Regional Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Council and the Fire Chiefs Association of Broward County. The award honors individuals who have made significant contributions that foster the advancement of EMS by working closely with EMS to improve the delivery of pre-hospital care. She also was asked to serve on the Florida Medical Association's Task Force on Medicaid Reform.

Howard Neer, D.O., FACOFP, professor and associate dean of alumni affairs, was appointed to the City of Plantation's Health Facilities Authority.

Edward Packer, D.O., FAAP, FACOP, professor and chair of the Department of Pediatrics, organized and participated in the annual NSU Back to Schools physicals event held August 14 at the university's Sanford L. Ziff Health Care Center. Throughout the day, approximately 50 children received examinations related to medicine, dentistry, optometry, speech and hearing, and physical therapy and had their needed immunizations.

Moving on Up: Faculty/Staff Promotions

Over the past several months, the following faculty and staff members had the scope of their job responsibilities enhanced:

Lynne Cawley, M.Sc., was named director of student services and alumni services. In this enhanced role, she is managing the office of student services as well as overseeing the Office of Alumni Affairs in conjunction with Howard Neer, D.O., FACOFP, professor and associate dean of alumni affairs.

Yennifer Ceron, who has worked as an administrative assistant for both the College of Osteopathic Medicine and the College of Optometry since 2007, was named assistant to the director of administrative operations in the Office of the Dean.

Kenneth Johnson, D.O., FACOOG, associate professor of obstetrics and gynecology (OB/GYN) and director of the NSU Women's Health Center, was named chair of the Department of OB/GYN.

Naushira Pandya, M.D., CMD, chair of the Department of Geriatrics, has been promoted to the rank of professor.

John Pellosie, D.O., M.P.H., FAOCOPM, assistant professor of public health and chair of the Department of Preventive Medicine, was appointed to oversee the Master of Public Health and Master of Science in Biomedical Informatics programs as well as the Department of EMS Education and Training on an interim basis.

Albert Whitehead, D.M.D., M.Ed., M.B.A., assistant professor of family medicine, was named assistant dean of clinical operations and admissions. In this position, Dr. Whitehead is directly responsible for oversight and direction of the operation of the medical offices and the practice of medicine that occurs therein. Additionally, he is responsible for the development of policies and procedures pertinent to the college's admissions program.

IN MEMORIAM

A Life Well-Lived: Dr. Daniel Barkus

On June 30, Nova Southeastern University and the osteopathic medical profession lost a beloved professor, friend, and colleague when **Daniel Barkus, D.O., M.S., FACOOG**, passed away at the age of 77. Dr. Barkus' compassion, sensitivity, and professional dedication, coupled with his quick wit, well-honed intellect, and commitment to student education, made him a respected member of the faculty and administration.

Dr. Barkus, who served as chair of the College of Osteopathic Medicine's Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology (OB/GYN) since the college matriculated its first class in 1981 and was a member of the HPD Board of Governors, was the sole force behind the Department of OB/GYN during the college's formative years as he gave all the lectures and formulated the course curriculum.

After earning his D.O. degree from the Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine in 1959, Dr. Barkus completed his internship and residency training at Metropolitan Hospital in Philadelphia. Although he initially had planned to pursue a career in family medicine, the allure of OB/GYN soon proved irresistible.

Consequently, after spending several years working as part of an 18-man multi-specialty group in Dallas, Texas, Dr. Barkus relocated to South Florida to accept the chairmanship of the Department of OB/GYN at Osteopathic General Hospital in North Miami Beach and start his own practice.

"There's nothing in the world like OB/GYN," said Dr. Barkus in a 2001 interview for *COM Outlook* magazine. "There are all kinds of things we can do for people in medicine, but there's nothing like OB/GYN in my opinion—especially when you know your intervention is going to give somebody a normal life for maybe 70 or 80 years. There have been times when years after I worked in a clinic setting that patients would come up to me and proudly introduce me to one of their kids I had delivered. That's the rewarding part."

After spending nearly six productive decades working as an osteopathic practitioner, Dr. Barkus racked up enough career achievements to fill a movie-length reel of highlights. But his greatest sense of satisfaction always came from knowing he positively impacted the lives of current and future generations of osteopathic physicians.

Dr. Barkus leaves behind his beloved wife, Miriam, and two children—David and Lori.



Remembering a Beloved Colleague

*In remembrance of Dr. Daniel Barkus' long service to the college, the members of the **Faculty Rank and Promotion Committee** wish to recognize the contributions he made during his many years of participation as a member. It is difficult to adequately express all that Danny brought to our group efforts. It certainly was not just his dedication to the routine work commitment involved, but more importantly, it was all the other things he was ready to offer.*

None of us can ever exactly duplicate his subtle humor, his special brand of collegiality, his precise wordsmithing, his anecdotal commentary on a particular candidate, or his personal brand of wisdom that was always there when we couldn't quite find the right direction to go or the most tactful or equitable way to deal with a particularly sensitive issue. These are qualities that can never be precisely measured or fully recaptured at some future date when we are dealing with the work at hand. There will always be that moment that openly or to ourselves we will undoubtedly think, "I wonder how Danny would handle this or what would Danny suggest."

Every member of the committee has his or her own personal memories of Danny that each of us will be able to recall with a smile or a chuckle as the years go on. There is, however, one thing we will uniformly share: We will all miss our friend. It is with a deep sense of commitment that the Faculty Rank and Promotion Committee would like to offer in remembrance of Dr. Daniel Barkus this commendation for his service, dedication, and compassion during his long tenure as our colleague.

Introducing...New Faculty



Dr. Chipon



Dr. Combs



Dr. Hollar

Nadine Chipon-Schoepp, D.O., a 2007 NSU-COM alumna, joined the Department of Family Medicine as an instructor. She graduated from the NSU-COM/Palmetto General Hospital Family Medicine Residency Program in June 2010.

Angela Combs, D.O., a 2006 NSU-COM alumna who is serving as an instructor in the Department of Dermatology, received her D.O. degree from NSU-COM and completed her dermatology residency at Broward General Medical Center in June 2010.

Tatwig Guirguis, M.D., who will be joining the Department of Internal Medicine as an assistant professor, received his M.D. degree from the University of Alexandria Faculty of Medicine in Alexandria, Egypt, and was previously associated with Memorial Regional Hospital in Hollywood, Florida.

Lucas Hollar, Ph.D., assistant professor in the Master of Public Health Program, received his Ph.D. from Florida Atlantic University in 2008. Prior to joining the college, Dr. Hollar was associated with the Department of Government at Stephen F. Austin State University in Nacogdoches, Texas, where he organized and taught undergraduate and graduate classes in public health administration and policy.

