

NSU
Florida

CAREER SHIFT
Student makes radical
vocational shift.

FEMALE FOCUS
KPCOM alumna
prioritizes
women's health.

**SAVORING
SURGERY**
Self-acceptance
serves 2008
alumnus well.

LINK

KPCOM

Nova Southeastern University Dr. Kiran C. Patel College of Osteopathic Medicine



FALL 2024
V3.3



RACHEL FRICKER: FROM CHEMICAL ENGINEER TO KPCOM STUDENT

Why does a person decide to pivot from a successful career as a chemical engineer to endure the arduous—and costly—process required to become a physician? According to third-year student Rachel Fricker, it was a confluence of factors that compelled her to chart a new course.

As a child growing up in Fishkill, New York, Fricker excelled in math and science, so when it came time to attend Syracuse University

in New York, she decided that earning a degree in chemical engineering with a minor in nuclear energy would allow her to indulge her passion for math and science. As she neared the end of her sophomore year, Fricker landed a summer internship at Entegris—a global company that works with leading manufacturers to enable ongoing advancement in technology.

After spending two summers as a research and development intern in the company's specialty gases and engineering chemicals division, Fricker was offered a full-time position in Entegris's new Leadership Development Program once she graduated. For the next few years, she worked in several roles, including as a quality engineer, research engineer, and manufacturing engineer.

"My role as a research engineer was quite cool, as I worked on a big project that involved cleaning one of our products and figuring out how to remove boron trifluoride residue from our gas cylinders. I liked this project, because I was designing and conducting experiments and then statistically analyzing the results to determine the best cleaning solution and method," Fricker explained.

"The project resulted in me creating an Entegris IP Trade Secret, which is like a patent," she added. "However, with patents, you have to disclose the information, and keeping this a trade secret meant we were able to keep the information within the company and have an advantage over our competitors."

"I want to be the type of physician who treats people holistically, empathetically, and finds the root cause of their symptoms."

—Rachel Fricker

Although she liked working at Entegris and enjoyed interacting with her coworkers, something was lacking. "As much as I found the job interesting, I didn't feel fulfilled," she admitted.

One day, on the drive home from work, Fricker began reflecting on her older sister's health battles and her own experiences with the medical profession. "I started thinking

about how many people are being treated for their symptoms, while the root causes of their problems remain unknown,” she explained.

The idea of pursuing a medical career first crossed Fricker’s mind when she was in 7th grade and her older sister was in 10th grade. “My sister went from playing two varsity sports to not being able to get out of bed without help. After a ton of lab work, a multitude of doctors, and a five-day hospital stay, they eventually diagnosed her with an unknown autoimmune disease. They treated her symptoms to make her feel better, and she remained on medication for seven years,” Fricker recalled.

“Being so young, and seeing someone I love have her health change so rapidly, left me feeling helpless,” she added. “I was grateful the doctors were able to treat her symptoms and make her feel better, but I would always find myself thinking about what caused her illness, if it could’ve been prevented, and if it could’ve been treated differently.”

Several years later, during her freshman year of college, Fricker endured her own health battle when she experienced severe bouts of anxiety. “At first, I thought it was just the typical adjustment period most new college students experience,” she said. “However, my anxiety became so severe that I eventually saw a psychiatrist, who diagnosed me with an anxiety disorder and prescribed me a low dose of a selective serotonin reuptake inhibitor.”

Over the next two years, as Fricker’s symptoms worsened, her psychiatrist upped her medication to the maximum recommended dose—to no avail. “I started losing weight and felt terrible,” she explained. “Eventually, I decided to see a different psychiatrist, who took a holistic approach to treating me. After doing genetic testing and analyzing my blood work, she said I had an undiagnosed, severe gluten sensitivity. After I removed gluten from my diet, the medication dosage drastically lowered, and I began feeling much better.”

