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Graduation season is a time of year I look forward to with special fondness. Due to the enduring relationships my office develops with students, many of whom work closely with me and Debra R. Gibbs, B.A., our medical communications coordinator, a sense of parental pride develops when I watch students to whom I’ve grown close graduate from the college and embark on their careers.

This issue of COM Outlook proudly commemorates the myriad achievements of the class of 2017. As you will read in the graduation highlights and awards section, a number of our newly minted osteopathic physicians received well-deserved awards for their academic, community service, and research prowess. We also highlight the achievements of new alumna Lauren Boudreau, D.O., who served as president of the Student Government Association and was a star athlete during her undergraduate days as an NSU student.

Beyond our graduation focus, this issue is replete with an interesting mix of stories and updates on our students, faculty and staff members, and alumni. In the faculty profile “A Passion for Positivity: Assistant Dean Relishes Academic Role,” Janet Hamstra, Ed.D., M.S., discusses her life and the career path she followed. In the faculty perspective piece “Research in Grenada Addresses Importance of Pap Tests and HPV Awareness,” Kamilah B. Thomas-Purcell, Ph.D., M.P.H., MCHES, shares details of the vital research project she is involved with to improve women’s health.

In the article “Longtime Administrator Retires After 19 Years,” we bid a fond farewell to Johneta Goodwin, director of administrative operations, who served as the college’s unofficial “den mother” for almost two decades. Finally, in “Crisis Management in Action,” we detail the tornado-related trials and tribulations faced by James M. Turner, D.O., M.P.H., FACOFP, FACOEP, a 1988 alumnus who serves as dean of the William Carey University College of Osteopathic Medicine in Hattiesburg, Mississippi.

As we close the book on the class of 2017 graduation events, we also warmly welcome the incoming class of 2021 students, who will look to follow in the illustrious footsteps of those who came before them. Good luck!

Scott Colton, B.A., APR
COM/HPD Director of Medical Communications and Public Relations
During this interim leadership period, it is important for the Health Professions Division (HPD) to maintain the momentum it has established through the years. We are commencing projects that have been planned for years and initiating new endeavors, which is why it is important to continue this progress.

Frederick Lippman, R.Ph., Ed.D., who was appointed as NSU interim executive vice president and chief operating officer, and I have been working together for more than 20 years and will continue to work collaboratively on issues related to the Health Professions Division. As a result, we will continue to progress consistently at the HPD without disruption.

NSU is on track to realize its potential as a major university, while at the HPD, new facilities are being constructed and planned. Expansion is in the works as we seek to serve our students and faculty and staff members better and meet the increasing needs of health care education in our community.

We are continuing our focus on research and our work on the new College of Allopathic Medicine. Additionally, the HPD has made significant progress related to the new hospital and Academical Village that will be built on the Fort Lauderdale/Davie Campus, and in achieving the goals outlined in Vision 2020.

As we look to the future, we should recognize those who had the vision to plan and assemble the resources to get the Health Professions Division to its current state of excellence. They faced many challenges and had the determination to complete the task.

I look forward to working with the HPD deans, faculty and staff members, and students to continue our progress.

Irving Rosenbaum, D.P.A., Ed.D., M.P.A.
Interim Chancellor
Health Professions Division
A Passion for Positivity

ASSISTANT DEAN RELISHES ACADEMIC ROLE
Making a “significant positive impact” has been a philosophy Janet Hamstra, Ed.D., M.S., has lived by since she was a child growing up in Hinsdale, Illinois, which she described as being reminiscent of the idyllic life seen on the TV show *Leave it to Beaver*.

Hamstra, who serves as assistant dean of osteopathic postgraduate education and executive director of the college’s Consortium for Excellence in Medical Education, was born in New Jersey but moved to Illinois when she was two. “We had a wonderful couple, the Sievertsons, who lived across the street from us in Hinsdale,” Hamstra said. “They didn’t have children, so I spent a lot of time with them while my mom was busy with my older and younger sisters. Mrs. Sievertsen was a Sunday school teacher at a Lutheran church, and I remember helping her prepare crafts for her classes.”

Add in her parents’ devotion to the Christian faith, which they passed on to their middle daughter, and you have a recipe for a life grounded in the Golden Rule— “Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.” From attending Christian schools and participating in weekly catechism classes to being active in a church program for girls called the Calvinettes, Hamstra spent her formative years being instilled with a strong value system.

When she was about 12, the Hamstra family returned to New Jersey, relocating to a small town called Midland Park so her father, Art, could assume control of the family business—H. Hamstra & Company, which imported specialty Dutch foods. “When I was home for summer vacations from college, I worked there and honed my typing and filing skills,” she recalled. “I also learned to work the computer—a Honeywell machine that took up more space than my present office.”

From a professional perspective, Hamstra only had one goal in mind—becoming a teacher. “I always wanted to be a teacher,” she admitted. “In fact, I don’t remember wanting to be anything else. When I was a senior in high school, my math teacher let me teach one of his classes, so I definitely knew I had my sights set on a teaching career. Even though I eventually moved into school administration, I still consider myself a teacher at heart and always will.”

After earning a bachelor’s degree in elementary education from Calvin College in Grand Rapids, Michigan, Hamstra accepted a teaching position as a junior high math and science teacher in Cerritos, California. “At my college graduation, the chair of the education department pulled me aside and told me to get some years of teaching under my belt, earn at least a master’s degree, and come back and teach at Calvin College,” she said. “That was the first time I ever thought of moving beyond classroom teaching as a career.”

During her nine-year stint as a junior high teacher, Hamstra followed her professor’s advice and enrolled in a master’s program at California State University in Fullerton. It may have taken her five years to complete, but earning her Master of Science in Education, with a specialization in curriculum and instruction, was a proud achievement that even won her a prestigious award.

“I was named an Edwin Carr Fellow for having ‘demonstrated potential for making a significant positive impact on education in California.’ I took that award to heart. Since then, I have made an intentional effort to have a ‘significant positive impact’ wherever I work and in my life.”

**TRANSITIONING FROM TEACHER TO ADMINISTRATOR**

The next decade would prove to be a prolific one for Hamstra, who launched her career as a school administrator, serving as a high school registrar and K–12 curriculum coordinator for several years. While she was busy augmenting her career credentials, Hamstra wisely decided to pursue a Doctor of Education degree from the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA).

Because she was working full time while doing her doctoral coursework, it took Hamstra five years to earn her Ed.D., which focused on the areas of administration,
curriculum, and teaching studies. In the midst of completing her dissertation, she accepted a position as principal for a pre–K through eighth grade Christian school and moved to Michigan.

Hamstra’s dissertation, “A Teacher Network: Collegiality and Professionalism in a Learning Community,” still brings a smile to her face when she discusses it today. “The research I did truly carried me forward into what was down the road for me career-wise,” she explained.

“I did my cognate coursework in the UCLA Graduate School of Management in Organizational Behavior, and I’m still using and teaching things I learned all those years ago.”

After living in sunny southern California for 14 years, the transition to frigid Michigan winters proved difficult, prompting Hamstra to move to South Florida and become headmaster and president of a Christian school in Fort Lauderdale. By 2001, however, Hamstra was ready to make the professional leap to higher education. “I started teaching two or three courses a term at Florida Atlantic University (FAU) in Boca Raton in the Educational Leadership Program and then was hired full time to work on a number of grants,” she said.

In her role as director of the Region V Area Center for Educational Enhancement, which involved working with the Florida Department of Education-funded No Child Left Behind program, Hamstra provided expert consultation, technical assistance, and professional development services to the Broward, Martin, Monroe, and Palm Beach county school districts. “That’s when I honed my faculty development and consortium skills,” she said. “I started leading a training series with the failing schools in Broward County and continued as a consultant after the position was no longer funded by the Florida Department of Education.”

Prior to joining forces with NSU-COM, Hamstra also served as the senior research coordinator for the National Science Foundation/Interagency Educational Research Initiative/U.S. Department of Education-funded Science IDEAS Project. The project, “Validation of a Multi-Phase Scale-Up Design for a Knowledge-Based Intervention in Science and Reading Comprehension,” allowed Hamstra to utilize her multifaceted skills.

CHOIR FRIENDSHIP LEADS TO NSU-COM CAREER

While she was working at FAU, Hamstra kept up her religious interests by being active in her church and singing in the choir. As luck would have it, a fellow choir member, who happened to work at NSU-COM at the time, asked Hamstra if she would be interested in a position available in the college’s Standardized Patient Program.

“By that time, I had been on ‘soft money’ at FAU long enough to realize I like a little more stability in my career, so getting a position that wasn’t grant funded sounded very good to me,” Hamstra said. “After looking into what exactly standardized patients were and what they did, I realized the job sounded like a good fit for me, because it connected well to my teaching and science background.”
In November 2005, Hamstra joined the NSU-COM faculty as a medical education specialist and assistant professor of internal medicine. In the ensuing 12 years, she brought her multidimensional talents to a range of career-ascending positions.

“My work has morphed quite a bit over the years,” she said. “I initially worked closely with the second-year Principles of Clinical Medicine course and what was then known as the first-year Clinical Practicum course in terms of standardized patient testing. I also led the NSU-COM Faculty Development Program and Interprofessional Grand Rounds. More recently, I was the director of preclinical education.”

Dedication to research also has been a hallmark of Hamstra’s NSU-COM career, which is evidenced by the fact that she has presented numerous posters and spoken at various national conventions and conferences. She also established successful poster competitions for the Consortium for Excellence in Medical Education (CEME)—NSU-COM’s Osteopathic Postdoctoral Training Institution—and the Florida Osteopathic Medical Association.

Hamstra’s involvement with the CEME stretches back to her early days with the college. “In my role as medical education specialist, I led and still lead faculty and resident development sessions,” she said. “Now, as the executive director of CEME, I’m more involved in the day-to-day, operational side of things, which are both interesting and more challenging since we are in transition to the single accreditation system for graduate medical education in the United States.”

In addition to serving as CEME executive director, Hamstra earned another major promotion in 2016 when she was named assistant dean of postgraduate education. “I think I was ready for my next career challenge when our dean, Dr. Elaine Wallace, asked me to consider the position,” she said. “It wasn’t on my radar screen, so it took me a while to say yes, but I’m glad I did. Hopefully, Dr. Wallace is glad I came around, too.”

According to Hamstra, “What I am enjoying most in this new position is making better use of my intellect, years of training, and experiences than I was as the director of preclinical education,” she explained. “While I worked hard in that position and enjoyed my interactions with the students, that job was not that mentally challenging for me.”