Kristi D. Messer, M.S.W., M.P.H., assistant project director of the Center for Bioterrorism and All-Hazards Preparedness and assistant professor of public health, received her M.S.W. and M.P.H. degrees from the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill in 1994 and 1995, respectively. Prior to joining NSU-COM, Dr. Messer worked at the Bureau of Primary Health Care, which is a component of the Health Resources and Services Administration of the United States Department of Health and Human Services.

Dennis Penzell, D.O., who will be joining the Department of Internal Medicine as an associate professor, received his D.O. degree from New York College of Osteopathic Medicine and has been actively involved with the college's AHEC Program for several years. He also has been associated with NSU-COM for several years in his capacity as medical director of the Suncoast Community Health Centers, Inc. in Ruskin, Florida.

Cheryl Atherly Todd, M.D., assistant professor in the Department of Family Medicine, received her M.B.B.S. degree from the University of the West Indies School of Medicine. Dr. Todd, who is a Diplomat of the American Board of Family Medicine, completed a geriatric fellowship in 2009 and was associated with the Miami Veterans Administration Hospital/Jackson Memorial Hospital before joining NSU-COM.



Ms. Messer



Dr. Penzell



Dr. Atherly Todd

Dr. Bruce Peters Lends a Hand in Haiti

As images of the crisis in Haiti following last January's devastating earthquake continue to fade from people's consciousness, dedicated medical professionals such as Bruce Peters, D.O., FACOP, FAAP, are continuing to assist the crippled country.

In late June, Dr. Peters, who serves as professor of pediatrics and medical director of the NSU medical clinics, was invited by the James Wilson Bridges Medical Society to participate in a Haiti medical outreach trip. "I was part of a four-member group, in which I was the only pediatrician, that flew into Port-au-Prince and headed out to the neighboring villages and other parts of Haiti where there were orphanages that had not received health care," he explained.

During his several-day stay in Haiti, Dr. Peters and his cohorts provided health care at various orphanages as well as to impoverished residents living in tent cities located in the mountains and hills. "We brought medications and other needed supplies with us after identifying many children living in horrific conditions with multiple medical needs," he stated. "Some of the children were so bad that we had to transport them ourselves to the University of Miami tent hospitals for appropriate care to be provided.

"What was even sadder was the fact that after all the millions of dollars of support that supposedly went to Haiti, you couldn't tell where any of it went as the land and people still looked totally devastated, with no relief in sight," he added. "What little infrastructure the United Nations and other communities put in place wasn't enough as the devastation is everywhere."

Because many Haitians are still struggling to find food and shelter nearly nine months after the earthquake struck, some desperate mothers are dropping their children off at local orphanages and running away. During Dr. Peters' last day at one of the orphanages, a mother surreptitiously dropped off her young son and disappeared just as mysteriously. As a result, because the child's name was unknown, he was called 1550 (see below photo) until someone had the chance to name him. "This was a very common occurrence as the children ranged in age from 6 months to 21 years," Dr. Peters explained. "Fortunately, there were several homeless people living in the orphanage, and they became the only assistants to the owner to help run the shelter."

Because he is so committed to helping the people of Haiti, Dr. Peters plans to return to the island nation in the near future to help establish a school-clinic combination for several of the distant communities located near some of the orphanages.



NSU Overview: A Tradition

NSU Breaks Ground on New SEC in West Palm Beach



Earlier this year, NSU administrators and students as well as faculty and staff members attended a groundbreaking ceremony for the university's **new Student Educational Center (SEC) located in West Palm Beach**. The ceremony was held at the site of the new SEC at the intersection of Interstate 95 and Military Trail in Palm Beach Gardens, Florida.

The new 75,000-square-foot facility will feature 26 classrooms, 4 computer labs, a student lounge, a fitness area, a pharmacy library, a faculty prep area, and offices. Construction is expected to be completed by early 2011, and classes will be offered in the new facility by summer 2011.

"This new facility will allow us to expand our academic programs at this center," said NSU Chancellor Ray Ferrero Jr., J.D., in his remarks at the ceremony. "We plan to add programs that will meet the needs of the community, especially in the health professions. These additional programs will create new jobs for the area while also providing educational opportunities for its citizens. Providing access to quality higher education is part of our university's mission, and continuing that mission is why we are here to celebrate."

NSU's Student Educational Center in West Palm Beach currently has more than 1,400 students enrolled and offers bachelor's, master's, educational specialist, and doctoral degrees in numerous programs, including pharmacy, business, education, mental health counseling, and school psychology. NSU has had a presence in Palm Beach County for more than 35 years.

NSU to Build America's Largest Coral Reef Research Center

NSU's Oceanographic Center received a **\$15 million stimulus grant** from the federal government earlier this year to build America's largest coral reef research center—the **86,000-square-foot Center for Excellence for Coral Reef Ecosystems Science Research Facility**, which is expected to open in December 2011. NSU was among 12 universities out of 167 applying nationwide to receive the competitive and prestigious grant from the U.S. Department of Commerce and was one of two universities that received the full amount of \$15 million.

The university will more than match the federal grant with \$22 million to build the facility at the Oceanographic Center, which is located near the Atlantic Ocean in Dania Beach. The \$37-million facility is expected to create 22 new academic jobs and 300 construction jobs, employ 50 graduate students, and preserve 22 existing academic jobs. The goal is to expand research by current and new faculty researchers, visiting scientists, postdoctoral fellows, and graduate students.

"I am thrilled that Nova Southeastern University has this opportunity to continue its leadership role in Florida's and the nation's science and research economy," said NSU Chancellor Ray Ferrero, Jr., J.D. "This type of research infrastructure is urgently needed to support economic growth and environmental sustainability in our region."

Using the largest research grant in NSU's history, the center will be the only research facility in the nation dedicated to coral reef ecosystem research, which involves the reefs and their surrounding environment. It will have space for offices, laboratories that allow for research collaboration, training, and staging for fieldwork.



of Growth and Achievement

Dr. Margaret Malmberg Named Associate Provost of Newly Created Academic Division



Margaret Malmberg, Ph.D., who has been named NSU associate provost, is spearheading a newly created division comprising the university's Mailman Segal Institute, the Center for Psychological Studies, the Graduate School of Humanities and Social Sciences, and the Criminal Justice Institute.