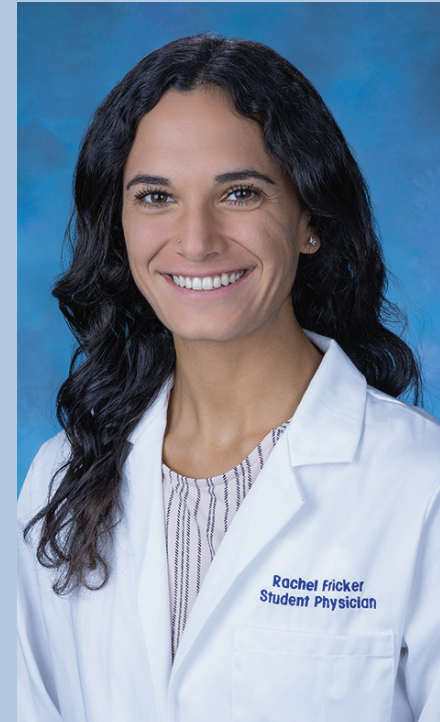
Although she had considered pursuing medicine several years earlier, Fricker had a pivotal realization on that memorable drive home from work—becoming a physician was

where her destiny lay. “I realized I wanted to at least try and apply to medical school. Otherwise, I would live with regret,” she said.

“Luckily, I had college credits from high school that transferred,” she continued. “Additionally, because chemical engineering is very science-based, I only had to take Organic Chemistry II and Biochemistry to have the required courses needed to apply to medical school. I worked at Entegris during the day, completed the courses at night, studied for the MCAT, and applied to medical school.”

Not surprisingly, the class of 2026 Dr. Kiran C. Patel College of Osteopathic Medicine student is very content with her decision to attend medical school. “I want to be the type of physician who treats people holistically, empathetically, and finds the root cause of their symptoms,” said Fricker, who is pursuing a Master of Science in Nutrition with a concentration in functional nutrition and herbal therapy from the college.

Now that she’s begun her clinical rotations, Fricker is leaning toward a career in gastroenterology when she graduates; however, she is keeping her options open. “Everyone says the third year of medical school is when you discover what you are really passionate about, so I’m excited to continue this journey,” she said. “I’m also excited to see how I can incorporate my engineering background into medicine to provide the best care possible to my patients.” ■





Pictured from left are Adalyne Singh, Ed.D., M.B.A., assistant professor of physiology, Dr. Kiran C. Patel College of Allopathic Medicine; Jessica Okun; Paul Greenman; Lynette Sieracki; Fred Lippman; Lori Dribin; Elaine M. Wallace; and Debra McNally, M.S., KPCOM assistant professor of anatomy.

LASTING LEGACY: PLAQUE DEDICATION CEREMONY HONORS GERALD CONOVER

On September 11, the Dr. Kiran C. Patel College of Osteopathic Medicine (KPCOM) coordinated a heartfelt plaque dedication ceremony to honor the contributions of Gerald R. Conover, Ph.D., who passed away on March 1, 2024.

During his 35-year career with Nova Southeastern University, Conover helped establish a full-dissection anatomy lab and served as the longtime chair of the Department of Anatomy. His legacy will now live on through the Dr. Gerald Conover and Dr. Lynette Sieracki Endowed Scholarship Fund, established by his wife Lynette Sieracki, D.O., to support KPCOM students.

The ceremony was presided over by Elaine M. Wallace, D.O., Ed.S., M.S., M.S., M.S., KPCOM dean, while personal and professional reflections of Conover were offered by Fred Lippman, R.Ph., Ed.D., Health Professions Division (HPD) chancellor emeritus, and Lori Dribin, Ph.D., KPCOM professor of anatomy and a colleague of Dr. Conover’s for more than 35 years. Paul Greenman, D.P.M., former faculty member, and 2010 KPCOM alumna Jessica Okun, D.O., M.S., FACOS, a neurological surgeon and KPCOM preceptor, remarked on his personal style and teaching contributions

in the lab and lectures. Similarly, Sieracki emphasized Conover’s love for teaching anatomy and devotion to ensuring excellence.