In her current role as assistant dean, Hamstra works closely with residents and their program directors, which is a role she relishes. “I want to help them and their programs succeed,” she said. “I have also really enjoyed learning about osteopathic medicine. With my science teacher background, the whole structure/function aspect makes perfect sense to me. I really wish more D.O.s valued what osteopathic manipulative treatment (OMT) can add to their patients’ treatment and practiced OMT on a regular basis.”

Although Hamstra isn’t retiring from her robust NSU-COM career any time soon, she does have a plan in place for when she does. “When I retire, I plan to continue singing in the church choir and spend more time doing crafting, which is something I started doing with Mrs. Sievertsen when I was in kindergarten and have done off and on throughout my life since then.”

She also foresees traveling to a few places on her “bucket list,” such as Denali National Park in Alaska and seeing the northern lights. Still, the self-confessed “homebody at heart” looks most forward to “curling up in a chair with a good book and my two cats,” Hamstra said. “Add in a cup of coffee or a glass of wine depending on the time of day, and I’m set!”
2017 Graduate Linked to D.O.s from Day One

BY DEBRA R. GIBBS, B.A., MEDICAL COMMUNICATIONS COORDINATOR

For Lauren Boudreau, D.O., the thread of osteopathic medicine weaves throughout her life. “I was delivered by a D.O., who I later learned had graduated medical school with my third-year OB/GYN preceptor. While growing up, my family’s physician was a D.O.,” Boudreau said.

Born and raised in the town of Halfmoon in upstate New York—10 minutes up the road from Waterford, where her parents were born and raised—Boudreau lived with her father, who is the chief of the local volunteer fire department; her mother, a business owner and hairstylist at the family’s beauty salon; and her younger sister, Rachel.

Boudreau’s physician dreams formed early. “I knew I wanted to be a doctor when I was 10 years old. Miss De LaRosa, my fifth-grade teacher, taught a science unit on the human body, and I loved every second. It was the first handout of the skeleton that I will never forget. She had painted the heart on a bedsheet for an exercise in which we all had to point out the blood flow with a yardstick,” she said.

Her interest in medicine increased personally as well as scientifically. “We had many family members fall ill during my childhood, and witnessing the triumphs and pitfalls in their care inspired me to become a physician,” Boudreau explained. “My cousin was diagnosed with a rare leukemia during my senior year of high school. We were only 17 months apart in age and grew up together as best friends. Sadly, her short 9-month battle with her illness ended just 5 days before I graduated from high school and solidified my decision to pursue a career in medicine.”

Boudreau attended high school at Shenendehowa Central Schools and was a member of the crew team. John Gartin, former head coach of NSU’s rowing team, recruited her for her skills. Gartin and Boudreau met at a college fair during the U.S. Rowing Club National Regatta Championships on the Cooper River in Camden, New Jersey.

Pursuing her bachelor’s degree and competing on NSU’s rowing team, Boudreau’s talents led to her election as team captain at the end of her freshman year—a leadership spot she held through her senior year. During that time, she was awarded All-American and Academic All-American honors in 2012 and 2013. In 2013, the team triumphed with the NCAA Division II National Rowing Championship. That national recognition marks the most memorable event in her life, Boudreau said. Another success came as Boudreau was named a Top 30 Honoree for the NCAA Woman of the Year Award in 2013.

Her winning spirit helped build bridges with students and others in the university community and beyond. Graduating with a Bachelor of Science in Biology in 2013, Boudreau took aim at her first year with NSU-COM. During her undergraduate years, she participated in the Clinical Exploration Program and experienced the power of osteopathic manipulative medicine. Mastering the holistic, healing skills of osteopathic manipulative treatment ignited her desire “to learn this skill for the care of my patients,” she said.

Boudreau’s caring about others developed into years of commitment to her classmates and the larger community. She volunteered at community centers, offered screenings at health fairs, presented on panels throughout South Florida health care and other osteopathic organizations, and coauthored research.

Always willing to serve others, Boudreau said, “The most important activity would be my involvement with the
Student Government Association as NSU-COM president. It was the greatest honor to be elected to serve my classmates as president of our college’s Student Government Association. I enjoyed the conversations I had with my classmates, and felt as though I could make a difference in their lives and educational experiences.”

All through her four years of coursework and campus leadership, Boudreau’s character and commitment resulted in a long list of accolades that included

- serving as ambassador of the Mental Health Awareness Task Force
- serving on the Florida Osteopathic Medical Association Membership Committee and Board of Trustees
- being a member of the NSU Letterman Association Executive Board
- serving as president of the Student Government Association Executive Board
- acting as chair of the PanSGA Health Professions Division Concerns Committee
- being a member of the National Student Medical Education Committee
- serving as a member of the Presidents’ 64
- acting as a member on the Council of Osteopathic Student Government Presidents

Her academic recognition includes the Matthew A. Terry Scholarship Endowment; the Beth and Joel L. Rush, D.O., Endowed Charter Scholarship; the Dean’s Organizational Award; the Merck Scholars Award; NSU Athletics Alumni of the Month; and the Burns Academic Society Award. In 2014 and 2015, Boudreau’s classmates honored her with the Most Likely to Become Dean of NSU-COM Award. Only time will tell.

In her third and fourth years, Boudreau optimized the opportunity to grow her career with clinical experience by taking electives in neonatology, family medicine, pediatrics, and osteopathic manipulative medicine at hospitals throughout South Florida and the northeastern United States. With her eyes on her future, Boudreau advocates those she leaves behind to “trust in the process. Take things one moment at a time. Do not go at it alone, and join a study group that works for you. Make it a point to have time for yourself, to see family, and have fun. Connect with a handful of honest and trustworthy upperclassman and use them as your guide,” she said.

Her next steps include a pediatric residency program—focusing on acute care, namely neonatology—at the University of Connecticut’s Children’s Medical Center. After eight years in Florida, “I am thrilled to be heading back up north to be closer to my family and my boyfriend,” Boudreau said.

As she builds her success, this particular piece of wisdom represents her perseverance: “No matter how muddy the path may become, never forget how blessed you are to be on this journey,” Boudreau said. By sharing her many blessings, her achievements are forever intertwined with what makes NSU great.
Senior Week provided an abundance of opportunities for the class of 2017 to get reacquainted while participating in the Senior Awards luncheon, enjoying a bash at the NSU Flight Deck, and attending an awards banquet at the Greater Fort Lauderdale/Broward County Convention Center.

The week culminated on Friday, May 19, when 233 D.O., 106 Master of Public Health, 24 Master of Science in Biomedical Informatics, 13 Master of Disaster and Emergency Management, and 3 Master of Science in Medical Education degrees were conferred during the NSU College of Osteopathic Medicine and College of Dental Medicine Commencement Ceremony at the Rick Case Arena at the Don Taft University Center on the Fort Lauderdale/Davie Campus. In addition, two graduates received dual D.O./D.M.D. degrees.

During the ceremony, graduates were acknowledged for their accomplishments in front of an enthusiastic audience filled with family, friends, and faculty members. Celeste Philip, M.D., M.P.H., surgeon general and secretary of the Florida Department of Health, served as the keynote speaker and received an honorary Doctor of Humane Letters degree as part of the ceremony.
Awards and Highlights

**CHANCELLOR’S AWARD**
Osteopathic Medicine
Presented to the student who best exemplifies the characteristics of a fine osteopathic physician—a combination of scholarship, leadership, integrity, humanity, and loyalty to the profession
Recipient: Lucy Kahn, D.O.

**CHANCELLOR’S AWARD**
Biomedical Informatics
Presented to the student who best exemplifies the characteristics of a fine biomedical informatics professional—a combination of scholarship, leadership, integrity, humanity, and loyalty to the profession
Recipient: Jacques Orces, M.S.B.I.

**CHANCELLOR’S AWARD**
Public Health
Presented to the student who best exemplifies the characteristics of a fine public health professional—a combination of scholarship, leadership, integrity, humanity, and loyalty to the profession
Recipient: Angie Alegría, D.O., M.P.H.

**CHANCELLOR’S AWARD**
Disaster and Emergency Management
Presented to the student who best exemplifies the characteristics of a fine disaster and emergency management professional—a combination of scholarship, leadership, integrity, humanity, and loyalty to the profession
Recipient: Scott Manning, M.S. DEM

**DEAN’S AWARD**
Osteopathic Medicine
Presented for academic excellence to the student graduating with the highest scholastic achievement in the Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine Program
Recipient: Logan Vander Woude, D.O.

**DEAN’S AWARD**
Biomedical Informatics
Presented for academic excellence to the student graduating with the highest scholastic achievement in the Master of Science in Biomedical Informatics Program
Recipient: Rocio Arevalo, M.S.B.I.

**DEAN’S AWARD**
Public Health
Presented for academic excellence to the student graduating with the highest scholastic achievement in the Master of Public Health Program
Recipient: Matthew Slingbaum, M.P.H.

**DEAN’S AWARD**
Disaster and Emergency Management
Presented for academic excellence to the student graduating with the highest scholastic achievement in the Master of Disaster and Emergency Management Program
Recipient: Theodore Milburn, M.S. DEM
CHANCELLOR’S AWARD
Medical Education
Presented to a graduating student who best exemplifies the characteristics of a fine medical education professional—a combination of scholarship, leadership, integrity, humanity, and loyalty to the profession
Recipient: Hilda DeGaetano, D.O., M.S.Ed.

EXCELLENCE IN EMERGENCY MEDICINE AWARD
Presented to the graduate who has demonstrated outstanding proficiency in emergency medicine
Recipient: Javier Sanchez, D.O.

OUTSTANDING STUDENT IN PEDIATRIC SERVICE
Awarded to a student in the upper third of class in rank who actively organized and participated in at least three children’s projects during his or her time at NSU-COM and is considered by students and faculty to have motivated children-related projects at NSU-COM
Recipient: Patricia Camino, D.O.

OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT IN GERIATRICS AWARD
Presented for aptitude and interest in geriatrics as well as clinical competency and superior performance in the geriatrics rotation
Recipient: Kristi Ray, D.O., M.P.H. (pictured), and Julia Skettini, D.O.

ALBERT L. WEINER, D.O., MEMORIAL PSYCHIATRY AWARD
Presented in memory of Dr. Albert Weiner to the student achieving the greatest proficiency in psychiatry
Recipient: Janny Rivera, D.O.