Dr. Malmberg brings a wealth of knowledge and experience in academia, having previously served as associate dean at the University of Maine and director of its Hutchinson Center in Belfast, Maine. Most recently, she served as executive vice president and vice president for academic and student affairs at the National College of the Marshall Islands in the republic of the Marshall Islands—a developing nation approximately 2,500 miles southwest of Hawaii.

Dr. Malmberg received both her master's and Ph.D. degrees in Experimental Psychology from Texas Christian University and completed her postdoctoral studies in Higher Education Administration at Michigan State University and Harvard University.

Women's Golf Team Captures Back-to-Back National Championships

The NSU women's golf team capped off another magical season, this time with a 40-stroke victory over Rollins College at Longbow Golf Club in Arizona on May 15, to claim the NCAA Division II National Championships title for the second straight year.

"The season we just had is historic for NCAA Division II women's golf," said Kevin Marsh, head coach. "Nine team titles, including a conference and regional championship, eight individual titles, our fourth NCAA Division II National Player of the Year, our third NCAA Division II Freshman of the Year, and a team scoring average which was the lowest in Division II history. This is a season these girls and I will remember for the rest of our lives."

The defending national champion Sharks led from start to finish in the 72-hole event. NSU raced out to an eight-stroke lead after the first round of play and took control of the championships in the second round by firing a tournament-low team score of 285 to distance themselves by 29 strokes from the field. After gaining another six strokes in the third round, the Sharks punctuated their title by adding five more strokes to their lead in the final round to win by a total of 40 strokes.

While the team led from the start, three-time defending NCAA Division II National Player of the Year Sandra Changkija erased a four-shot final round deficit to win the first individual title in NSU women's golf program history. Changkija also qualified for the U.S. Women's Open, which was held July 9-12 at the Oakmont Country Club in Oakmont, Pennsylvania, by earning the fifth and final qualifying spot at the U.S. Women's Open Sectional Qualifier held May 24 at the Oaks Club in Osprey, Florida.



Pictured (from left to right) are: Amanda Brown, NSU women's golf team assistant coach; golfers Sandra Changkija, Taylor Collins, Maria Garcia-Austt, Nicole Whitmore, and Abbey Gittings; and Kevin Marsh, head coach.



INTEGRAL INTERVENTION: HPD Student Assistance Program Provides Crucial Support

*By Scott Colton
Director of Medical Communications*

HELP

Consider this sobering statistic: At any given moment in the United States, about 14 percent of the population, which totals over 310 million, suffers from some sort of substance abuse or addiction problem. That translates into an astounding 43.4 million people that cross all cultural, religious, and professional boundaries.

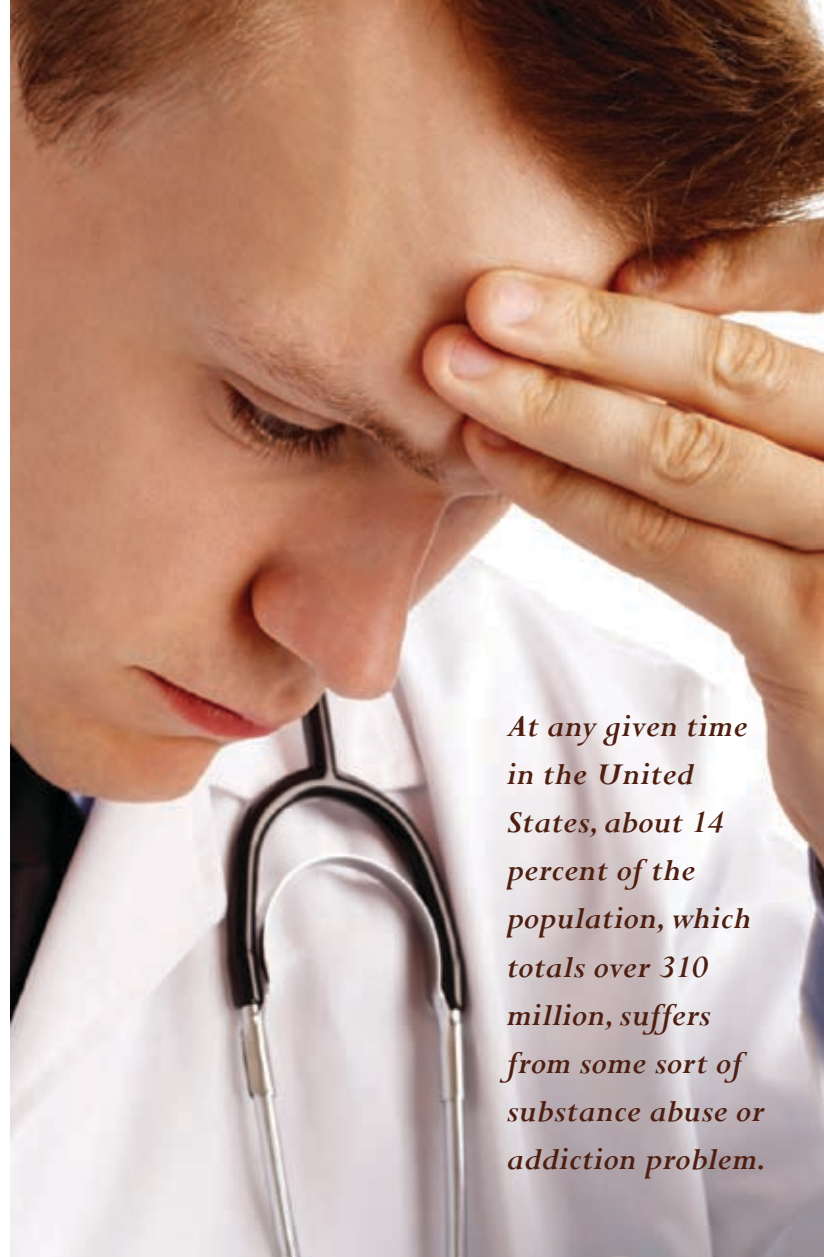
In the realm of health care education, this becomes an especially thorny issue since the wellbeing of the general public is at stake every time a physician, dentist, or other health care practitioner performs a procedure or makes a decision impacting the health of a patient. As a result, NSU and its Health Professions Division (HPD) have taken proactive measures to ensure its students are afforded both voluntary as well as mandatory interventional programs to deal with issues related to substance abuse, addiction, and mental health disorders.

“NSU provides a number of phenomenal student-related programs to assist in mental crisis and substance abuse-related issues,” said Raymond G. Ferrero III, J.D., associate professor of family medicine/public health and HPD executive director for intramural health affairs, who also serves as director of the HPD Student Assistance Program (SAP). “However, because we’re dealing with a very different type of student here in the Health Professions Division—those who will be working in areas where public safety is essential—we needed to establish a very specific assistance program that would meet the unique needs of the graduate and postgraduate student.”

