

KPCOM LINK

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



FEEDING CLINIC OFFERS ESSENTIAL SERVICES TO CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

Thanks to the benevolence of the Kapila Family Foundation, founded by Prabodh Kapila, M.D., and her husband Soneet Kapila, CPA, CIRA, CFE, CFF, a vital healthcare resource was established at the Dr. Kiran C. Patel College of Osteopathic Medicine (KPCOM). The newly launched Kapila Family Nourishing Lives Feeding Clinic will positively affect the lives of children and families by addressing various feeding challenges.

According to three KPCOM faculty members who are playing key roles in the initiative, The Kapila Family Nourishing Lives Feeding Clinic was created to meet the needs of children with pediatric feeding and swallowing disorders, as well as their families. The faculty members—Lorraine Breffni, Ed.D., M.A., associate dean of the college's Dr. Pallavi Patel School of Rehabilitative Sciences; Raquel Garcia, SLP.D., CCC-SLP, CLC, CNT, NTMTC, BCS-S, assistant professor of speech-language pathology; and Priya Krishnakumar, Ph.D., RDN, assistant professor of nutrition—shared their insights about the clinic's mission and impact.

Breffni explained that a 2021 nationwide study found that more than 1 in 37 children under the age of five are diagnosed with, and actively experience, a pediatric feeding disorder (PFD) each year—a prevalence that surpasses cerebral palsy and autism. "Feeding is a fundamental activity that supports growth, development, learning, and bonding," she said. "When disrupted, it can have far-reaching effects on a child's health, nutrition, and psychosocial well-being. PFD also places a considerable emotional, financial, and functional burden on parents and caregivers."

To help mitigate this issue in South Florida, the clinic will primarily serve infants, toddlers, and children

with feeding and swallowing disorders. Services will include comprehensive diagnostic evaluations; individualized treatment plans; and coordinated care from a multidisciplinary team that may include speech-language pathologists, occupational therapists, dietitians, physicians, and psychologists.

"Many children with pediatric feeding disorders face lifelong consequences if left untreated, including poor brain growth, malnutrition, aspiration, and delays in both social and developmental milestones," Breffni explained. "Because these disorders are complex and often involve medical, nutritional, psychological, and skill-based factors, a single provider cannot effectively manage them."



Kathryn W. Miller, J.D., director of development for NSU Health and Advancement and Community Relations, with the Kapilas

The clinic will address an array of challenges, including oral motor difficulties, swallowing safety, sensory-based feeding issues, and nutritional management. Families will also receive education, counseling, and support to reinforce at-home strategies. "This ensures children not only improve their feeding abilities, but also thrive developmentally, socially, and nutritionally," Garcia said. "By emphasizing early identification and intervention, the clinic aims to reduce long-term consequences of feeding and swallowing disorders while improving overall quality of life for children and their families."

The Kapila Family Nourishing Lives Feeding Clinic



A 2021 nationwide study found that more than 1 in 37 children under the age of five are diagnosed with, and actively experience, a pediatric feeding disorder (PFD) each year—a prevalence that surpasses cerebral palsy and autism.

Pictured at the naming ceremony are Terry Mularkey, M.A.S., CFRE, NSU vice president for advancement and community relations; Elaine M. Wallace, D.O., Ed.S., M.S., M.S., M.S., M.S., KPCOM dean; Kitty Murchison, office manager of the Kapila Family Foundation; Prabodh and Soneet Kapila; and Chad A. Perlyn, M.D., Ph.D., M.B.A., NSU executive vice president and chief medical officer, executive medical director for NSU Health, and dean of the Dr. Kiran C. Patel College of Allopathic Medicine.



Prabodh Kapila addresses the invited guests.

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Because there are currently no similar multidisciplinary clinics in Broward or Miami-Dade counties that specialize in pediatric feeding and swallowing disorders, The Kapila Family Nourishing Lives Feeding Clinic—located in NSU’s Marilyn Segal Early Childhood Studies Center—will serve as a crucial community resource.

“Families often face long wait-lists and limited access to specialized care,” Garcia explained. “Because feeding challenges affect multiple systems, such as nutrition, growth, psychosocial health, and development, a single medical provider cannot address them effectively. This clinic was established to fill a critical gap.”

Dedicated KPCOM faculty members will form the core of the multidisciplinary team, which includes specialists from pediatrics, speech-language pathology, health and wellness, family therapy, occupational therapy, and nutrition. The clinic

will also serve as a dynamic learning environment for students through interprofessional education and interprofessional practice.