OUTSTANDING STUDENT IN THE STUDY OF PEDIATRICS
Presented to an outstanding student who is in the upper quarter of the class in rank and possesses honor grades in pediatric ambulatory and hospital rotations as well as one elective in a pediatric area with an honor grade
Recipient: Erin Thornley, D.O.

FLORIDA CHAPTER OF THE AMERICAN ACADEMY OF PEDIATRICS, LUTHER W. HOLLOWAY AWARD
Presented to a graduating osteopathic medical student who intends to pursue a career in pediatrics and has been involved in pediatric advocacy work or community-based projects while in medical school
Recipient: Ila Sehgal, D.O.

MORTON AND GERALDINE TERRY INTERNAL MEDICINE AWARD
Presented to the student for the highest achievement in the study of internal medicine, both academic and clinical
Recipient: Courtney O’Brien, D.O.

FLORIDA CHAPTER, AMERICAN ACADEMY OF OSTEOPATHY AWARD IN OSTEOPATHIC MANIPULATIVE MEDICINE
Presented to the student who, in the opinion of the Department of Osteopathic Principles and Practice, has achieved the highest proficiency in osteopathic therapeutics
Recipient: Rita Zeidan, D.O.

A. ALVIN GREBER, D.O., CARDIOLOGY AWARD
Presented to the student demonstrating outstanding aptitude academically with recognized clinical application of knowledge in patients with cardiovascular disease
Recipient: Meghan Anderson, D.O.
MORTON AND MARY SMITH ACHIEVEMENT AWARD
Presented to the student exhibiting the highest quality of service and leadership, combined with scholarship, integrity, and personal worth
Recipient: Jason Faucheux, D.O.

ROSE COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARD
Presented to the student who demonstrated sincere interest in community service or community projects
Recipient: Angie Alegria, D.O., M.P.H.

SAMUEL J. SALMAN, D.O., AWARD IN FAMILY MEDICINE
Presented by the Florida Society of the American College of Osteopathic Family Physicians to the student whose scholarship, patient empathy, dedication, concern, and goals epitomize the osteopathic family physician as exemplified by the late Samuel J. Salman, D.O.
Recipient: Terry Parsons, D.O.

RESEARCH AWARD Osteopathic Medicine
Presented to a member of the graduating class who performed student research at a level worthy of recognition among peers and faculty members
Recipient: Sergey Arutyunyan, D.O.

ALUMNI ASSOCIATION AWARD
Presented to the student who, by his or her leadership, has done the most to maintain the cohesiveness, unity, and esprit de corps within his/her class for all four years
Recipient: Ravi Uppal, D.O.

CLINICAL SERVICE AWARD
Presented to the student judged to be outstanding in clinical service
Recipient: Kelly Corbitt, D.O.

DONNA JONES MORITSUGU AWARD
Presented to the spouse of a graduating student who best exemplifies the role of a professional’s partner in being an individual in his or her own right while being supportive of mate, family, and the osteopathic profession
Recipient: Victoria Faucheux

DEAN’S ORGANIZATIONAL AWARD
Presented to the senior who demonstrated organizational skills and leadership and received recognition from his or her peers during a productive academic career
Recipient: Lauren Boudreau, D.O.

MATTHEW A. TERRY, D.O., MEMORIAL AWARD
Presented to the student chosen by his or her peers as the exemplary osteopathic medical student
Recipient: Ravi Uppal, D.O.

PREDCTORAL RESEARCH FELLOWSHIP AWARD
Presented to the members of the graduating class who successfully completed the NSU-COM Predoctoral Research Fellowship
Recipients: Sergey Arutyunyan, D.O., and Michael Carranza, D.O.
DEAN’S GOVERNMENT AND PUBLIC POLICY AWARD
Presented to that member of the graduating class who has shown unique interest in developing an understanding of governmental and public health care policies
Recipient: Angela Kim, D.O., M.P.H.

DEAN’S COMMUNITY AWARD
Awarded to that member of the graduating class who, by personal and professional conduct, and by contributions to the student affairs and to the general program of NSUCOM, has been deemed worthy of special recognition
Recipient: Kristi Ray, D.O., M.P.H.

MASTER OF PUBLIC HEALTH STUDENT SERVICE AWARD
Presented to the Master of Public Health student who demonstrated commitment to community service
Recipient: Kristi Ray, D.O., M.P.H.

INTERPROFESSIONAL LEADERSHIP PROGRAM
Presented to a graduating D.O./M.P.H. student who exemplifies the characteristics of an interprofessional leader—a combination of scholarship, cultural competency, commitment to community-oriented care, and team-based skills
Recipient: Tiffany Crider, D.O.

ENDOCRINE SOCIETY AWARD
Presented to the student who has demonstrated outstanding achievement in the area and/or study of endocrinology
Recipient: Bansari Sarkar, D.O.

MEDICAL EDUCATION PROGRAM SERVICE AWARD
Presented to a graduating student who demonstrates sincere interest in community service and has, through personal and professional actions, contributed to the community by engaging in community service or community projects
Recipient: Theresa Schilthorn, M.S.Ed.

AMERICAN CONGRESS OF OBSTETRICIANS AND GYNECOLOGISTS (ACOG) DISTRICT XII DANIEL R. BARKUS OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT IN THE STUDY OF OB/GYN
Presented to the student who ranks in the top 25 percent of the class, is pursuing OB/GYN residency training, and has obtained the highest academic grade in the women’s health course
Recipient: Rehan Feroz, D.O.

AMERICAN CONGRESS OF OBSTETRICIANS AND GYNECOLOGISTS (ACOG) DISTRICT XII OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT IN THE SERVICE OF OB/GYN
Presented to the graduating student who ranks in the top 50 percent of the class, has demonstrated his/her intention of pursuing residency training in OB/GYN, and has effectively organized and participated in the greatest number and variety of activities related to the field of women’s health
Recipient: Britney Gibby, D.O.
DISASTER AND EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT PROGRAM SERVICE AWARD
Presented to the student who demonstrated sincere interest in community service or community projects
Recipient: Samantha Berkley, M.S. DEM

BIOMEDICAL INFORMATICS PROGRAM RESEARCH AWARD
Presented to a member of the graduating class who performed student research at a level worthy of recognition among peers and faculty
Recipient: Dwayne Richards, M.S.B.I.

MASTER OF PUBLIC HEALTH RESEARCH AWARD
Presented to the student who demonstrated an effort to contribute to new knowledge in public health through research
Recipient: Giovanni Vigliotti, M.P.H.

PREDOCTORAL OSTEOPATHIC PRINCIPLES AND PRACTICE FELLOWSHIP CERTIFICATES
Presented to students who have completed a predoctoral clinical and teaching fellowship in osteopathic principles and practice
Recipients: Rebecca Drucker, D.O.; Jamie Coffey, D.O.; Blaze Emerson, D.O.; Jason Faucheux, D.O.; Bryan Gayne, D.O.; Rita Zeidan, D.O.

Recipients in attendance (from left): Rebecca Drucker, Bryan Gayne, Rita Zeidan, Jamie Coffey, and Jason Faucheux

MERCK MANUAL AWARD FOR OUTSTANDING GRADUATING MEDICAL STUDENTS
Presented to graduating medical students for their outstanding contributions to the medical school community.
Recipients: Debra Cheng, D.O.; Terry Parsons, D.O.; Hiamine Maass, D.O.; Blaze Emerson, D.O.; Lauren Boudreau, D.O.

Recipients in attendance (from left): Debra Cheng, Lauren Boudreau, Hiamine Maass, and Terry Parsons
Sigma Sigma Phi is a national honorary osteopathic service fraternity established in 1921 in Kirksville, Missouri, by seven students from the American School of Osteopathic Medicine. The fraternity’s main objectives include furthering the science of osteopathic medicine and its standards of practice as well as promoting a higher degree of fellowship among its students. To earn membership consideration, Sigma Sigma Phi members are required to have a minimum grade point average of 80 percent; however, selection is based primarily upon service and leadership in the osteopathic community. Following, in alphabetical order, are the individuals who earned membership in Sigma Sigma Phi.


Membership in the Theta Chapter of the Psi Sigma Alpha National Osteopathic Scholastic Honor Society is based on laudable traits such as academic achievement (placing in the top 10 percent of their class), high moral character, and integrity. Following, in alphabetical order, are the individuals who received Psi Sigma Alpha recognition.


Sigma Sigma Phi is a national honorary osteopathic service fraternity established in 1921 in Kirksville, Missouri, by seven students from the American School of Osteopathic Medicine. The fraternity’s main objectives include furthering the science of osteopathic medicine and its standards of practice as well as promoting a higher degree of fellowship among its students. To earn membership consideration, Sigma Sigma Phi members are required to have a minimum grade point average of 80 percent; however, selection is based primarily upon service and leadership in the osteopathic community. Following, in alphabetical order, are the individuals who earned membership in Sigma Sigma Phi.

GOLD HUMANISM HONOR SOCIETY

The Gold Humanism Honor Society honors senior medical students, residents, role-model physician teachers, and other exemplars who demonstrated excellence in clinical care, leadership, compassion, and dedication to service and was organized to elevate the values of humanism and professionalism within the field of medicine and its constituent institutions.

Following, in alphabetical order, are the individuals who earned membership in the Gold Humanism Honor Society.

NOVA SOUTHEASTERN UNIVERSITY

GOLDEN APPLE AWARD
Osteopathic Medicine
Presented by the class of 2017 to a faculty or staff member deemed most outstanding by the graduating class
Recipient: David Boesler, D.O., M.S.

GOLDEN APPLE AWARD
Master of Public Health
Presented by the class of 2017 to the M.P.H. faculty member deemed most outstanding by the graduating class
Recipient: Nicole Cook, Ph.D., M.P.A.

GOLDEN APPLE AWARD
Medical Education
Presented by the class of 2017 to the medical education faculty member deemed most outstanding by the graduating class
Recipient: Arif Rana, Ph.D., Ed.S., M.S., M.P.H.

GOLDEN APPLE AWARD
Disaster and Emergency Management
Presented by the class of 2017 to the disaster and emergency management faculty member deemed most outstanding by the graduating class
Recipient: Kelly Davis, Ph.D.

GOLDEN APPLE AWARD
Biomedical Informatics
Presented by the class of 2017 to the biomedical informatics faculty member deemed most outstanding by the graduating class
Recipient: Jennie Q. Lou, M.D., M.Sc.