Genesis of the SAP

When Ferrero joined the NSU-COM faculty in August 2003, one of his initial responsibilities was to revamp what was then called the Impaired Students Program, which was specifically geared for medical students. “At the time, the college’s dean, Dr. Anthony J. Silvagni, was engaged in discussions with the Physicians Resource Network, or PRN, which is an agency that provides monitoring services when a licensed medical professional has a substance abuse, behavioral, or health-related issue,” explained Ferrero, who was promoted to his current HPD position in 2008. “When I came aboard, there was talk of drafting legislation that would include students who would be working in the health professions field under the PRN umbrella of services, just as if they were licensed professionals.”

However, because the enacted legislation would have raised significant liability issues for a private university such as NSU, the decision was made to forego the PRN route, restructure the existing Impaired Students Program, and establish the Student Assistance Program. “Basically what I did was incorporate the best of what I believed PRN offers from a monitoring and outsourcing standpoint to create a model that best met the needs of the College of Osteopathic Medicine,” explained Ferrero, who serves as a non-disciplinary student resource. “We used the NSU-COM model as a pilot program to work out the kinks as to how it was going to operate. Once I felt the program was working



At any given time in the United States, about 14 percent of the population, which totals over 310 million, suffers from some sort of substance abuse or addiction problem.

effectively, I spoke to Dr. Silvagni and Dr. Fred Lippman about expanding it HPD-wide. By 2008, the program had gone through all the necessary checks and balances and had the university’s legal department approval, allowing it to become yet another student-oriented HPD resource.”

According to information provided in the college’s *Student Handbook*, “The objective of the Student Assistance Program is to assist students in need of substance abuse services in obtaining such services in order to: 1) protect the public welfare and 2) encourage those in need of substance abuse services to enter into recovery in order to maintain physical, psychological, and academic success within the Health Professions Division (HPD) and for the remainder of their lives. Any student enrolled in the HPD in need of substance abuse services is encouraged to voluntarily seek such assistance.”

Not surprisingly, the majority of students brought to Ferrero’s attention are referred through the student progress committees of the six HPD colleges. “Only about 1 out of 10 students will come asking for help voluntarily, mainly because of issues such as denial, fear, and concern that their

request for help might be revealed to either classmates and/or faculty,” he said. “If they fail to seek voluntary help, typically what happens is they’re being popped on a positive drug test during their clinical rotations, their grades have slid precipitously, or they’re exhibiting strange behavior—issues that are eventually brought to the attention of the college’s Student Progress Committee.”

Detailing the SAP Process

Whether a student has visited Ferrero voluntarily or been referred through a specific student progress committee, his first order of business is to have a heart-to-heart talk with that student about the situation that has led to a face-to-face meeting. After gleaning all the appropriate information, Ferrero strategizes his next step, which usually involves referring the student to an outside network of psychiatrists because NSU does not provide drug or alcohol detox services and treatment. “We don’t want to be in the business of providing treatment,” said Ferrero, who also is the co-founder of a law firm called Addition Recovery Legal Services. “My local providers are nationally and internationally recognized, which means they can find an appropriate provider even if the student is doing a clinical rotation outside the tri-county region or across the country.”

Although background checks are conducted on all HPD students early in their matriculation process to discern previous drug or alcohol-related offenses such as driving under the influence or possession, oftentimes these problems don’t manifest until much later. “Occasionally we will see inappropriate behaviors that may signal mental disorders, which means it’s our responsibility to get to the root of the issue,” Ferrero stated. “We’ve seen full-time students who are taking care of sick or dying parents or students who have absolutely no support systems at all because they’re from other countries and are dealing with severe culture shock. There are so many scenarios that may at first appear to be drug or alcohol-related due to issues such as depression, isolation, or domestic violence.

“When students appear before a student progress com-

mittee, the first questions often asked are in the vein of ‘Why are you failing?’ or ‘Why are you acting this way?’” he added. “That’s when they often reveal the details about having a drug or alcohol problem, being bipolar, going through a horrible divorce, or any of the multitude of real-life problems people face every day. In a way, we become our students’ surrogate parents while they’re here, which is why we have a responsibility to not abandon them when and if problems arise. This isn’t a moral issue; these are not bad people. They just need help.”

Because the majority of students are brought to Ferrero’s attention via the HPD student progress committees—or

come in voluntarily—the SAP process proceeds in a very straightforward manner. However, there are times when discussion ventures outside the established protocols. “I have been individually approached by faculty members who are concerned about a specific student,” he said. “Those cases are more difficult to deal with because there are so many reasons why a student may be struggling. So we work together and try to figure out the best way to approach the student, which could be something as easy as identifying a specific faculty member in the college who’s close to the student and can address the concerns by talking to the student in private and asking ‘Is there something going on, and if so, can we help you?’ We don’t ever want to come across as accusatory; we want to be supportive.”

According to Ferrero, the immediate goal is to identify the problem, and, if neces-

sary, make sure the students enter into a period of recovery that will lead them to maintaining a healthy lifestyle in the future. “If we can identify students who may be floundering, what we’re going to do is hopefully save them from potential disaster 10 years down the line,” Ferrero stated. “A substance abuse problem can go on for years if it goes untreated, and the consequences can be dire, especially for a physician who makes a critical mistake that maims or kills a patient. You hear about tragic incidents where the wrong eye or leg was removed because the caregiver was





impaired, or someone dies because the wrong prescription was ordered. Because public safety is our number one priority, we have to ask ourselves tough questions such as ‘What’s the degree of the problem?’ ‘Can the student come back?’ ‘Will the student need to take a leave of absence to receive treatment?’ There are so many variables involved.”

The complexity and severity of a substance-abuse problem are best exemplified by a theoretical scenario Ferrero discussed regarding a student doing a clinical rotation in another state that simply doesn’t show up at the rotation site. “The rotation director becomes understandably concerned and visits the student’s home to find out if the individual is sick or missing,” he explained. “After gaining access to the apartment, the director finds the student passed out surrounded by empty bottles following a major drinking binge. The student is now at risk of losing everything and is referred to student progress and then the Student Assistance Program. We immediately get the student into a detox treatment program and have the individual take a leave of absence. In the end, the student successfully

completes the detox program, enters treatment, gains insight, engages recovery, and is allowed to return to school.”