After earning his Ph.D. in Neuroanatomy from the University of Michigan, Conover launched his professional career at Case Western Reserve in Cleveland, Ohio, teaching in the physical therapy department. He later relocated to the Kansas City College of Osteopathic Medicine—now the University of Health Sciences College of Osteopathic Medicine—in Kansas City, Missouri—where he was instrumental in teaching gross anatomy, neuroanatomy, and histology to osteopathic students.

In 1981, Conover moved to North Miami Beach, Florida, to work at the newly established Southeastern College of Osteopathic Medicine—the precursor to what is now known as the KPCOM. “His greatest legacy is the thousands of students who passed through the lab, the Department of Anatomy, and the various HPD schools,” explained Sieracki, who earned her D.O. degree at the Kansas City College of Osteopathic Medicine and has worked in private practice in South Florida for more than four decades.

“For 35 years, Dr. Conover supported all the HPD schools,” she added. “Those students are

“By developing a scholarship fund, part of Dr. Conover’s legacy will be to help KPCOM students continue their educational path.”

—Lynette Sieracki, D.O.,

KPCOM WELCOMES CLASS OF 2028

On August 9, the KPCOM Tampa Bay Regional Campus site celebrated the incoming class of 2028 at its annual White Coat Ceremony held at the Carol Morsani Hall at the Straz Center. The Fort Lauderdale/Davie Campus held its ceremony on August 23 at the Rick Case Arena at the Don Taft University Center.

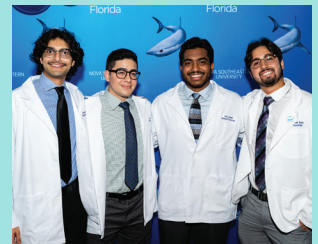


now physicians and health care professionals who are using the skills they learned at NSU to heal patients and provide lifesaving services throughout the United States. He was a hands-on instructor, particularly in the laboratory, where he went from table to table at the dissection selections to help students learn the intricacies of the human body.”

According to Sieracki, “Education was a very important part of our family life at home,” which is why she and her family decided to establish the Dr. Gerald Conover and Dr. Lynette Sieracki Endowed Scholarship Fund. The scholarship will be awarded annually to a deserving, financially disadvantaged student who is in good academic standing.

“By developing a scholarship fund, part of Dr. Conover’s legacy will be to help KPCOM students continue their educational path,” she said. “Anyone who passes through the anatomy lab at NSU will be a part of his legacy.”

The commemorative plaque was mounted in the hallway between the gross anatomy and histology labs in the HPD Library/Lab Building. If you would like to make a donation to the scholarship fund, please visit nova.edu/give/kpcom-conover-sieracki-endow-scholarship.





1995 ALUMNA ANNA CABECA PRIORITIZES WOMEN'S HEALTH

Throughout her life, Anna M. Cabeca, D.O., FACOG, has endured more than her share of heartbreak. But, with each successive setback, she emerged stronger, with an increased resolve to make life better for herself and her patients.

As a child growing up in Doylestown, Pennsylvania, Cabeca suffered from frequent ear infections and underwent yearly myringotomy surgeries from the ages of 6 to 13 to correct the problem. Then, when she was a teenager, her mother developed diabetes and early-stage heart disease.

“Witnessing my mom’s journey as she navigated her health concerns ignited my interest and curiosity in medicine,” said Cabeca, a 1995 Dr. Kiran C. Patel College of Osteopathic Medicine (KPCOM) graduate. “As I watched my mom’s health decline, even as young as I was then, something struck me.”

According to Cabeca, “Most of the medicine and procedures the physicians were basing her care on were centered on research that had been done on men, not women. Something never felt quite right to me about that,” she recalled. “I became passionate about women’s health before even going to medical school. It was a calling.”

After graduating from the KPCOM, Cabeca attended Emory University School of Medicine in Atlanta, Georgia, to do her OB-GYN residency. However, while in the midst of her residency training, her mother endured a second heart surgery, which she didn’t survive. Devastated by the loss of her mother, Cabeca vowed to make life better for all women.