LEONARD TOW HUMANISM IN MEDICINE AWARDS
The Leonard Tow Humanism in Medicine Awards, presented by the Arnold P. Gold Foundation, recognize one graduating medical student and one outstanding faculty member judged to be exemplary in their compassion and sensitivity in patient care. These individuals consistently demonstrate compassion and empathy, act as role models for professional behavior, and demonstrate cultural sensitivity in working with people of diverse backgrounds.
Recipient—Student
Angie Alegria, D.O., M.P.H.
Recipient—Faculty
Naushira Pandya, M.D., CMD (pictured)
COMMISSIONING CEREMONY

NSU-COM was proud to host its annual promotion commissioning ceremony for graduating seniors who will be entering the armed services of the United States. The event, established in 2005 to honor and showcase support for graduates who will be doing medical tours of duty in the armed services, is held annually to facilitate the promotion of these young officers from the rank of second lieutenant (Army and Air Force) or ensign (Navy) to the rank of captain (Army/Air Force) or lieutenant (Navy). These young men and women have attended NSU-COM via the armed services Health Professions Scholarship Program.

The graduates have committed to serve in the U.S. armed forces for a minimum of eight years as part of their scholarship obligation. Most will be pursuing graduate medical education opportunities within the armed services after leaving NSU-COM. Retired Army Col. Ronald J. Renuart, D.O., FACP, presided over this year’s ceremony. Listed below are the NSU-COM graduates who were recognized at the ceremony.

**UNITED STATES ARMY**
- Capt. Foster Lerner, D.O.
- Capt. Karen Muschler, D.O.
- Capt. Olivia Parry, D.O.

**UNITED STATES NAVY**
- Lt. Tracey Kim, D.O.
- Lt. Adrienne Law, D.O.
- Lt. Eric Rosson, D.O.
- Lt. Stephanie Tamayo, D.O.

**UNITED STATES AIR FORCE**
- Capt. Anthony Bertasi, D.O.
Students Advocate on Capitol Hill

On March 8, several NSU-COM students, along with a faculty member, attended the American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine annual lobby day called COM Day on Capitol Hill in Washington, D.C. Along with other osteopathic medical students from across the United States, the NSU-COM attendees met with Florida senators and representatives to discuss medical student debt reform and the future of the physician workforce.
NSU-COM Students Honored at FOMA Convention

Several NSU-COM students earned scholarship awards during the Florida Osteopathic Medical Association (FOMA) annual convention held February 22–26 in Weston, Florida. The event attracted more than 900 osteopathic physicians, health care professionals, and students.

Seltzer Legislative and Healthcare Policy Award

Second-year student Natalie Negron received the FOMA Seltzer Legislative and Healthcare Policy Award, which is accompanied by a $250 cash prize. The Seltzer Award is presented to a student of good standing in the FOMA Student District Society at NSU-COM who possesses significant interest in the legislative process in Florida, is politically active, possesses leadership qualities, and supports FOMA Legislative Committee initiatives.

Paul Seltzer, D.O., FOMA legislative chair, and Natalie Negron

AFOMA Believes in You Scholarship

Jaclyn Siegel, class of 2018, received a $500 AFOMA Believes in You Scholarship Award, presented by the Advocates of the Florida Osteopathic Medical Association (AFOMA). The award is partly based on a student’s interest in osteopathic medicine, activities in the profession, and leadership abilities.

Jaclyn Siegel and Marc Kaprow, D.O., class of 2001 NSU-COM alumnus

Student Award

Second-year student Joe Bhagratie was the recipient of a $500 FOMA Student Award, presented to a deserving student based on criteria such as possessing leadership skills, supporting FOMA student district society initiatives, and showcasing significant interest in the osteopathic profession and osteopathic manipulative medicine.

From left: Robert George, D.O., Joe Bhagratie, and James Voirin, D.O.
Donors, Students Meet at Big Thank You Luncheon

NSU’s sixth annual Big Thank You Scholarship Luncheon, held March 27 in the Rick Case Arena at the Don Taft University Center, provides NSU administrators and students an opportunity to honor scholarship donors who continually make a difference in students’ lives. Donor honorees represent many generous people who created endowment funds at NSU over the past several decades—endowments that provide scholarships for deserving students throughout the university and enable them to pursue their dreams of undergraduate and graduate degrees.

Fourth-year student Kristi Ray and second-year student Tony Swicer were the recipients of the Morton Morris, D.O., J.D., Endowed Public Health Scholarship, while fourth-year student Angie Alegria and second-year student Coltz Boubert received the Judy Morris, M.D., Endowed Memorial Scholarship. Both public health scholarships are provided due to the generosity of Marie Morris—the widow of Morton Morris, D.O., J.D., who served as executive dean for professional affairs at the Health Professions Division prior to his death in May 2008.

To be eligible for the scholarships, nominees must be NSU-COM students or have already achieved their D.O. degree, showcase high academic achievement, be currently enrolled in the college’s Master of Public Health Program, and demonstrate financial need.
Student Advocacy on Display at D.O. Day

On April 5, about 30 first- and second-year NSU-COM students participated in D.O. Day in Washington, D.C., and marched along with more than 1,000 D.O.s and osteopathic medical students to advocate for continued federal funding of teaching health center graduate medical education. Throughout the day, D.O.s and students participated in a march across Capitol Hill and conducted dozens of meetings with members of Congress and legislative aides.

The NSU-COM students traveled to D.O. Day with James Howell, M.D., M.P.H., assistant dean of professional relations; Marie Florent-Carre, D.O., M.P.H., assistant professor of family medicine and public health; and Ronald J. Renuart, D.O., FACP, president of the Florida Osteopathic Medical Association and a 1990 NSU-COM alumnus.

NSU-COM Students Win Bethesda Hospital Poster Competition

On April 7, a trio of third-year students—Kimberly Baran, Heather Kligfeld, and Christian Prusinski—were named the winners of the Bethesda Hospital fourth annual Medical Student Poster Competition held at the hospital’s graduate medical education wing in Boynton Beach, Florida. Prusinski captured first-place honors, while Baran and Kligfeld captured second and third place, respectively.

Student COMmunications

NSU-COM Makes Noise at SOSA Conference

NSU-COM took center stage at the Student Osteopathic Surgical Association (SOSA) National Spring Conference held April 1–2 at Liberty University College of Osteopathic Medicine in Lynchburg, Virginia. During the symposium, second-year student Gee Yoon Park (above) received a SOSA Community Service Scholarship, which was awarded to two SOSA members who demonstrate a commitment to providing medical care to the underserved and exemplifies local/national community service activities.

Park, along with second-year students Kiara Jennings, Julia Ladna, and Tiffany Sinclair, represented NSU-COM at the conference. Additionally, Park’s presentation helped NSU-COM win the bid to host the national SOSA conference in the spring of 2018. Thanks to the hard work of Park and first-year student Zachary Smith, the college’s SOSA chapter also won the association’s Chapter Scholarship, which was awarded to only 1 of 33 chapters across the nation that demonstrates a stellar commitment to its local community through service or other outreach activities.
Second-year students George Abreut (left), Alixandria Fiore, and Wilson Pfeiffer, and first-year student Austin Price were awarded $1,000 Florida Vascular Society’s Next Generation Student Scholarships through the Florida Vascular Foundation for their academic achievements and interest in vascular surgery. The scholarships were provided to defray costs associated with their participation in the 30th Annual Scientific Sessions held May 4–7 in Amelia Island, Florida.


Fourth-year student Sergey Arutyunyan, M.S., had his coauthored article “Predictors of Sunburn Risk Among Florida Residents” published in the March issue of the Journal of the American Osteopathic Association. He also was interviewed regarding the article’s findings for a piece titled “Young Adults with Melanin-Rich Skin Are More Likely to Sunburn” featured on the Yahoo! Beauty website.

Mohga Behairy, class of 2018, received the Best Case Study Poster Award for her presentation “Celiac Disease in Simpson-Golabi-Behmel Syndrome Type 1” at the American College of Osteopathic Pediatricians Spring Conference held April 6–9 in Louisville, Kentucky.

Third-year student Daniel Bral was elected to the Kids Kicking Cancer Board of Directors. The national organization provides an innovative program that merges modern integrative medicine with traditional martial arts and addresses the overwhelming physical, spiritual, and emotional needs of children with illness.

Second-year students Alixandria Fiore, Vikisha Hazariwala, Natalie Negron, and Veena Varki, along with third-year students Bhavik Gupta and Nupur Shah, were inducted into Omega Beta Iota—the National Osteopathic Political Action Honor Society—at a ceremony held April 5 during D.O. Day in Washington, D.C. From left: Alixandria Fiore, Natalie Negron, third-year student Saamia Shaikh, and Vikisha Hazariwala.
Third-year student **Parth Gandhi** coauthored a poster with David Boesler, D.O., M.S., which earned third-place honors in the Louisa Burns Osteopathic Research Committee Research and Case Study National Poster Competition held at the American Academy of Osteopathy 2017 Convocation held March 22–26 in Colorado Springs, Colorado. The winning poster was titled “The Use of Osteopathic Manipulative Treatment in Addressing Neurogenic Thoracic Outlet Syndrome.”

Third-year students **Kristina T. Gemayel**, M.S., and **Kelly Hilton** presented their research project “Creating a Global Genetic Database for Myalgic Encephalomyelitis/Chronic Fatigue Syndrome and Identifying Relevant Single Nucleotide Polymorphism Frequencies” at the Global Health & Innovation Conference held April 22–23 at Yale University in New Haven, Connecticut. Their research, directed by Nancy Klimas, M.D., assistant dean of research and director of the NSU Institute for Neuro-Immune Medicine, helped establish the inaugural global database containing both genomic information and symptom questionnaires. With the help of their patient population, and by utilizing social media for participant recruitment, the duo has more than 500 participants spanning the globe. From left: Kelly Hilton and Kristina Gemayel looking collegiate at Yale University.

**Vikisha Hazariwala**, class of 2019, was awarded a $600 student scholarship for her abstract “Zinc and S-Adenosylmethionine Mediates Lung Inflammatory Cytokines in Otherwise Healthy HIV-1 Infected Individuals,” which she presented at the American Federation for Medical Research Southern Regional Meeting held February 11–13 in New Orleans, Louisiana. Her abstract also was published in the *Journal of Investigative Medicine*.

Third-year students **Tejeshwer Jaswal** (pictured) and **Vatche Melkonian** presented their emergency medicine research case posters at the Foundation for Osteopathic Emergency Medicine Case Study Poster Competition held April 19 in Bonita Springs, Florida. Jaswal discussed “Ovarian Vein Thrombosis Mimicking Acute Abdomen in a Pregnant Patient,” while Melkonian’s project focused on “Abdominal Cramps as the Earliest Warning Signs of Impending Anaphylactic Shock in a Patient with Indolent Systemic Mastocytosis.”