Swift Student Support a Priority

Unfortunately, incidents occur that, because of the imminent danger they pose, must be handled with alacrity—and outside the SAP system. “When I initiated the SAP, I had a great concern that if someone happened to contact me about a life-threatening situation, our program would simply not be equipped to respond to it,” he said. “That’s why the SAP has formed alliances with other NSU units to deal with whatever levels of crisis we might encounter.”

When it comes to crisis-related student situations, Ferrero can rely on NSU’s Student Behavioral Concern Committee, which is run by the university’s dean of student affairs, Brad Williams, Ed.D. “If someone comes to me who’s in immediate trouble, that’s where I refer the individual to because it’s a team of professionals that deals with the situation immediately,” he said.

On other occasions, it may be a potentially dangerous behavioral issue that prompts Ferrero to contact the crisis committee. “There was one situation that arose where I thought I was out of my league,” he admitted. “Some emails were brought to my attention that were very revealing and a bit disturbing. I didn’t want to play a guessing game as to what the student was actually conveying in the emails, which involved issues of violence, so I immediately passed this information on to the crisis unit. Ultimately, if I could express anything, it would be that the HPD recognizes that these issues exist and is dealing with them. NSU recognizes that tragedies occur when red flags or cries for help are ignored, so we take the health, safety, and well-being

of our student population very seriously.”

Despite the Student Assistance Program’s success rate, Ferrero hopes to see more students come forward voluntarily in the future to deal with these issues instead of suffering in silence. “If there are impaired yet highly functioning, students within the HPD that need some assistance, I encourage them to

seek help” he said. “There are probably students out there that have an existing problem or one that is developing that may not be getting the assistance they need. Because I’m an attorney, any conversations I have with a student who comes directly to me for help are confidential. If somebody needs a referral to gain outside assistance without having a case report formalized within the university, my door is always open.”

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Dr. Jessica Hilst Embraces Future Challenges

By Scott Colton

Director of Medical Communications

Based on her medical pedigree, Jessica Hilst, D.O., a 2010 NSU-COM graduate, certainly was predisposed to becoming a physician, especially when you consider that her father and both her grandfathers are physicians, as were several of her uncles. “But I’m the first female physician, which is very exciting,” she proudly stated. “That’s my little claim to fame in the family.”

After spending her first five years of life in North Carolina, Dr. Hilst’s family relocated to Georgia, initially to Augusta and then to Gainesville, which is located north of Atlanta, when she was in the second grade. It was in Gainesville, where her father operated a private psychiatry practice, that Dr. Hilst gained her first practical exposure to the medical field. “My mom was my dad’s office manager, so since my parents ran the medical practice, I was always in the office assisting them in whatever way I could,” she explained. “I also got the sense that helping people was a really big priority. My mom has done extensive amounts of community service all her life, so I was definitely influenced by her. I became a Girl Scout, with my mom serving as our troop leader, and quickly realized the importance of giving back to the community and making the world a better place.”

Marriage and Medicine Lead to NSU

Although it seemed medicine was going to be her all-consuming dream, something unexpected occurred once she entered high school. “I was suddenly convinced I was going to be a journalist,” said Dr. Hilst, who recently began her residency training in internal medicine at Grandview Hospital in Dayton, Ohio. “I was the editor of our school paper and loved investigative journalism. Around this time, my dad tried to convince me to think about going to medical school, but at that point I was completely against the idea—kind of that rebellious thing teenagers often go through. I wanted to be a journalist and perhaps do medical journalism. So when I went to college, I majored in journalism at the College of Charleston in

South Carolina.”

Dr. Hilst, who has two younger brothers, was admittedly enamored with journalism, which was evidenced when she was named news editor of the *Cougar Chronicles* at the College of Charleston. However, clouds of discontent would soon appear on her journalistic horizon. “I was really enjoying it, but I began to realize how much I missed the medical influences I had become so accustomed to,” she explained. “I had worked as a candy striper in high school and had done nu-



merous types of medical volunteering—and I missed it. Perhaps my parents had been subtly brainwashing me all along, but I realized I missed the elements of human connection and involvement with the community that were so important to me growing up in a small town. I knew that medicine would be a rewarding way to make a difference through education, preventative medicine, and relationship building.”

Consequently, Dr. Hilst transferred to Jacksonville University in Florida at the start of her sophomore year and changed her major to philosophy. “My journalism major didn’t include any of the science requirements, but my Bachelor of Science in Philosophy actually allowed me to take more science courses and pursue a premed track,” she said. “By the end of my junior year, I decided I wanted to go to medical school. I knew I couldn’t just be a wandering philosopher, so I jumped full speed ahead and took the MCAT.”

To prepare for the medical school experience, Dr. Hilst did an internship at Shands Jacksonville Medical Center during her senior year before earning her bachelor’s degree in 2005. However, making a decision as to which medical schools to apply to was not going to be predicated on her interests alone.

While she was attending Jacksonville University, Dr. Hilst met a kindred spirit named Hans Hilst, a pilot and current fourth-year NSU-COM student who became her husband in 2005. Their path to choosing a medical school took a predictably unpredictable turn when they attended a lunch meeting coordinated by Jacksonville University’s premed club that featured an unexpectedly charismatic guest presenter. “The speaker that day was Dr. Anthony J. Silvgani from NSU-COM,” Dr. Hilst stated. “I had no idea who he was, just as I had no idea what osteopathic medicine was. As everybody knows, Dr. Silvgani has a dynamic personality. So when I heard him speak about the osteopathic philosophy and the importance of community service and primary care, it really resonated with me because it fit exactly into the mold of the way I conceptualized myself practicing medicine. As a result, I immediately realized that osteopathic medicine was the way for me to go.”

Because Dr. Hilst’s husband was two years behind her at Jacksonville University, she decided to take a year off after graduating to allow the couple time to properly plan their immediate future. “Hans and I were still deciding if we wanted to stay in Florida, but once we made the decision to

THE SPORTS SECTION.



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stay, we agreed that NSU was our first choice,” she explained. “Thankfully, we both got in, so I’ll be forever indebted to Dr. Silvagni for introducing us to osteopathic medicine and NSU.”

A Leader Is Born

Once Dr. Hilst arrived on campus, she hit the ground running from both an academic and involvement standpoint. Her activism included serving her classmates with distinction through her positions as a class representative, SGA president, and a delegate to organizations such as the Council of Osteopathic Student Government Presidents (COSGP), the Florida Osteopathic Medical Association, and the American Osteopathic Association House of Delegates. She also demonstrated her commitment to providing service to the community through her involvement in Sigma Sigma Phi events such as Soupinator and Doctor’s Bag as well as volunteering at local health fairs and participating in the Ecuador medical outreach mission.