“Students from programs such as speech-language pathology, osteopathic medicine, occupational therapy, and nutrition will have opportunities to collaborate as part of the care team,” Krishnakumar added. “Through real-world, collaborative practice, the clinic is shaping professionals who will be better equipped to advance pediatric health outcomes in the future.” ■

For more information about The Kapila Family Nourishing Lives Feeding Clinic, or to refer a family, please call (954) 262-3743 or email Priya Krishnakumar at pkrishna@nova.edu.



◀ Lorraine Breffni provides a tour of the feeding clinic to the attendees.



Pictured from left are KPCOM faculty members Lisa Presti, M.A., CCC-SLP, instructor of speech-language pathology/clinical supervisor; Stephanie Urban-Galvez, Ph.D., assistant professor of pediatrics; Elizabeth Fernandez, D.O., assistant professor of pediatrics; Lorraine Breffni; Prabodh and Soneet Kapila; Priya Krishnakumar; Raquel Garcia; Shazia Akhtarullah, Ph.D., LMFT, LMHC, MCAP, NBC-HWC, assistant professor in the Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Medicine; and Fariha Niazi, Ph.D., LMFT, LMHC, professor and chair of the Couple and Family Therapy Program.

ALTRUISTS AIM TO NOURISH THE COMMUNITY

According to Prabodh Kapila, M.D., her desire to fund the creation of The Kapila Family Nourishing Lives Feeding Clinic at NSU's Dr. Kiran C. Patel College of Osteopathic Medicine is simply the continuation of a long-established tradition of NSU giving. Through the Kapila Family Foundation, she and her husband Soneet Kapila, CPA, CIRA, CFE, CFF, have been staunch supporters of various NSU initiatives, including the Kapila Family Foundation Starting Right Program for children.

"NSU has been a great teaching institution for Broward County, and my rheumatology practice in Plantation, Florida, was in many ways influenced by NSU," she explained. "I had medical students and residents rotate through my office and had multiple NSU staff members under my professional care. These experiences contributed significantly to establishing a special relationship with this institution. We have a desire to initiate and support NSU programs that will help our community and make our future generations healthier."

Kapila's interest in nutrition was piqued during her pediatric rotation at the University of Nairobi School of Medicine, where she treated children of all age groups suffering from severe malnutrition. "We also encounter young children with feeding disorders in North America, despite the presence of adequate amounts and varieties of foods in the household," she explained. "Various types of eating disorders are prevalent worldwide and are not necessarily related to socioeconomic status, due to the multifaceted nature of this condition."

Kapila cares deeply about this issue and was motivated to establish the feeding clinic due to her "desire to educate families and improve the quality of life of children facing food insecurities or feeding difficulties," she stressed. "Early intervention enables children to thrive physically and cognitively. Proper nutrition is fundamental to educational outcomes, as hungry children struggle to focus and excel in school."

As the feeding clinic's namesake, Kapila is thrilled that the initiative will feature a "multidisciplinary approach with a team of physicians, dietitians, and therapists to address complex feeding, psychological, and medical issues to



Prabodh and Soneet Kapila

improve the outcomes for children with medical and behavioral feeding challenges," she said.

"This approach is valuable for children and families, as it provides resources for nutrition, health, and development that address both immediate causes for the problem, as well as long-term well-being," Kapila added. "It helps rebuild confidence, joy, and a healthy relationship with food. This not only benefits the individual child, but the family and the community."

Although NSU has benefited from the couple's generosity, their benevolence extends far beyond the university. "My husband Soneet, and his boutique forensic accounting/litigation support firm KapilaMukamal, have been involved in supporting legal education at the University of Miami School of Law and at Stetson University College of Law for more than 20 years," she explained. "Our family takes pride in its philanthropic efforts in education, arts, and cultural activities." ■

Difficulties Lead to Determination for VITO EVOLA

Dealing with inescapable hardship is something third-year student Vito Evola has had to contend with throughout his life.

As a child growing up in New Jersey, Evola experienced a life-altering experience at the age of eight when his father was deported to Sicily. “Overnight, my family lost its foundation. My father was the source of income, and when he was taken away, everything collapsed,” he explained. “My mother was left alone with three children, no education, and no resources. It wasn’t a storm that passed quickly—it was years of grinding struggle.”

Due to financial constraints, Evola and his family relocated to South Florida to be near other relatives for support. But that didn’t mean their lives suddenly improved. “My mom worked multiple jobs while trying to earn a basic education, all while raising my sisters and me,” he said. “As a child, you don’t always recognize the weight of what’s happening, but I remember the moment I realized my father was gone and my mother was all we had—it hit like a tidal wave.”

According to Evola, their lives quickly became a series of survival rules. Everything had to be unplugged before leaving the house, meals were carefully rationed, and there were strict limits on water and electricity usage. “Every dollar mattered,” he stressed. “That was my reality for years, and it shaped me.”