**Angela Kim**, class of 2017, coauthored the chapter “The History of Trichotillomania: The Bible, Shakespeare, and Other Curiosities,” which was published in the book *Trichotillomania (Hair Pulling Disorder): Clinical Characteristics, Psychological Interventions, and Emotional Effects*. She also was awarded an NSU Health Professions Division Educational Research Grant for her Master of Public Health project “Interrelationship of the Human Skin and Mind: Attitude and Behavior of Alopecia Areata Population Toward Seeking and Accessing Mental Health Services.”
Second-year student **Michelle King** presented an oral podium presentation about her abstract “Vulvar Vestibulectomy for Neuroproliferative Associated Vestibulodynia: A Retrospective Case-Control Study” at the International Society for the Study of Women’s Sexual Health annual meeting held February 24–26 in Atlanta, Georgia. She also presented the poster “Cervical Ectropion May Be a Cause of Dequamative Inflammatory Vaginitis” at the symposium.

Third-year students **Christopher Mancuso** (pictured), **Jason Mammino**, and **Logan Holman** had their coauthored article “The Adaptability and Utility of the Bilobed Transposition Flap” published in the April issue of the *Journal of the American Osteopathic College of Dermatology*.


**Urvi Patel**, class of 2019, was the recipient of a $1,000 Osteopathic Family Medicine Student Scholarship from the Auxiliary to the American College of Osteopathic Family Physicians. She was 1 of 20 D.O. students nationwide who received the scholarship for their commitment, leadership, and dedication to the field of osteopathic family medicine.

Third-year student **Jeffrey B. Morris** had his coauthored article “Dermoscope Use by Osteopathic Primary Care Physicians” published in the March issue of the *Journal of the American Osteopathic Association*. He also served as first author of an original research manuscript titled “Use of and Intentions to Use Dermoscopy Among Physicians in the United States,” which was accepted for publication in the *Dermatology Practical & Conceptual* journal.

**Third-year student Saamia Shaikh** and her teammates from the NSU Shepard Broad College of Law earned first-place honors in the Best Oral Presentation category at the L. Edward Bryant, Jr., National Health Law Transactional Moot Court Competition held March 24 at Loyola University in Chicago, Illinois. Shaikh is the second NSU-COM student to pursue the university’s concurrent Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine/Juris Doctorate degree.
Third-year student Zubin Shah, M.P.H., received the first-place award for his poster “Efficacy of Oral Re-Esterified Omega-3 Nutrition for Treatment of Dry Eye Disease” at the 101st Annual Clinical Assembly of the American Osteopathic College of Ophthalmology and Otolaryngology held May 10–13 in Las Vegas, Nevada. Additionally, Shah’s research was published in the *Cornea* journal and was rated as one of the most-read research articles of the year.

Brittany Siegel, class of 2018, served as primary author on the poster “Complications of Chronic Glucocorticoid Use in Congenital Adrenal Hyperplasia,” which she presented at the American College of Osteopathic Pediatricians 2017 Spring Conference held April 6–9 in Louisville, Kentucky.

Third-year student Jaclyn Siegel served as primary author on the poster “Complications of a Common Childhood Infection Mimicking a Deadly Diagnosis,” which she presented at the American College of Osteopathic Pediatricians Spring Conference held April 6–9 in Louisville, Kentucky.

Aadil Vora, class of 2018, was appointed as a national osteopathic coordinator for the Emergency Medicine Residents’ Association (EMRA) Medical Student Governing Council. In this role, Vora will represent all colleges of osteopathic medicine and students interested in emergency medicine. Additionally, his case report “Don’t Skip Leg Day, Bro: A Case of Unprecedented Exertional Rhabdomyolysis Without Acute Kidney Injury” won third place at the Foundation of Osteopathic Emergency Medicine Case Report Competition at the American College of Osteopathic Emergency Physicians Spring Seminar held April 18–22 in Bonita Springs, Florida. Vora also won second place for the same case report at the Florida Chapter of the American Academy of Emergency Medicine’s Scientific Assembly held April 22–23 in Miami Beach.
Abundant Accomplishment on Display at Student Awards Ceremony

On April 17, a number of deserving students earned awards and scholarships at the annual First- and Second-Year Student Awards Ceremony held in the Steele Auditorium. Students were honored in areas such as research, academic excellence, and community service.

MATTHEW A. TERRY ENDOWMENT
Second-year student Allison Nguyen and first-year student Mohammad Dlewati were the recipients of the Matthew A. Terry Scholarship Endowment. The academic accolade was established in 1999 to honor first- and second-year medical students who epitomize virtues such as scholastic excellence, service to the school, empathy, and congeniality.

From left: Allison Nguyen; Elaine Wallace D.O., M.S., M.S., M.S., NSU-COM dean; and Mohammad Dlewati

THREE STUDENTS WIN BRADLEY I. SILVERMAN SCHOLARSHIP
Second-year students Alixandra Fiore and Brittany Siegel, along with first-year student Douglas Rausch, were the recipients of the Bradley I. Silverman Memorial Scholarship, which was established in 2006 to honor outstanding NSU-COM students who participate in cancer-related community service and showcase compassion, commitment, and other laudable traits exemplified by Silverman.

From left: Alixandra Fiore; Stanley and Marilyn Silverman, the parents of Bradley Silverman; Brittany Siegel; and Douglas Rausch

THREE STUDENTS WIN BETH AND JOEL RUSH ENDOwed CHARTER SCHOLARSHIP
Second-year students Derek Jones and Edward Waseleski, along with first-year student Roha Garakani, received the Beth and Joel L. Rush, D.O., Endowed Charter Scholarship, which is provided to NSU-COM students who are in good academic standing and demonstrate active participation or leadership within their class.

From left: Derek Jones; Roha Garakani; Delia Harper-Celestine, Ed.D., M.P.H., assistant dean of student and alumni affairs; and Edward Waseleski

ROBERT KLEIN ENDOwed SCHOLARSHIP AWARD
Second-year student Juan Arana was the recipient of the Robert Klein, D.O., Endowed Scholarship Award, which is presented to a member of the Klein Society who demonstrates active participation or leadership within the society.

Juan Arana and Kenneth Johnson, D.O., FACOG, assistant dean of faculty and chair of the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology
DAVID B. LEVINE ENDOWED SCHOLARSHIP AWARD
Second-year student Urvi Patel received the David B. Levine, D.O., Endowed Scholarship Award, which is presented to a second-year student who demonstrates an interest in family and/or internal medicine, displays leadership for the osteopathic medical profession, and is a member of the Student Osteopathic Medical Association.

Urvi Patel accepts her award from Mark Sandhouse, D.O., M.S., associate dean of administration.

ROBERT AND EUGENE FRIEDMAN SCHOLARSHIP
Third-year student Saamia Shaikh received the Robert and Eugene Friedman Scholarship, which is presented to the student who best demonstrates active participation and leadership in his or her class.

Debra Cohn Steinkohl, M.H.S.A., assistant professor of family medicine and public health and course director of community service, presents Saamia Shaikh with her award.

C.H.A.S.E. HONORARY ANESTHESIOLOGY SCHOLARSHIP
Third-year students Genevieve Marshall and Kristina Gemayel garnered the C.H.A.S.E. Honorary Anesthesiology Scholarship, presented to students interested in attending the Florida Society of Anesthesiologists Annual Meeting in Palm Beach, Florida.

From left: Genevieve Marshall; Jennifer Jordan, Ed.D., assistant dean of medical education; and Kristina Gemayel

JUDY MORRIS ENDOWED MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP
Second-year student Coltz Boubert received the Judy Morris, M.D., Endowed Memorial Scholarship, presented to a student based on his or her educational goals, leadership, and active participation in the Master of Public Health Program.

From left: Cyril Blavo, D.O., M.S., M.P.H. and T.M., FACOP, director of the college’s Master of Public Health Program, and Coltz Boubert
Morton Morris Osteopathic Medicine Public Health Scholarship

Second-year student Tony Swicer received the Morton Morris, D.O., J.D., Osteopathic Medicine Public Health Scholarship, which is awarded to a student based on his or her educational goals, leadership, and active participation in the Master of Public Health Program.

From left: Cyril Blavo, D.O., M.S., M.P.H. and T.M., FACOP, director of the college’s Master of Public Health Program, and Tony Swicer

Rosebud Foster Memorial Public Health Scholarship

Kristine Freitas, B.S., training coordinator for two of the college’s disaster preparedness programs, was the recipient of the Rosebud Foster, Ed.D., Memorial Public Health Scholarship, which is presented to a graduate public health student who exemplifies leadership and demonstrates concern for underserved populations through community service and advocacy.

Gustavo Saldias, M.P.H., associate director of the Area Health Education Center Program, and Kristine Freitas

Kenneth Burnell Research Award

First-year student Paige Spagna received the Kenneth Burnell Student Research Award, which is bestowed to NSU-COM students who conduct outstanding research in either clinical medicine or biomedical science.

Humana Terry G. Smith Preceptorship

First-year student Madhurya Mulla earned the Humana Terry G. Smith Preceptorship, which is presented to first-year students selected to participate in a paid summer preceptorship with Humana.

Heather McCarthy, D.O., executive director of the Simulation/Standardized Patient Lab, and Madhurya Mulla
JEFF GROVE SCHOLARSHIP
Second-year student Paige Swalley received the Jeff Grove, D.O., Scholarship, which is presented to an NSU-COM student selected for his/her dedication to student service.

OSTEOPATHIC MEDICINE GENERAL SCHOLARSHIP
Second-year student Christina Baxter garnered the Osteopathic Medicine General Scholarship, which is presented to a second-year student based on academic merit and dedication to osteopathic medicine.

PEER MENTORS GARNER RECOGNITION
Second-year students were honored for their contributions to their individual societies as well as their commitment to fellow society members. They are as follows: Janelle Alvarez (William G. Anderson, D.O.); Gee Yoon Park (Louisa Burns, D.O.); Hytham Rashid (Robert Klein, D.O.); Daniel Nery (Fred Lippman, Ed.D.); Adaobi Ibe (Anthony J. Silvagni, D.O.); Timothy Diaz (Bradley I. Silverman, D.O.); Allison Nguyen (A.T. Still, M.D., D.O.); and Chris Larrimore (James Turner, D.O.). First-year students Luis Alva (Morton Terry, D.O.) and Zachary Smith (Ross Zafonte, D.O.) also won recognition.