“I definitely made a conscious decision to be involved as soon as I came to NSU-COM,” said Dr. Hilst, who also participated in D.O. Day on the Hill activities as well as the creation of the SGA Student Advocacy Series. “I’m very proud of the grades I made, but I knew from the beginning that if I was going to devote a significant percentage of my time to extracurricular endeavors, it was going to be a tradeoff. The most important thing I always strive for in my life is balance, and I think that for me personally, I wouldn’t feel balanced if I wasn’t giving something back and being proactive.

“Take student government, for instance,” she continued. “I was very involved in high school and college because it’s just part of my personality. I feel like if I don’t get involved and help advocate, then other people won’t be represented appropriately. I think the reason I got so involved at NSU is because I thought, ‘Hey, I could make this a little better; I can help my peers have a little better experience when they’re sitting in Steele Auditorium.’”

Because she’s been an outspoken advocate for the osteopathic profession, including in her former role as national second vice chair of the COSGP, she’s more than willing to address one of the profession’s longstanding issues: garnering positive publicity on a continuum. “In my

leadership role with the COSGP, I was significantly involved with promoting awareness of osteopathic medicine,” she said. “Public relations is so important for our profession, but we continually struggle in this area. I feel part of the problem is there’s a mentality that maybe the goal is to wait until D.O.s are a bigger percentage of the physician population, but I think that does a disservice to our profession, our students, and the physicians that are practicing now because there are so many amazing things we do. I truly feel we offer the full spectrum of services to our patients, and I really want to spread that message. It’s a job that’s never done.”

With Hans doing his fourth-year clinical rotations in Ohio near where Dr. Hilst is doing her residency training, the happy couple will be able to coexist in the same locale. Just don’t expect them to remain northerners once they’ve completed their postgraduate training. “I can’t imagine staying up north,” she admitted. “My goal is to do primary care in a rural setting. I joke about this, but where I grew up there were really more cows than people. That’s why I see the value of a primary care physician being one of the hubs of the medical community in terms of education and outreach where people often can’t get to a doctor for hundreds of miles. If it was up to me completely, we would live out in the middle of nowhere and take a horse to work. However, because Hans would like to open a psychiatric practice, we’ll probably end up in a sub-rural environment.”

Now that Dr. Hilst has graduated from NSU-COM and embarked on her residency training, she reflects on her medical school journey with a sense of both satisfaction and disbelief. “Looking back, it’s hard to believe that Hans and I were so young when we got married,” she stated. “But when we met in college, I just knew he was the person who was going to be my partner. I couldn’t have imagined getting through medical school if it wasn’t for him. It’s really amazing to have someone there with you to study with who knows what you’re going through and doesn’t get grossed out when you’re talking about a surgical procedure during dinner. I can’t believe we made such an important decision so soon, but I don’t regret it at all. We’re a great team.”





A LOOK at LARKIN Community HOSPITAL

Larkin Community Hospital, located in South Miami, Florida, is an acute care hospital that has been providing superior health care to the community for the past 40 years and partners with its medical staff, employees, and community members to meet the needs of its multicultural customers. It comprises 142 general medical, surgical, and psychiatric beds, a 24-hour emergency center, an 8-bed critical care unit, and a fully equipped surgery department with four operating room suites.

In addition, a new angiography suite and PET scanner are now



available for diagnostic and invasive procedures. Other services provided include comprehensive laboratory and imaging procedures such as MRI, CT scanner, nuclear medicine, and ultrasound. The hospital is fully accredited by the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations and well respected in the community.

Over the past several years, Larkin Community Hospital has worked hard to establish itself as a leader in

postgraduate medical education by creating several residency and fellowship training programs. These include residencies in family practice and psychiatry that were launched in 2010 as well as a new residency in integrated family practice/neuromusculoskeletal medicine (NMM) and a fellowship in neuromusculoskeletal medicine and internal medicine that will commence in 2011. The hospital also is studying the feasibility of launching postgraduate programs in physical medicine and rehabilitation, emergency medicine, general surgery, and anesthesia in 2012.

At the present time, the existing Larkin postgraduate training programs have been approved for the following slots:

- **Family Practice Residency** – 18 positions
- **Psychiatry Residency Training** – 12 positions
- **Integrated Family Practice/NMM** – 12 positions
- **NMM Residency Plus One Fellowship** – 3 positions

The hospital, which joined the NSU-COM Consortium for Excellence in Medical Education in July 2009, plays a key role in educating students and graduates, which is evidenced by the fact that 12 students, 8 family practice residents (6 from NSU-COM), and 3 psychiatry residents (2 from NSU-COM) are currently involved in Larkin programs. In terms of student programs, Larkin offers rotating clerkships in family practice, IM/CCU, general surgery, and psychiatry.

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

NSU-COM Alumni Association Executive Committee

Past Presidents

Pre 1995 - Holly Pomeranz, D.O. ('86)
 1996 - Daniel McBath, D.O. ('90)
 1997 - Orlando Garcia, D.O. ('94)
 1998 - Michael Gervasi, D.O. ('87)
 1999 - Tamer Gozleveli, D.O. ('94)
 2000 - John Geake, D.O. ('93)
 2001 - Isidro Pujol, D.O. ('94)
 2002 - Jeffrey Grove, D.O. ('90)
 2003 - Glenn Moran, D.O. ('88)
 2004 - Kenneth Johnson, D.O. ('91)
 2005 - Steven Cimerberg, D.O. ('87)
 2006 - Ronald Renuart, D.O. ('90)
 2007 - Gregory James, D.O. ('88)
 2008 - Robert Blackburn, D.O. ('86)
 2009 - Ronald Tolchin, D.O. ('89)

Trustees at Large

Tyler Cymet, D.O. ('88)
 Tamer Gozleveli, D.O. ('87)
 Mayrene Hernandez, D.O. ('01)
 Stephen MacDonald, D.O. ('90)
 Glenn Moran, D.O. ('88)
 William Stager, D.O. ('89)

2010-11 Officers

Daniel Carney, D.O. ('95)
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Paula Anderson-Worts, D.O. ('94)
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 Immediate Past President

Howard L. Neer, D.O.
 Associate Dean, Alumni Affairs

Lynne Cawley, M.Sc.
 Director, Alumni Affairs

Living Tribute Honorees

2002 – Mary Smith
 2003 – Arthur Snyder, D.O.
 2004 – Lori Dribin, Ph.D.
 2005 – Edye Groseclose, Ph.D.
 2006 – Howard Hada, Ph.D.
 2008 – Cyril Blavo, D.O.
 2009 – A. Alvin Greber, D.O.
 2010 – Harold Laubach, Ph.D.