In addition to enduring financial strife, Evola watched helplessly as various family members battled health issues. Although there wasn’t a singular incident that led him toward a medical career, it was more a culmination of experiences that led him down a healthcare path. “Time and



Vito Evola

again, I watched the people I loved suffer without understanding what was happening or knowing how to help,” he said. “That helplessness lit something inside me. I wanted answers; I wanted knowledge. Most of all, I wanted to be able to stand beside my family—and future patients—with the ability to truly make a difference.”

His goal of becoming a physician, however, was delayed for several years, as financial struggles followed him into adulthood. “I had no family safety net, no blueprint for higher education. My family were workers, not academics—hardworking, but with no experience in navigating college, much less medical school,” he explained.

To achieve his dream, Evola worked constantly, juggling two jobs while attending undergraduate classes. “On days without morning lectures, I was making Instacart deliveries from sunrise until

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To achieve his educational goals, Evola worked constantly, juggling two jobs while attending undergraduate classes. One of those jobs included working as a shift manager at McDonald's from 4:00 p.m. until 2:00 a.m.

“I believe neurological diseases are among the most cruel and unforgiving of all human illnesses. That’s why I want to dedicate my life to this field—to fight against these diseases, push the science forward, and bring real hope to patients and families.”

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midafternoon,” he said. “By 4:00 p.m., I’d clock in as a shift manager at McDonald’s, staying until 2:00 a.m. and studying in the back whenever the restaurant slowed down. I spent seven years at McDonald’s, saving what I could, paying for classes one semester at a time, always with the same gnawing question in my head: ‘If I pay for this, will I still be able to eat?’”

For Evola, his undergraduate education wasn’t a four-year sprint—it was a six-year marathon of sacrifice. Thankfully, the lucky break he needed came when he was hired to work at a research lab at Florida State University College of Medicine. “That opportunity opened the door I had been fighting for all those years,” he said.

Finally, the chance to apply to medical school materialized. “When I applied, I didn’t think I was the strongest candidate,” he admitted. “I told myself I’d be grateful for any acceptance. Early in the cycle, I was accepted to a medical school in Virginia, and I thought that was the plan. But when NSU’s acceptance came, everything shifted.”

Because his family lived in the area, Evola realized being near the people he loved wasn’t just convenient; it was necessary. “If they needed me, or if I needed them, we’d be within reach,” he stressed. “That mattered more than anything else. That’s why I chose NSU—because medicine isn’t just about what happens in classrooms or hospitals. It’s also about who you have beside you while you chase your dream.”

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Although he’s deeply immersed in his third year of study at the Dr. Kiran C. Patel College of Osteopathic Medicine (KPCOM), Evola already has a firm idea of what he’d like to pursue once he graduates from the college and embarks on his residency training.

“I’ve always been drawn to neurosurgery. During my undergraduate studies, I dedicated myself to cell and molecular neuroscience, and that’s where the fascination began. Watching people live with neurodegenerative disorders shook me—there’s something profoundly devastating about conditions that strip away the essence of who we are,” explained Evola, who is doing an extra year of study as a KPCOM predoctoral research fellow.

“I believe neurological diseases are among the most cruel and unforgiving of all human illnesses,” he continued. “That’s why I want to dedicate my life to this field—to fight against these diseases, push the science forward, and bring real hope to patients and families. Neurosurgery gives me the chance to heal with my hands while standing at the frontier of one of medicine’s greatest challenges. It’s where I know I belong.” ■

SHANELLE BRYAN Embraces Pregnancy Amid Academic Angst

Purposely becoming pregnant during the first year of medical school may seem counterintuitive. But for second-year student Shanelle Bryan, whose due date to give birth to her first child is December 4, it was a meticulously planned goal.

"I knew I wanted to be a mother long before I knew I wanted to be a physician," Bryan explained. "When I started exploring medicine as a career, I would always ask female physicians, 'Do you have kids? When did you have them?' And the answers were usually during residency, with some having kids in medical school," Bryan explained.

"What pushed me toward the medical school timeline were the physicians who said if they could do it again, they'd do it in medical school because of the online class/Zoom option," she continued. "Think about being pregnant and needing to vomit, but you're in an operating room or with a patient vs. being at home in your pajamas on a Zoom lecture with your camera off."

Bryan, who married her husband Mackenzie in 2022, initially concocted her masterplan while she was an undergrad shadowing, scribing, and pondering her future. After she was accepted into NSU's Dr. Kiran C. Patel College of Osteopathic Medicine (KPCOM) and began her first year of study in 2024, however, she thought her "baby fever" would fade because of the myriad demands of being a medical student.