“It didn’t make sense, and her passing stirred something in me,” said Cabeca, who is triple board certified and a fellow of obstetrics and gynecology, integrative medicine, and antiaging/regenerative medicine. “As I held my mom’s hand as she passed away, I promised her I would figure out what happened and how to not let it happen to anyone else. And with that purpose, I dug into understanding the underlying causes of disease.”

A Deeper Purpose

After completing her residency training, Cabeca realized she didn't have the "full picture" when it came to women's health, so she embarked on a multifaceted educational odyssey that took her around the globe. "I needed to learn more to get to the underlying root causes of the issues and illnesses the women I was treating were suffering from," she explained.

"That led me to study age-management and regenerative medicine," she continued. "Through my personal journey and travels around the world, I also learned about integrative medicine and many other healing modalities, as well as the integration of all the different healing methods—from science and medical academic teachings to old-wives' tales from villages in South America. All of this happened organically—a 360-degree approach was just a natural progression of my journey as a physician."

At the age of 39, a new health crisis—her own—led Cabeca down another path of self-discovery for both herself and her patients when she was diagnosed with early menopause and infertility. "I was devastated by the news that I would never be able to have another child. I had just lost my 18-month-old son in a tragic accident, which left me and my family in despair, and my body basically shut down," she explained.

"Witnessing my mom's journey as she navigated her health concerns ignited my interest and curiosity in medicine."

—Anna M. Cabeca

Cabeca knew she needed to do something radical to shake the malaise, so she took her family on what would become a healing journey around the world. "During this time, I learned from many healers on how to get through grief and heal with meditation, plants, nature, and everything the earth has to offer," she said. "As a result, I naturally reversed my early menopause and became pregnant with my youngest daughter, Avamarie."

Experiencing a miracle firsthand inspired Cabeca to dig deeper, which motivated her to become even more passionate about the superfoods she ate and the lifestyle changes she incorporated that led her down a healing path. "When I returned to the United States, I implemented all I learned into my medical clinic. I also created my first product, Mighty Maca Plus, which combines more than 30 superfoods that help with the adrenals and hormone balance. I am happy to say it helps a lot of women with menopausal issues, but most importantly, it helps families with fertility," she explained.

The Girlfriend Doctor

In 2012, Cabeca launched a podcast called *Couch Talk*, where she had the opportunity to interview Oprah Winfrey's former executive producer Sherry Salata and her colleague Nancy Hala, a branding expert. "During that interview, they said, 'Dr. Anna, we can ask or tell you anything. We feel so comfortable with you; it's like you are our girlfriend doctor.' From then on, the title stuck, and I love it," admitted Cabeca, who is a single mom with four daughters.



SPOTLIGHTS



“I love interviewing brilliant people in the field,” she continued. “The show has been a wonderful platform for me to learn, grow, and expand my knowledge base by sharing information with so many brilliant minds who come to the ‘couch’ with their knowledge and understanding of a multitude of different health disciplines.”

Whether it’s working with her patients or interacting with guests on her podcast, Cabeca “wants people to relate to me on a more human, personal level. Many patients don’t open up to their doctors, as they perceive them as special people in white coats who live in some kind of ivory tower,” she said.

“There has to be some level of transparency to get to the root cause of any illness, and that comes with trust,” she added. “If people see me as a girlfriend doctor, they will more easily reveal things about themselves that will enable me to help them in a more significant way, and I can guide them through tools on how to help themselves.”

Menopause Message

As a medical professional who has dealt with—and overcome—early menopause and infertility issues, Cabeca has an important message to share. “Menopause is natural and mandatory, but suffering is optional. When we address the underlying reasons, we can decrease inflammation and support the adrenal glands,” she stressed.

“When we change our diets to the Keto-Green 16 lifestyles, which means eating high-quality proteins, high-quality fat foods, and many alkalizing greens, along with practicing intermittent fasting, we can reverse the symptoms women suffer from when they reach that time in their lives,” she explained. “I really want women to know they can breeze through menopause into the second spring of their lives and feel better than ever.”