Celebration of Excellence Distinguished Alumni

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

NSU-COM Claims Deans' Challenge Cup at FSACOFP Convention



NSU-COM was well represented at the 30th Annual Florida Society of American College of Osteopathic Family Physicians Convention, which was held July 28-August 1 in Orlando. In addition to hosting an exhibit booth to greet alumni and others in attendance, an NSU-COM alumni reception was coordinated that attracted approximately 100 alumni and students as well as family members and friends.

"We always have good attendance at the FSACOFP Convention as many of our alumni are actively involved in the organization," said Lynne Cawley, M.Sc., director of student and alumni services. Howard Neer, D.O. FACOF, the college's associate dean of alumni affairs,

echoed Cawley's sentiments, adding, "Many alumni and NSU-COM faculty members lecture during the conference, which is why we continually shine each year."

To add an extra element of fun and camaraderie, the NSU-COM Alumni Association partners with the Lake Erie College of Osteopathic Medicine's Bradenton campus to sponsor a bus for students to visit City Place at Universal Studios, allowing students from both schools to mingle both professionally and socially with their future colleagues.

For the second consecutive year, NSU-COM emerged as the winner of the Deans' Challenge Cup, which is a friendly annual competition between LECOM and NSU-COM students that includes a nine-hole, par-three golf tournament, sunrise fun-run/walk, volleyball tournament, and scavenger hunt.

SAVE THE DATES!

NSU-COM Alumni Reunion CME Weekend

January 28-30, 2011

NSU Campus/Renaissance Hotel-Plantation

Friday, January 28

7:00 - 9:30 p.m. – Welcome Reception at Renaissance Hotel

Saturday, January 29

8:00 a.m. – Registration and Continental Breakfast

8:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. – Four hours of CME

7:00 - 11:00 p.m. – Gala Reception, Banquet, and Dance

Sunday, January 30

8:00 - 9:00 a.m. – Alumni Association Meeting

9:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. – Three hours of CME

CATCHING UP WITH...

Drs. James ('88) and Sherry ('07) Turner

"I am proud to be an osteopathic physician and an NSU-SECOM graduate."

- Dr. James Turner -

"I believe we are all responsible for the world, and as physicians as well as people, we need to support those who will follow us and be active in educating the next generation of physicians."

- Dr. Sherry Turner -

Fast Facts: **James Turner, D.O.**, who graduated in 1988, is married to **Sherry Turner, D.O.**, who graduated in 2007, and has a child named Ashley, who is currently attending West Virginia University.

Why did you decide to become a physician? When I was in college I became a respiratory therapist at our local hospital in order to supplement my GI Bill. While there, I became interested in medicine as a career choice.

How did you learn about osteopathic medicine? While working as a respiratory therapist, I met the first osteopathic physician I had known. He did things just a little differently, his patients seemed happier, and they seemed to get better quicker. When I asked him about this, he began to mentor me. When I graduated from undergraduate school, he continued to encourage me to follow the D.O. path, which is a decision I have never regretted.

What was the most memorable aspect of your osteopathic education at SECOM? When I attended SECOM, we were on the North Miami Beach campus. It was a small campus with only two classrooms and a hospital across the street. Being in an early class on a small campus allowed us to know everyone associated with the school, and it was not unusual for a student to be allowed to speak with Dr. Morton Terry on very short notice. The faculty was small but very engaged. It was truly a family atmosphere. At the time, I may not have truly appreciated that it was the perfect environment for me—no way to get lost in a big group, ample availability for mentorship, and the ability to know every class member.

What are you doing professionally? For the first 17 years of my career, I lived the dream of being *the* "Doc" in a small town. I was the chair of emergency medicine, the county physician, EMS director, and county coroner. I also stayed very active within the AOA and state society, serving as a clinical inspector for COCA and society president of both the Tennessee Osteopathic Medical Association and the state ACOFP society.



As times changed, I struggled to keep abreast of medicine advancements. When I was offered the opportunity to return to training in an osteopathic emergency medicine residency in 2001, I jumped at the opportunity. I returned to residency at age 44 at Mt. Sinai Medical Center in Miami Beach. After graduation, I knew I wanted to teach. Thankfully, an opportunity arose a couple of years later allowing me to become the founding director of

an emergency medicine residency at a large teaching institution.

I have continued to volunteer my time to the AOA through my work with COCA and PTRC doing college and residency inspections. I also serve on the ACOEP Board of Directors, on that organization's GMEC, and on several committees locally, at the state level, and nationally. All of this has been and continues to be a passion with me.

As an idealistic new physician, I was going to improve the world one patient at a time. I think I did this. Now, as a residency director, I have the opportunity to do this logarithmically by positively influencing young residents.

Closing thoughts? I am proud to be an osteopathic physician and an NSU-SECOM graduate. I thank Dr. Silvagni for his leadership and direction of the college. I know when I get NSU-COM graduates or students on rotation, they are well trained and will represent the profession and the school well.

Sherry Turner, D.O.

Why did you decide to become a physician? I had been interested in medicine since high school and had always done well in science and math. I felt I could not afford to move away from our small town and go to medical school, so I went to nursing school instead. After working as a nurse for many years, I met and married Dr. Jim Turner. We relocated to South Florida, which is when I decided to attend NSU-COM.

How did you learn about osteopathic medicine? Jim and a medical school classmate, Dr. Brenda Sowter, encouraged me and demonstrated the meaning of caring for the "whole patient." They

both demonstrated osteopathic practice and used the principles behind osteopathic medicine while caring for their patients. This close, caring, and conscientious approach caught my interest, and I felt drawn to the profession.

What was the most memorable aspect of your osteopathic education at NSU-COM? I enjoyed helping prepare for the mission trips as well as my time in the Student Government Association. The best aspect is the friendships I made and still value; I miss some of my classmates a great deal. I formed bonds during those days in the anatomy lab, and with those friends who were as lost as me at times, but who helped me find my way.

What are you doing professionally, and why do you enjoy it? I currently serve as chief resident of emergency medicine at Charleston Area Medical Center in Charleston, West Virginia. I also work as an emergency physician in two Ohio Hospitals. Having



the ability to provide the care and comfort people need in the worst moments of their lives is a rewarding but humbling experience. Each day, I am reminded how truly blessed I am and how I find comfort for my soul as I give it to others.