All winners are nominated by their peers as being supportive and involved society members who exemplify the attitudes regarding NSU-COM participation, community service, and professionalism within their societies.

Pictured are the peer mentor honorees with Hilda M. DeGaetano, D.O., M.S.Ed., FACOP, FAAP, assistant dean of preclinical education and academic projects.
Vice Dean Gets Service Award

Stanley Cohen, Ed.D., M.Ed., professor of psychiatry and HPD executive vice dean for educational support, was honored with the HPD Distinguished Service Award for his numerous contributions to the health care field and NSU during the Health Professions Division's (HPD) 32nd annual Bal Fantastique held April 1 at the Hyatt Regency Pier 66 in Fort Lauderdale.

Hosted by the HPD, the Bal Fantastique raises funds to support educational and community programs in areas such as osteopathic medicine, pharmacy, optometry, health care sciences, medical sciences, dental medicine, nursing, and allopathic medicine.

Scott Colton, B.A., APR, who serves as COM/HPD director of medical communications and public relations, received first-place honors in the 2017 American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine (AACOM) Excellence in Communications Awards Program. Colton earned the first-place award in the Best Feature Article category for his piece “Altruism in Action: Second-Year Student Gives the Gift of Life.” AACOM represents the 33 accredited colleges of osteopathic medicine in the United States, which are accredited to deliver instruction at 48 teaching locations in 31 states.

Louis Hasbrouck, D.O., who served as a longtime faculty member in the college’s Department of Osteopathic Principles and Practice before retiring a number of years ago, passed away in April at the age of 97.

James T. Howell, M.D., M.P.H., professor and assistant dean of professional relations, received the Lifetime Achievement Award from Palm Beach County Medical Society Services in recognition of his organizational leadership from 2001 through 2017.

Doris B. Newman, D.O., FAAO, assistant dean of osteopathic clinical education, was elected to the American Academy of Osteopathy (AAO) Board of Governors at the AAO Convocation held March 23 in Colorado Springs, Colorado. Newman was one of three osteopathic physicians from around the country to be newly elected as a governor of the AAO—the largest medical society in the United States devoted to fostering neuromusculoskeletal medicine and osteopathic manipulative medicine.
Transitions

Anjali Bhasin, M.D., transferred to the Division of Employee Health.


Darren Cohen, D.O., became director of the Simulation Lab.

Ana Del Alamo, M.Sc., was named administrative director of the Institute for Neuro-Immune Medicine.

Phyllis Filker, D.M.D., M.P.H., was promoted to associate dean of bache- lor’s, graduate, and community education programs.

Karlon Godfrey, B.S., is serving as administrative coordinator II.

Sadio Hazel, M.P.A., was promoted to manager in the Department of Medical Education.

Carmen Hernandez is serving as manager of the Simulation and Standardized Patient Lab.

Ana Maria Homs, Psy.D., is working as an academic adviser in the Department of Medical Education.

Jerita Lanier, M.S., is providing administrative support for the Department of Family Medicine and the Department of Osteopathic Principles and Practice.

Jordan Mathis, M.S., was promoted to director of student and alumni affairs.

Kristi Messer, M.P.H., M.S.W., assumed the full-time role as director of the college’s undergraduate programs.

Heather McCarthy, D.O., became one of three new academic advisers in the Department of Medical Education.

Elizabeth Oviawe, M.Sc., M.M.I.S., M.S.B.I., was appointed director of educational technologies within the Department of Medical Education.

Odessa Pemberton, B.S., was promoted to employee services consultant I.

Stephanie Petrosky, M.H.A., R.D., is serving as director of graduate admissions and the nutrition program.

Arif Rana, Ph.D., Ed.S., M.S., M.P.H., became director of the Biomedical Informatics Program and chair of the new Department of Health Informatics.

Alfredo Rehbein, M.B.A., extended his role and is now serving as director of finance and administration.

Denise Raof was promoted to executive assistant to the dean.

Shauntae Roberts, is serving as a administrative coordinator II in the Office of the Dean.

Sweta Tewary, Ph.D., returned to the college and became an academic adviser with the Department of Medical Education.

Kim Valenti, M.Ed., was appointed director of the Master of Medical Education Program.

Jill Wallace-Ross, D.O., was promoted to interim assistant dean of osteopathic clinical education.

Ellen Weinstein, B.S.I.T., is serving as an administrative assistant in the M.S. in Nutrition and the M.S. in Disaster and Emergency Management programs.

New Hires

Noel Alonso, M.D., assistant professor of pediatrics

Sahar Amini, D.O., assistant professor, internal medicine

Alison C. Bested, M.D., FRCPC, chair of integrative medicine and director of student research development

Dave Buchanan, Ed.D., manager, Biomedical Informatics Program

Phillyppe Carre, M.S., project manager, SEAMIST and HazMirts grants

Melissa Chamberlain, M.B.A., director of preclinical education

Marc Kesselman, D.O., assistant professor of internal medicine

Evelyn Martinez, coordinator, medical outreach

Shari Ramchal, M.P.H., student outreach coordinator
A number of longtime friends and colleagues attended Johneta Goodwin’s farewell reception. Pictured (from left) are Scott Colton, B.A., APR, COM/HPD director of medical communications and public relations; Anthony J. Silvagni, D.O., Pharm.D., M.Sc., FACOFP dist., FCPP, dean emeritus and director of international and interprofessional medicine; Dianna Silvagni, J.D., clinical assistant professor of medical education; Goodwin; Marie Morris; and Elaine M. Wallace, D.O., M.S., M.S., M.S., NSU-COM dean.

Longtime Administrator Retires After 19 Years

BY SCOTT COLTON, B.A., APR, COM/HPD DIRECTOR OF MEDICAL COMMUNICATIONS AND PUBLIC RELATIONS
In the November 2000 issue of COM Outlook, Johneta Goodwin, director of administrative operations, was profiled in the magazine’s Staff Snapshot section. When she was asked to describe where she hoped to be in five years, her mind already seemed set on retirement when she replied, “Relaxing, traveling, and enjoying my granddaughter.”

Goodwin, who has been the college’s unofficial “den mother” for the past 19 years, did not retire when that 5-year period concluded. In fact, she ended up extending her NSU-COM employment for 12 years, officially retiring from the college on February 28.

“I decided it was the right time to retire when I realized I needed to quit worrying about everyone around me, start concentrating on my own health, and do the things I have put off doing,” she explained. “I have thoroughly enjoyed my job; however, it is time for me to kick back. I feel I have contributed and have done my share to assist in making the college what it is today.”

Throughout her NSU-COM career, Goodwin played an integral and multifaceted role, including serving as the college’s human resources representative, which allowed her to interact with every faculty and staff member on some level. “The main thing I have enjoyed about my time at the college is the variety of people who have come into my life,” she said. “I have enjoyed so many fun times with many of the employees and have made many lifelong friends.”

One frightening incident several years ago proved to Goodwin just how much she is not only loved by her colleagues, but revered. After suffering a bad fall that kept her out of the office for almost five months, Goodwin was overwhelmed with the outpouring of affection and support she received.

“There wasn’t a day during my hospitalization and inpatient rehab when I did not have visits or phone calls from various faculty and staff members,” she recalled. “There was one occasion during my inpatient rehab when a faculty member visited me on a regular basis. After he came to the rehab hospital several times, they decided to give him his own parking spot during the time I was a patient in the facility. Then there was the time when several faculty and staff members moved me from one apartment to my current apartment while I was hospitalized. These are true friends.”

Goodwin’s decision to retire from what has essentially been her second home resulted in a mix of conflicting emotions. As she looks to the future, however, Goodwin is relishing what lies ahead as she eases into her hard-earned retirement.

“I am looking forward to not having a regular routine or being on a regular schedule,” she admitted. “I plan to spend time in Maine with my son and grandkids and in the Midwest visiting close friends. If I want to drive down to the beach for a cup of coffee in the morning, I can do so. Of course, I might consider sleeping in a few mornings—unless my internal clock tells me otherwise.”
The College of Osteopathic Medicine walked away with several significant accolades at the 19th Annual NSU Student Life Achievement Awards (STUEYS) held April 13 in the NSU Rose and Alfred Miniaci Performing Arts Center, including the Student Government Association (SGA) of the Year Award, which it also won in 2014.

“Being honored with the 2017 STUEY for Student Government Association of the Year could not have been possible without the hard work of all the individuals on our team,” said third-year student Bhavik Gupta, who serves as the college’s SGA president. “It has been our belief that leadership has never been about a title or a designation, but rather about impact, influence, and inspiration. Our team had a simple goal throughout the year—to enthuse others to dream more, learn more, and do more. This award is a testament to the vision of our Student Government Association and class executive boards.”

Frederick Lippman, R.Ph., Ed.D., former HPD chancellor who now serves as NSU interim executive vice president and chief operating officer, was named Executive of the Year. “It is a great honor to be recognized by my peers,” Lippman said. “But the real recognition goes to all the people who work with me on a daily basis, from the deans and faculty and staff members to the students. The students find their way to my office quite often, and I frequently find my way to their meetings. My acceptance of this award is really an acceptance for all the people I interact with, not just myself.”

Additionally, third-year NSU-COM student Saamia Shaikh, who is participating in the college’s dual D.O./J.D. program, received the NSU Student of the Year Award as a representative of the Shepard Broad College of Law, which nominated her for the award.

“Being recognized as the overall NSU Student of the Year served as confirmation of my belief that sometimes you must follow your heart in pursuit of a vision that only you can see,” Shaikh said. “Receiving this award has reinvigorated me to work even harder in hopes of becoming the most competent physician and attorney for my future patients and clients. It was also very humbling, because it was an opportunity for me to reflect and realize that I could not have made it this far without the constant support and encouragement of my friends, family, and professors.”

For those unfamiliar with the STUEY Awards, the event was created to honor the people and organizations that best exemplify the core values of academic excellence, student centered, opportunity, scholarship/research, integrity, diversity, innovation, and community within the university community.

Other NSU-COM nominees included Kristi Ray, for Student of the Year; Scott Colton, B.A., APR, for Administrator of the Year; and Traci-lyn Eisenberg, D.O., for Cocurricular Adviser of the Year.
Student COMmunications

**TOP LEFT:** Frederick Lippman proudly displays his STUEY with Jessica Brumley, B.A., vice president of facilities management (left) and members of NSU’s Infinite Motion Undergraduate Student Organization.