KPCOM COMMEMORATES EMPLOYEE MILESTONES

Each year, the college recognizes its faculty and staff members who celebrated significant NSU employment milestones. "It is a testament to our college and university that people spend decades here," said Elaine M. Wallace, D.O., Ed.S., M.S., M.S., M.S., M.S., KPCOM dean. "I express my personal appreciation to each one of you." ■



25 Years

Joseph De Gaetano
Liane Hess
James Howell
Jennifer Jordan
Gary Merlino

20 Years

Phyllis Filker
Delia Harper-Celestine
Lori Pantaleao

15 Years

Tye Barber
Carmen Hernandez
Raymond Ownby

10 Years

Caitlin Arbos
Darren Cohen
Kelly Duke
Dana Famularo
Marie Florent-Carre
Annisah Ishmael
Pei-Fen Li
Eliseo Rangel
Violetta Renesca
Justin Sowards

5 Years

Tonni Bacoat-Jones
Christina Brown-Wujick
Sharon Calabrese
Samantha Delaney
Elizabeth Fernandez
Eric Goldsmith
Tameeka Grant
Crystal Guerrieri
Stephen Jaqua
Jane Jordan
Deepesh Khanna
Jessica Malave Arce
Rosa Moljo
Yesenia Navas
Fariha Niazi
Raquel Parker
Mayur Parmar
Suzanne Riskin
Jeanette Rodriguez
Suzette Siviter
Holly Waters
Pamela Zerblas

Cabeca, who authored the best-selling books *The Hormone Fix*, *Keto-Green 16*, and *MenuPause*, also created innovative products such as Mighty Maca Plus and Julva—an antiaging feminine cream. "These products are the fruits of my personal and professional journeys as a woman and physician in constant quest of learning," she said. "I am a great proponent of using natural, chemical-free products, as chemicals can be potential hormone disruptors that can really affect hormonal balance in women of all ages."

However, she is quick to stress that the answer is never just a pill or a product. "It's always a combination of different elements," Cabeca concluded. "We all need to take care of ourselves, so we can do the work God put us on this Earth for." ■





Andrew Schlusel DO
Fellow American College of Surgeon
American College of Colon and Rectal Surgery



SURGEON ANDREW SCHLUSSEL SAVORS BEING HIS AUTHENTIC SELF

Andrew Schlusel presents a grand rounds lecture to the general residency program attendees at Hospital Escuela in Tegucigalpa, Honduras, while he was on a rotation with the U.S. Army.

“If you can’t love yourself, how are you going to love someone else?” —RuPaul

For Andrew T. Schlusel, D.O., FACS, FASCRS, a 2008 Dr. Kiran C. Patel College of Osteopathic Medicine (KPCOM) alumnus, medicine and the military proved to be a perfect partnership.

Schlusel, who was raised in Woodcliff Lake, New Jersey, initially thought a career in forensic pathology was in the offing based on his love for Patricia Cornwell novels and the book *Dead Men Do Tell Tales* by William R. Maple, Ph.D. “I was fascinated by biology, science, and what the human body can tell us—even after death,” he explained.

According to Schlusel, his career path was a bit unique. “When I entered college, I wanted to join the track team, but my running times were too slow to be eligible,” he said. “I was eager to find a community to join, and I was intrigued by the Reserve Officers’ Training Corps (ROTC), so I enrolled to learn more about the military and have a group of friends to work out with.”

During his sophomore year, however, the world-changing events of 9/11 occurred, which compelled Schlusel to accept an ROTC scholarship and join the U.S. Army after college. “I initially wavered on going into a more formal combat role in the military, but after great mentorship, I continued

on track to obtain an educational delay and go to medical school,” he said.

“Once I started medical school, I became interested in all the complexities of medicine. Also, because I had decided to join the army once I graduated, I had this sense of duty to treat my fellow service members and make sure they were healthy and fit for duty,” he explained. “When I started doing my surgical rotations, I witnessed the direct impact I could have on a person, especially the warfighter who got injured.”