What has been the most fulfilling aspect of being a physician? Having an impact not only on the lives our patients but the future of medicine by being involved in the

profession on multiple levels and learning what it means to truly see the big picture. By being a member of the college, as well as learning about policy and how decisions are made, I can have an impact on the future of our profession, medical education, and patient care. But despite all the other activities, when you see the face of a patient who looks up to you and knows you are the one who can help, it all becomes clear why we all do this very hard work.

Closing thoughts? I believe we are all responsible for the world, and as physicians as well as people, we need to support those who will follow us and be active in educating the next generation of physicians.

ALUMNI IN THE NEWS

Jeffrey Bergman, D.O. ('08) was named as one of the four recipients of the American Osteopathic Foundation (AOF)/Merck Outstanding Resident of the Year Awards, which recognize and honor outstanding osteopathic residents who go above and beyond to bring a sense of pride to the profession by exhibiting the exemplary characteristics of an osteopathic physician. The award, which includes a \$5,000 prize, will be presented in late October at the AOF Honors Ceremony at the Osteopathic Medical Conference and Exposition in San Francisco, California.

Kevin M. Boehm, D.O., M.Sc. ('05), who is the associate program director at Henry Ford Wyandotte Hospital's Department of Emergency Medicine in Michigan, had his article entitled "Seasonal and Avian Influenza Knowledge Base of Attending Physicians in a Community-Based Hospital: A Survey-Based Study" published in the May 2010 issue of the *Journal of the American Osteopathic Association*.

Devindra Dabiesingh, D.O., M.P.H. ('09) was named Intern of the Year out of a class of 45 categorical internal medicine interns at St. Luke's-Roosevelt Hospital Medical Center at Columbia University's College of Physicians and Surgeons in Manhattan, New York.

Jeremy Ingram, D.O. ('07), who is affiliated with Emergency Medical Associates of Florida, Bayfront Division in St. Petersburg, has become a clinical instructor in the Department of Emergency Medicine at the University of Florida College of Osteopathic Medicine-Jacksonville.

Hema Jadoonanan, D.O. ('05) and **Tasleyma Sattar, D.O.** ('05), along with Susan Ledbetter, D.O., assistant professor of family medicine, had their article entitled "The Utility of the Medical Home: A Survey on Patient Perspectives" published in the July-August issue of the *Osteopathic Family Physician*.

Mandar Jagtap, D.O. ('09) and **Sagar Patel, D.O.** ('10) had their research project entitled "24-Year-Old Female Presents to the ER 24 Hours After MVA Complaining of Lower Back Pain Radiating into the Left Leg" appear in the September 16 Case in Point section of the American College of Radiology Web site.

Joshua D. Lenchus, D.O., R.Ph. ('00) had his article entitled "End of the 'See One, Do One, Teach One' Era: The Next Generation of Invasive Bedside Procedural Instruction" published in the June 2010 issue of the *Journal of the American Osteopathic Association*.

Shoib Myint, D.O., FAACS ('91), who is an oculo-facial plastic surgeon practicing in Las Vegas, Nevada, was featured on *thehairgossip.com* Web site, where he discussed the art of creating natural-looking volume in the lips.

Leslie L. Smith, D.O. ('97), clinical assistant professor of family medicine, was appointed by the Central Florida Family Health Center (CFFHC) Board of Directors to the dual position of chief executive officer and chief medical officer. Dr. Smith previously served as the medical director of the organization since October 2004.

William H. Stager, D.O., M.S., M.P.H., FAAMA, FAAO, FACFP ('89), clinical associate professor of family medicine and treasurer of the NSU-COM Alumni Association Executive Committee, received the Physician of the Year Award during the Florida Society of the American College of Osteopathic Family Physicians Annual Convention and National Family Practice Update on July 30 in Orlando.

Robert J. Trenchel, D.O., M.P.H. ('89), clinical associate professor of preventive medicine, is currently serving as senior vice president/administrator of ambulatory care services for the Harris County Hospital District in Houston, Texas.

In Memoriam



Anthony De Simone, D.O. ('02), a third-year resident in the NSU-COM/Palmetto General Hospital Family Medicine Residency Program, suffered a fatal cerebral aneurysm on July 1. Dr. De Simone, who leaves behind his wife, Rachel, and two young sons, was a strong believer in organ donation. As a result, Dr. De Simone's family honored his wishes by donating his organs, which have subsequently saved seven lives.

To honor his passing as well as his numerous contributions to the medical profession, Palmetto General Hospital established a college fund for Dr. De Simone's two young sons. In addition, the residency program decided to continue his mission to promote awareness about organ donation. "Though we are grieving profoundly, we wanted to honor him and establish a lasting medical legacy," said Susan Ledbetter, D.O., assistant professor of family medicine and program director of the NSU-COM/Palmetto General Hospital Family Medicine Residency. "Through his gift of life, he is giving others a chance to make their impact on this world."

In a fitting postscript, Dr. De Simone was named as one of the four recipients of the 2010 American Osteopathic Foundation (AOF)/Merck Outstanding Resident of the Year Awards, which recognize and honor outstanding osteopathic residents who go above and beyond to bring a sense of pride to the profession by exhibiting the exemplary characteristics of an osteopathic physician. The awards, which include a \$5,000 prize, will be presented in late October at the AOF Honors Ceremony at the Osteopathic Medical Conference and Exposition in San Francisco, California.

Alumni Association Fund Honor Roll

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

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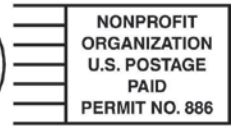
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2010-11 Calendar of Events

October 24-28, 2010

AOA Osteopathic Medical Conference and Exposition

San Francisco, California

Alumni Reception – Monday, October 25

Conservatory of Flowers at Golden Gate Park

100 John F. Kennedy Drive

7:00-9:30 p.m.

December 2010

Medical Outreach Trips to Bangladesh, Jamaica, and Peru

During the first two weeks in December 2010, the college will be coordinating medical outreach trips to Bangladesh, Jamaica, and Peru. For additional information about the Bangladesh and Peru trips, please contact

Dr. Robin Jacobs at rjacobs@nova.edu. To learn more about the Jamaica trip, please contact **Dr. Paula Anderson-Worts** at paulal@nova.edu.

January 28-30, 2011

NSU-COM Alumni Reunion CME Weekend

NSU Campus/Renaissance Hotel-Plantation

For additional information, please contact **Lynne Cawley** at cawley@nova.edu.