**TOP RIGHT:** Kristi Ray commemorated her NSU-COM Student of the Year STUEY with David Boesler, D.O., M.S., chair of the Department of Osteopathic Principles and Practice.

**BOTTOM LEFT:** Natalie Negron, president-elect of the NSU-COM Student Government Association (right), with Lisa M. Deziel, Pharm.D., Ph.D., dean of the NSU College of Pharmacy.

**Bottom right:** Saamia Shaikh revels in her NSU Student of the Year win with George L. Hanbury II, Ph.D., NSU president and chief executive officer.
Cervical cancer is the third-most common cancer among women worldwide. Although cervical cancer is one of the most successfully controlled cancers because of the Papanicolaou test (Pap smear), which detects cervical cancer and precancerous lesions, developing countries have not benefitted from these advances. There is a limited capacity to prevent, as well as treat, cervical cancers due to these programs being either unavailable or underfunded because they compete with other priorities.

The Pap test is available in Grenada at government clinics at a low cost; however, coverage rates are relatively low. Increasing access to and improving quality of screening programs has been identified as a key component of effective programs for the early detection of cervical cancer in low-resource settings.

The World Health Organization (WHO) advises that for cytology screening to be effective, coverage rates must be high. The data from Grenada, however, clearly indicates that coverage levels are insufficient, which is demonstrated by the relatively high rates of cervical cancers and low Pap test rates.
These survival statistics can be improved with the use of effective screening and treatment strategies; however, cancer diagnosis in these populations with low screening coverage is most often made in advanced stages. Therefore, efforts to increase screening coverage levels among women in Grenada are imperative.

Results from our qualitative study conducted with Grenadian women, supported by a 2014–2015 NSU-COM Kenyon Cancer Research Grant, indicated that increasing education and knowledge might increase cancer screening. Additionally, participants thought they needed to learn the process for when to initiate cancer screenings.

Participants also stated they preferred face-to-face communication through a forum or in small groups with open discussion and a facilitator. They also wanted to ask questions and get an immediate answer. These results led to seeking an evidence-based intervention that could be adapted to address the cervical cancer disparities in Grenada.

The research team in Grenada consists of Christine Richards, Ph.D., M.P.H., of St. George’s University, as well as Marva Primus-Joseph, M.P.H., R.N., and Ann Marie Burnie-James, R.N., of T.A. Marryshow Community College. The group adapted Salud es Vida—a curriculum and intervention program developed for lay health workers in the Hispanic community—to Woman to Woman for the Grenadian context.

Woman to Woman is an education program developed for lay health advisers (LHAs) in Grenada, which is funded through a 2016–2017 Kenyon Cancer Research Grant. Specifically, the program provided Grenadian LHAs with training on cervical cancer and human papillomavirus (HPV) so they can deliver education in their communities.

In May, the two-day Woman to Woman training on cervical cancer and HPV was conducted with six women from the three parishes with the lowest rates of cervical cancer screening, along with two local women from the Grenada National Organization of Women. Day one addressed the female anatomy, cancer, and cervical cancer, while day two covered cervical cancer screening, HPV, and community resources. The training was a top feature on the local evening news channels.

LHAs completed a pretest and a post-test measure, as well as a session evaluation, and participated in a focus group about the training. Preliminary results indicated that women improved their cervical cancer and HPV knowledge. Additionally, the curriculum and its delivery were highly rated by the local women.

The newly trained LHAs are expected to conduct a minimum of two community sessions in the presence of a member of the research team. Each community session will consist of 8 to 10 women. If successful, the program has the potential be implemented in similar nations throughout the Caribbean.
Jay M. Fleisher, Ph.D., M.S., M.A., was invited to conduct a peer review of a large meta-analysis submitted on the risk of acquiring infections from recreational exposure to seawater in the *International Journal of Epidemiology*. Fleisher also was invited to be an external dissertation adviser for a doctoral student at the University of Illinois at Chicago.

Stephen G. Grant, Ph.D., presented his paper “Nucleotide Excision Repair Identifies Two Distinct Types of Non-Tumor Adjacent Breast in Sporadic, Non-Germline Breast Cancer” at the Gordon Research Conference on Mammalian DNA Repair: Frontiers of Mammalian Genomic Stability in Human Health held February 19–24 in Ventura, California. He also reviewed six manuscripts and papers for several journals, including *Toxicology in Vitro*, *Chemotherapy: Open Access*, *Biomedical Review*, *Anatomy & Physiology: Current Research*, and the McMaster Online Rating of Evidence system.

Elizabeth Hames, D.O., (pictured) and Kenya Rivas, M.D., presented their lecture “Food for Thought: Nutrition and Weight Loss in Persons with Dementia: Strategies in Post-Acute and Long-Term Care” at the AMDA—Society for Post-Acute and Long-Term Care Annual Conference in Phoenix, Arizona, on March 18.

Kenneth E. Johnson, D.O., FACOOG, had his coauthored article “Preventing Alcohol-Exposed Pregnancies: A Randomized Controlled Trial of a Self-Administered Version of Project CHOICES with College Students and Non-students” published in a recent issue of *Alcoholism: Clinical & Experimental Research*.

Bindu S. Mayi, Ph.D., M.Sc., discussed the topic “MRSA Is Not Alone!” on April 20 at Bastyr University in Kenmore, Washington. A book-signing session followed for her book, *Mrs. A*, that talks about prevention of MRSA set amidst a story of overcoming bullying with the help of a strong and caring mentor. She also presented on the topic “Hepatitis C: Latest News” at the Association for Professionals in Infection Control and Epidemiology Broward/Palm Beach Counties Chapter meeting on May 19.

Naushira Pandya, M.D., CMD, FACP, served as a keynote speaker at the “Diabetes Skills Workshop” held March 16 at the AMDA—Society for Post-Acute and Long-Term Care Annual Conference in Phoenix, Arizona.
Faculty Members Receive President’s Research Grants

On May 15, several NSU-COM faculty members, in collaboration with other NSU faculty researchers, were awarded cash endowments in the university’s 18th Annual President’s Faculty Research and Development Grant (PFRDG) Awards ceremony.

During the event, 29 research projects received PFRDG awards of up to $15,000 each for fiscal year 2018. Various university researchers received a total of $368,909 in awards. The ceremony also recognized the dedication and innovation of the 68 faculty members and 41 students from the 15 academic units that submitted 55 PFRDG proposals.

NSU-COM recipients of the President’s Faculty Research and Development Grants were Renee Alexis, M.D.; Winston Alexis, M.D.; Vladimir Beljanski, Ph.D.; Mary Ann Fletcher, Ph.D., M.A.; Kristina Gemayel, M.S.; Patrick Hardigan, Ph.D.; Kenneth Johnson, D.O.; Nancy Klimas, M.D.; Jacqueline Freire Machi, Ph.D.; Mariana Morris, Ph.D.; Lubov Nathanson, Ph.D., M.Sc.; Maria Vera Nunez, M.D.; Elizabeth Oviawe, M.S.; Melanie Perez; Violetta Renesca, M.S.N.; Irina Rozenfeld, M.S.N., A.R.N.P.; Luis M. Salgueiro, Ph.D.; Rodrigo Schmidt, M.S.; Malav Trivedi, Ph.D.; and Jill Wallace-Ross, D.O.
Alia Abdulla, D.O. (’03), a surgical oncologist, was honored at the Boys & Girls Club of Broward County’s annual 100 Outstanding Women of Broward County dinner on May 11 for her dedication to cancer care. Abdulla serves as the medical director of surgical oncology and robotic surgery at North Shore Medical Center (NSMC) in Miami and is a practicing physician at NSMC and Palmetto General Hospital in Hialeah as part of the Center for Advanced Surgical Oncology.

Mete Akin, D.O., M.P.H. (’09), who is board certified in anesthesiology and interventional pain medicine, accepted a position as associate professor and medical director of the pain management division of Johns Hopkins School of Medicine’s Sibley Memorial Hospital.

American Medical Association presented the award—formerly called the McCurdy Citizenship Award—to an osteopathic physician.

Carisa R. Champion, D.O., J.D., M.P.H. (’16), was appointed to the American Osteopathic Foundation’s Honorary Event Host Committee for the American Osteopathic Association OMED annual convention being held October 7–10 in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. She also was named cochair of the AOA Bureau of Emerging Leaders Membership Value Task Force.

Suzanne M. Labriola, D.O. (’04), was named as the chief medical officer at Allegheny Valley Hospital in Natrona Heights, Pennsylvania. She has served in a variety of leadership and advisory positions throughout her career with the Allegheny Health Network.

David Pizzimenti, D.O., FACOI (’02), was selected to be a member of the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education’s (ACGME) Internal Medicine Resident Review Committee (RRC). The RRC oversees the accreditation of all ACGME internal medicine programs nationwide.

Lawrence J. Shapiro, J.D., D.O. (’88), will be published in chapter 71 of the Practical Aspect in Hair Transplantation for Asians textbook. Shapiro’s submission discusses “Low Anabolic Profile in Assessing a Patient’s Overall Hair Loss.” Additionally, he served as a guest speaker on the topic at the North Carolina Dermatology Association meeting held March 4–6 in Pinecrest, North Carolina, and the Dermatology Nursing Association meeting held April 2–4 in Orlando, Florida.

Erica P. Turse, D.O., M.P.H. (’14), was appointed to the American College of Physicians (ACP) Council of Resident/Fellow Members (CRFM) for a two-year term. The CRFM consists of 12 at-large members, with consideration given to the ACP’s diversity policy as well as training year, training program, and chief resident experience. All members must be ACP resident/fellow members at the time of selection.

Michael L. Baron, D.O. (’88), received the Judy and Bob McMahon Citizenship Award from the DeKalb Medical Society in April. It marked the first time the Georgia division of the American Medical Association presented the award—formerly called the McCurdy Citizenship Award—to an osteopathic physician.

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Alumni Corner

NSU-COM Alumni Earn Honors at FOMA Convention

Several NSU-COM alumni were in the spotlight during the Florida Osteopathic Medical Association (FOMA) annual convention held February 22–26 in Weston, Florida.

1990 Alumnus Elected FOMA President
Ronald J. Renuart, D.O., FACP ('90), who was elected the FOMA president, is former chief of staff at Baptist Medical Center in Jacksonville Beach and has served in the Florida House of Representatives since 2008. As a colonel in the Florida Army National Guard, he served three combat tours in countries such as Iraq and Afghanistan and served for six years as the chief medical officer for the National Guard, retiring after 20 years of decorated service. During his tenure in the Florida House of Representatives, Renuart has authored landmark legislation pertaining to concussions in youth athletics, prostate cancer research, the Florida GI Bill, and the craft distillery industry.