After graduating from the KPCOM, Schlusel did his internship and general surgery residency at Tripler Army Medical Center in Honolulu, Hawaii. It was during this time, however, that a long-repressed belief about his sexuality began bubbling to the surface. “When I decided I wanted to be in the army, the Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell policy was in full effect, and I signed a document specifically acknowledging that,” said Schlusel of the controversial legislation enacted in 1994 that allowed gay military personnel to serve without threat of being discharged as long as they did not disclose their sexual orientation.

“I made a decision to sacrifice my personal desires for service to my country,” said Schlusel, who works as a colorectal surgeon at HCA Florida Jacksonville Surgical Specialists. “When I decided I wanted to become a surgeon, I was convinced

that gay men were not surgeons. Therefore, I took my sexual orientation, put it in the closet, and did everything I could do to pretend to have a heterosexual lifestyle.”

Not surprisingly, after years of suppressing his authentic self, Schlusssel’s mental health began to deteriorate during his second year of residency. “It was becoming too difficult to hide my sexual orientation. I needed to be myself and show up as my authentic self. If that meant I had to sacrifice parts of my professional life, so be it,” he explained.

“Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell was repealed in 2011, but there was still a lot of stigma and discrimination against the LGBTQ+ community, both in the military and medicine,” he added. “It wasn’t until 2017, when I met my husband, that I finally laid all my cards on the table to the world.”

During this period of life-affirming decision-making, Schlusssel also discovered his enthusiasm for the medical specialty he currently practices—colorectal surgery—when his chief resident went on vacation and Schlusssel was asked to scrub in and participate in a few complex pelvic operations. “After developing an interest in complex operations, colorectal surgery just made sense to me. I loved doing colonoscopies as a resident, and colorectal surgery has a wide variety of practices,” he explained.

“I get to perform office procedures, as well as large, complex colectomies. It is enjoyable to have variety in my schedule,” added Schlusssel, who spent 15 years on active duty in the military and is currently in the U.S. Army Reserves. “Colorectal surgery patients often go for many years without seeing a provider for their issues, so they often feel isolated and uncomfortable talking to their providers. In my practice, I strive to provide an individualized approach to patients to ensure they are comfortable with the surgical decision-making process.”



With a career in full stride and a fulfilled personal life due to his marriage to Michael J. Semidey, D.M.D., an oral maxillofacial surgeon in Orange Park, Florida, Schlusssel felt even more emboldened to be his authentic self.

“In late 2022, I came across an online post from *outsurgeons.org*, which is how I learned about the Association of Out Surgeons and Allies (AOSA),” he said. “It was a small, young organization, but it was exactly what I was looking for.”

Schlusssel immediately joined, becoming an active member who quickly climbed the leadership ladder. After serving as president-elect, he ascended to the AOSA presidency in October 2024. “Although we all have unique stories and challenges in life, I want to do everything I can to ensure people don’t feel the need to pretend to be someone they are not to move forward in their professional lives,” he stressed. “Currently, we have more than 400 members and 20 institutional members and continue to grow daily.”

“I made a decision to sacrifice my personal desires for service to my country.”

—Andrew Schlusssel

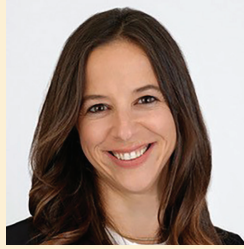
According to its website, the AOSA is an organization of LGBTQ+ surgeons and allies that promotes acceptance, inclusion, and equity in the surgical specialties to further learner engagement, support individual clinicians and researchers, and build a community. “We have many medical students and residents involved, so it brings me joy to see them interacting with attending surgeons,” said Schlusssel, who has ambitious goals as AOSA president.

“I will continue to be actively involved with education, as well as work with other major surgical organizations to collaborate on topics related to the LGBTQ+ community and medicine,” he emphasized. “I also hope to gain additional support and sponsorship from university programs and industry, so we can continue to grow our educational program, provide scholarships to students and residents, and implement outreach projects in local communities.”

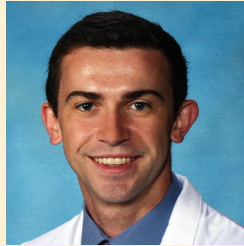
After struggling for years to become the fully realized person he is today, Schlusssel has a message for those who may be dealing with similar self-acceptance issues. “I think it is essential that you get to be your authentic self whenever and wherever you want, especially as a doctor and surgeon,” he concluded. “There will be many long nights, many tough cases, many stressful days, and complex patients. Trying to navigate those hard experiences can be even more daunting if you feel like you have to wear a mask everywhere you go.” ■

ALUMNI

Hara Berger, D.O. ('11), recently established her endocrinology wellness center LiveWell Endocrinology in Boca Raton, Florida, where she specializes in menopause, polycystic ovarian syndrome, thyroid disorders, and metabolic syndrome.



Corey Burns, D.O. ('21), a primary care physician, joined Holy Cross Medical Group—a multispecialty, physician-employed group of more than 130 physicians providing services throughout Broward County, Florida. He recently completed his three-year family medicine residency at Halifax Health Medical Center of Daytona Beach in Florida.



Rachael Candela, D.O. ('21), a recent graduate from the Atrium Health Floyd Medical Center Family Medicine Residency program, joined IN Compass Health as a hospitalist at the Atrium Health Floyd Medical Center in Rome, Georgia.



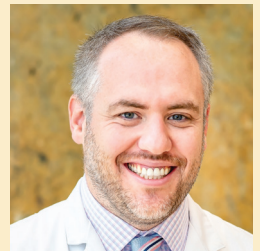
Charles Cavo, D.O., FACOG ('99), co-founder and chief medical officer of Pounds Transformation, was appointed to Avalon GloboCare's Scientific Advisory Board. The company, based in Freehold, New Jersey, is a developer of innovative precision diagnostics and laboratory services. Cavo's expertise will advance the marketing and business development of KetoAir—a handheld breathalyzer for ketogenic health.



Matthew Denson, D.O. ('15), and **Kathryn Fitzgerald, D.O. ('15)**, joined the surgical team at Penn Highlands Healthcare in Pennsylvania. As general surgeons, Denson and Fitzgerald provide surgical treatment for a range of diseases and conditions affecting various parts of the body, including the abdomen, digestive tract, endocrine system, skin, and blood vessels. Prior to joining Penn Highlands, Fitzgerald practiced at Mohawk Valley Health System in Utica, New York, while Denson worked at Guthrie Cortland Regional Medical Center in Cortland, New York.



Kevin M. Donohue, D.O., FACP ('15), associate medical director at Sound Physicians hospital medicine practice at CHI Saint Joseph London in Lexington, Kentucky, was elected as a fellow of the American College of Physicians.



Michelle Ferreira, D.O., M.P.H. ('06), a board-certified neurologist and movement disorder specialist, joined the Holy Cross Medical Group—a multispecialty, physician-employed group of more than 130 physicians providing services throughout Broward County, Florida. She previously owned Neurology Specialists of Florida and was a partner with Neurology Offices of South Florida.



The *KPCOM LINK* is produced by the Office of Printing and Publications. Scott Colton, B.A., APR, senior editorial director, serves as executive editor and primary writer of the publication.

ACHIEVEMENTS

Beau Gedrick, D.O., and Brooke Gedrick, D.O. (both 2010 graduates), recently opened their concierge medical practice Flex Health in Evans, Georgia. Beau Gedrick focuses on primary care sports medicine, urgent care, and osteopathic manipulation. Brooke Gedrick, who is board certified in obesity, focuses on urgent care, weight loss, body contouring, urinary incontinence, laser hair removal, and laser skin rejuvenation.



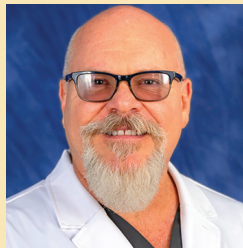
George Guerrero, D.O., M.P.H. ('12), joined the Baptist Health Primary Care location in Boynton Beach, Florida. He specializes in the management of acute and chronic medical conditions, as well as preventive healthcare.