Distinguished Service Award
Gregory James, D.O., M.P.H., FACOFP dist. ('88), received the FOMA Distinguished Service Award, which is the highest honor the FOMA can bestow upon an individual. The award is given to an individual in recognition of outstanding accomplishments in scientific, professional, osteopathic education, or service to the osteopathic profession at a state and national level.

Physician of the Year
Diana Johnstone Graves, D.O. ('86), received the Physician of the Year Award, which is presented to an osteopathic physician who, during the past year, has made significant and considerable contributions to the osteopathic profession, his or her patients, and to the community on both a local and statewide level. She received the award in recognition of and appreciation for her devotion as a leader, educator, and role model for the FOMA and osteopathic physicians in Florida.
The life of an academic dean is fraught with daily challenges, which can range from programmatic issues and curriculum concerns to hiring decisions and prickly student situations. Crisis management may be a less-common occurrence; however, when an emergency arises, swift action and strategic planning play key roles in ensuring a calm, coordinated, and controlled response.

James M. Turner, D.O., M.P.H., FACOFP, FACOEP, a 1988 alumnus who serves as dean of the William Carey University College of Osteopathic Medicine (WCUCOM) in Hattiesburg, Mississippi, learned these lessons firsthand when a powerful EF3 tornado ripped through Hattiesburg during the early morning hours on Saturday, January 21.

At approximately 3:00 a.m., Turner was awakened by his phone, which was emitting an emergency message. “When we turned the television on, we found out the tornado was just a few miles away and headed toward Hattiesburg,” said Turner, who immediately called several people to warn them of the impending danger. “As soon as we were sure the tornado threat had passed, I called the university’s president, Dr. Tommy King, who informed me the tornado had hit the campus.”

With a sense of trepidation, Turner jumped in his car and headed toward the college, which proved to be difficult due to the extensive debris strewn throughout the streets. “We arrived on campus before daybreak, so the damage was initially hard to assess,” he said.

In the tornado’s aftermath, about 750 WCU students had gathered in the college’s administration building to escape their student housing structures, which had been heavily damaged. “Trying to figure out which were osteopathic students, and if anyone was hurt, was initially a challenge, but we were able to make a complete assessment by the time the sun came up around 7:00 a.m.,” Turner said.

Unfortunately, all the WCUCOM structures experienced varying degrees of damage. Miraculously, however, none of the medical students were hurt. “One of our students lived in a building that was completely destroyed by the tornado.” Turner said. “But, by the grace of God, he was not hurt, although he lost most of his possessions.”

With daylight creeping over the horizon, Turner and his colleagues began evaluating the extensive damage. “Power lines were down all around, and the potential for injury to the students was significant,” he recalled. “We soon discovered that the simulation lab had sustained heavy damage and that the new anatomy lab was beginning to cave in on itself. Some students lost most, if not all, of their personal possessions. Additionally, many cars
were damaged, including more than 120 that could no longer be driven.”

After the initial assessment, leaders implemented a multipronged process. This included providing swift and accurate communications to the college’s various stakeholders, finding housing for the displaced students, and addressing the issue of academic continuance and campus repair/reconstruction. “Initial communication was directed at assessing student and faculty losses and injury,” Turner said. “This began as an on-site assessment, but then we reached out to everyone through Facebook and email.”

Because swift and precise communication are key components of crisis management, all communications-related information was promulgated through the WCUCOM dean’s office to maximize accuracy and minimize the flow of misinformation.

“One of the reasons we feel we were so successful in keeping initial control of the situation, and were able to get up and running so rapidly, was daily communication between my office and the students,” Turner explained. “Efforts to keep students fully apprised of all developments were extensive and open. Students were repeatedly asked if they had physical or emotional needs, and emergency housing was secured hours after the tornado struck.”

OUTPOURING OF SUPPORT

As news of the tornado’s impact spread through the local area and reached the national osteopathic community, Turner was overwhelmed with messages of concern and offers of support. “During the initial 48 hours, I received more than 1,000 emails and texts, including many from friends across the osteopathic profession,” he said. “The leadership of the American Osteopathic Association, the American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine (AACOM), the Commission on Osteopathic College Accreditation, and the AACOM Board of Deans all offered assistance, as well as well wishes.”

From a local perspective, the University of Southern Mississippi (USM) Hattiesburg campus, located several miles from William Carey University, offered immediate assistance by providing food services to the WCU students. The outpouring of help, however, was just beginning.

“Community support has been tremendous. In the initial aftermath, the Forrest County Board of Supervisors and area hospital personnel were on the scene and helped secure many of our valuable resources,” Turner explained. “Included in these resources were our cadaveric specimens, which were transported by a local business in a refrigerated vehicle to the county morgue.”

Additionally, an incredibly generous offer from Rodney Bennett, Ed.D., president of the University of Southern Mississippi, helped ensure the continuation of WCU College of Osteopathic Medicine classes within a week of the tornado’s touchdown. “Dr. Bennett visited us early on the morning of January 21 and offered his Hattiesburg campus as a relocation facility for our college,” Turner
said. “Camp Shelby volunteers came to campus to help transport desks and instructional materials to USM, while faculty and staff members worked many hours to get the temporary space up and in place by week’s end.”

Three days after the tornado struck, WCUCOM held a meeting at a local church for all students, as well as faculty and staff members, to allay everyone’s fears regarding the college’s future. Meeting participants included AACOM and AOA leadership, who joined the conversation by telephone.

According to Turner, one of the earliest offers of assistance came from the University of Mississippi Medical Center in Jackson—the state’s only allopathic medical school. Local hospitals, including Merritt Health Wesley and Forrest General Hospital, also offered assistance in the form of space and teaching resources.

RECONSTRUCTION EFFORTS/LESSONS LEARNED

In the ensuing months, William Carey University raised more than $3.6 million in tornado relief funds from the community. “A portion of this has come from students of various osteopathic medical schools across the country,” Turner said. “In addition, many offers of assistance were put forth by many of the deans of our osteopathic medical schools nationwide.”

By January 23—two days after the tornado decimated much of the campus—more than 650 construction workers and several hundred volunteers were on-site to assist with the recovery and reconstruction effort. “Initially, this effort was to secure a safe working environment and save as much equipment as possible,” Turner explained. “Since then, five buildings have been demolished, including our college’s anatomy lab, with rebuilding efforts starting the following week.”
Based on projections from the college’s insurance company and architect, Turner anticipated holding classes in the reconstructed buildings prior to the new student orientation events that took place in late July. “This remarkable recovery time is in part due to the university leadership’s decision not to accept any federal recovery funds,” he said. “This decision greatly expedited the ability to move forward without extensive paperwork delays.”

Now that a number of months have passed since the January 21 tornado ripped through the college campus, Turner took time to reflect on the biggest challenges he faced and the lessons he learned. “The most challenging aspect was the emotional stress and great feeling of loss experienced by our students and faculty members,” he said. “Fortunately, WCUCOM is blessed with an outstanding faculty and student body who have adapted to the temporary space and accommodations. This has been possible only with full cooperation of all involved, especially the USM team.”

Turner also shared some valuable advice with his sister colleges, which could face a natural or man-made disaster at any time. “Communication is key,” he stressed. “During this time frame, all communication was directed through the dean's office. We employed social media, as well as our standard Internet resources. This was particularly important, because our telephone system was down for two weeks.”

Thankfully, he had previously converted the students’ files from paper to electronic records, which prevented the possible loss of valuable—and irreplaceable—information. “WCUCOM was in the advanced stage of digitalizing its student records, which allowed us to have off-campus backup of these records,” he explained. “Had this process not been almost completed when the tornado struck, loss of records could have been a major issue. As a result, there was there was only minimum disruption to our students in this respect.”

While it’s true that no college or university is immune from experiencing a catastrophic natural or man-made disaster, the leadership at William Carey University proved that planning and effective crisis communication and management protocols will ensure the best possible outcomes. □
Pediatric Activist Honored with Melnick Child Advocacy Award

On February 9, NSU-COM’s Pediatrics Club honored Patricia Rowe-King, M.D., with the Arnold Melnick Child Advocacy Award for her dedication to childhood causes. The annual award was named in honor of the founding dean of the College of Osteopathic Medicine and was established by the college’s Pediatric Club. The award recognizes individuals who promote children’s causes and is presented each year.

Rowe-King is director of the pediatric residency program at Broward Health Medical Center. She also works as a hospitalist and is the medical director of pediatric services for EmCare. She has led many medical outreach trips to the Dominican Republic and Belize, working extensively with underserved youth. Demonstrating leadership and service, she champions the cause of children and inspires the members of the Pediatrics Club to do the same.

Additionally, she has been a teacher, role model, and mentor to the NSU-COM family. Rowe-King thinks making a lasting impact in the lives of children goes far beyond the clinic, routine office visits, or health care crises that patients may face. She exemplifies the importance of pediatrics as a calling beyond the profession and exhibits passion, joy, and copious amounts of hard work for a population who often do not have a voice.
The holistic pursuit of wellness is a hallmark of NSU’s College of Osteopathic Medicine. One of its most recent options in that endeavor includes taking the stairs in the Terry Building. Initially, there were posters and quotations to inspire stair climbers. Then inspiration took a refreshing, colorful, and younger turn when the college collaborated with NSU University Lower and Middle Schools for the 2016–2017 school year.

“Hopefully, you have taken the time to walk the stairs in the south end of the Terry Building. If you have, I am sure you were delighted to see the artwork produced by students who attend NSU University School’s fifth grade, on the topic of wellness,” said the college’s dean, Elaine M. Wallace, D.O., M.S., M.S., M.S.

The project is a part of the collaboration between NSU-COM and the NSU Lower and Middle Schools to encourage individuals to exercise. Wallace, along with Jill Wallace-Ross, D.O., collaborated with William Kopas, Ed.D., headmaster, and Jenine S. Mas, M.A., art teacher at the University Lower School, to create the art program.

Each month, new drawings decorated the stairwells—the shapes, phrases, and colors encouraging climbers to pursue healthy habits. On each landing, the pieces were numbered and a sheet provided a way for exercisers to choose their favorite.

“After tallying the votes each month, the COM donated $100 for classroom supplies to the homeroom teacher of the students who received the most votes,” Wallace said. She added that the energizing artwork project will continue next year.