Lisa Gwynn, D.O., M.B.A., M.S.P.H., FAAP ('98), was promoted to associate chair for population health and advocacy for the Department of Pediatrics at the University of Miami Miller School of Medicine.



Patrick J. Harris, D.O. ('97), a board-certified family medicine physician, joined UF Health St. Johns and is caring for patients at UF Health Primary Care—Treaty Oaks in St. Augustine, Florida. His clinical expertise spans the full scope of primary care, with special emphasis on improving patient health through osteopathic manipulative treatment.



James Hill, D.O. ('00), an emergency medicine physician, joined the medical staff at the Archbold Memorial Emergency Department in Thomasville, Georgia.



Andrea Horbey, D.O., FCAAP, FACOP ('15), began a new position as a pediatric hospitalist at East Tennessee Children's Hospital in Knoxville, Tennessee. She relocated to Tennessee after spending the last five years working as a pediatric hospitalist at HCA Florida Palms West Hospital in Loxahatchee, Florida. Additionally, she appeared as a pediatric expert on two local South Florida news channels. On August 5, she appeared on the WPTV news segment "When's the Best Time to Get Your Child Back into a Routine," while on August 22, she was interviewed for a WPBF segment titled "HCA Florida Palms West Hospital Launching New Program for Child Brain Development."



Claude L. Jones, D.O., M.P.H., M.Sc., FACOI ('05), was appointed medical director for the Cleveland Clinic Martin Health Primary Care Institute in Stuart, Florida. Jones, who is board certified in addiction medicine, internal medicine, and healthcare quality, previously served as president and CEO of Care Alliance Health Center in Cleveland, Ohio.



Will Kirby, D.O., FAOCD ('00), a board-certified dermatologist and chief medical officer of LaserAway, joined the Orlando College of Osteopathic Medicine Global Strategic Development Team. He will bring his passion for medical education and a commitment to expanding healthcare access globally to this role.



ALUMNI ACHIEVEMENTS

Debbie Manigat, D.M.F.T., LMFT ('22), was elected as an American Association of Marriage and Family Therapy (AAMFT) board director for the 2023–2025 term. The AAMFT represents the professional interests of more than 72,000 marriage and family therapists throughout the United States, Canada, and abroad. She also serves as a public speaker and consultant for mental wellness and cultural humility in corporations, communities, and churches as the leader of the Protective Factors Group—a nonprofit practice for decreasing mental health disparities in diverse communities and increasing collective healing across the U.S.



Shivtj Mann, D.O. ('16), who is triple board certified by the American Board of Internal Medicine in hematology, oncology, and internal medicine, joined the medical staff at Florida Oncology and Hematology's new location in Cape Coral, Florida. He also serves as physician chair of the Lee Health Anticoagulation Committee and collaborates with academicians at Tampa General Hospital and the Moffitt Cancer Center to provide and facilitate academic oncologic care in a community setting.



Earle M. Pescatore, Jr., D.O. ('89), joined the full-time faculty at Southern Illinois University School of Medicine in Springfield, Illinois, as assistant professor and division head of urogynecology and reconstructive pelvic surgery.



Kimberly Sackheim, D.O. ('06), a pain management specialist based in New York, is featured in a national commercial for the Salonpas pain-relief patch. You can view the commercial at youtube.com/watch?v=FfjPuxvsSys.



Jason A. Zell, D.O., M.P.H. ('01), vice chief for academic affairs in the Division of Hematology/Oncology at the University of California—Irvine, was awarded a five-year, \$1-million Research Specialist Award (R50) from the National Cancer Institute (NCI)/National Institutes of Health. The financial award will fund his research titled “Advancing Novel Cancer Preventive and Therapeutic Strategies Across the Modern NCI Clinical Trial Networks.”



IN MEMORIAM

Susan Beth Fox, D.O. ('97), of North Miami Beach, Florida, passed away peacefully on July 2. According to those who knew her, she was a gifted and caring physician who specialized in vascular and venous diseases and was one of the first physicians in the United States to be board certified in vein treatment.



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