"I was wrong," Bryan admitted. "I thought about it every day—as if I didn't have enough to think about. So, I started asking the same questions to my KPCOM female professors and peers: 'Do you have kids? Do you want kids? Do you know anyone who's done it?' And again, everyone was mostly supportive, telling me, 'There is no good time. You'll figure it out. Freeze your eggs.'"



Shanelle Bryan showcases her growing belly.

Interestingly, her decision to pursue pregnancy wasn't crystallized until she was asked, "If you weren't in medical school, would you do it?" Not surprisingly, Bryan's response was an unabashed yes. "I remembered how I promised myself I wouldn't let becoming a physician—or a mom—consume me, that I'd keep living my life," she said. "So, I started looking at our second-year schedules to plan it."

One crucial element in Bryan's favor is the "amazing support system" she has. "All the female physicians

I asked about family planning said it was the hardest thing they've ever done," she explained. "And when they heard I live with my in-laws, which includes one who spent 15 years as a live-in nanny and then became a stay-at-home mom, they said, 'Do it.'"

“

It is such a blessing to carry a child. And I'm not just studying for me anymore. I want my daughter to know she can do hard things."

Because winter break has always been one of the longest time-off cycles on the college calendar, Bryan planned to get pregnant in March 2025 and give birth in early December to have enough time to recover from the birth experience. To her and her husband's surprise, they got pregnant on the first try, with a due date set for the day of the last exam for the fall semester.

As it turned out, getting pregnant was the easy part. "I've had to change my perspective on a lot of things," Bryan admitted. "It's not supposed to be easy, and no one said it would be. So, when I'm tired, 15 lectures behind, and getting all the practice questions wrong, I know I'm doing something right. I'm tired because I'm working hard. I'm not supposed to get every question right, because I need to identify the gaps in my knowledge. If anything, I feel like being pregnant has made me a better student."

With her December due date looming, Bryan is working hard to maintain a positive attitude and effectively juggle the dual responsibilities involved with being a medical student and an expectant mom. "I have to be productive during the time I have, because once the exhaustion hits, it becomes

10 times harder. I haven't been lifting at the gym, but I've been walking, which ended up being better, because I can do Anki at the same time," she explained.

"Eating healthy and getting enough sleep is not just about me anymore," she added. "I have to make sure my baby has everything she needs to grow. Stressing myself about every exam or worrying if I don't get a certain grade is not sustainable. Is failing something really the worst-case scenario? Is having to remediate really the worst thing that could happen? No, because all that matters is having a healthy baby."

Despite the burgeoning belly, headaches, backaches, bouts of nausea, and swollen feet, Bryan is relishing the experience. "It is such a blessing to carry a child. And I'm not just studying for me anymore. I want my daughter to know she can do hard things," she explained.



with husband
Mackenzie

"Realizing there are many more important things than grades and that I am much more than a medical student has really helped with my anxiety and dealing with the pressures of school," she concluded. "So far, my second year as a medical student has not been easier, but I have gotten better. So, I think it's fair to say that being a mom of a newborn will make me better as well." ■



LORRAINE BREFFNI

Discusses Her Odyssey from Northern Ireland to NSU

Resilience is a trait Lorraine Breffni, Ed.D., M.A., associate dean of the Dr. Kiran C. Patel College of Osteopathic Medicine's (KPCOM's) Dr. Pallavi Patel School of Rehabilitative Sciences, learned at an early age in Northern Ireland.

Because Breffni grew up during the time of the Troubles—a violent, sectarian conflict that lasted from about 1968 to 1998 in Northern Ireland—she learned to thrive amidst the chaos. “Even now, when I am asked to share openly about my childhood, it feels difficult. The instinct to ‘say nothing’—something I, and many others who grew up during the Troubles, had to do from a very young age—is so deeply ingrained,” she explained.

“As children, my four siblings and I experienced things no child should experience and saw things no child should see,” she continued. “But, like most children growing up at that time and in that place, we learned resilience almost without realizing it. It was woven into everyday life. School carried on even with bomb scares and death. Play was still play, even if the sound of helicopters or the sight of soldiers became part of the backdrop.”

Although Breffni and her siblings found joy in small things, such as spending summers playing in the river that ran alongside their parents’ house or swinging on ropes tied to lampposts, “Resilience did not mean we were untouched by what was happening,” she stressed. “Rather, we found ways to hold on to normality in the middle of conflict.”

Not surprisingly, Breffni always had a fervent desire to leave Northern Ireland, which she expressed in a letter she wrote to President Jimmy Carter in



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the late 1970s when she was a young teenager, asking if he could help her family relocate to the United States. “I waited and waited but never heard back, although I like to think my letter still sits in his archives somewhere,” she admitted.

Interest in Education Blossoms

According to Breffni, her interest in education, particularly early childhood development, was initially a necessity before it became a passion. “My three children were born in Northern Ireland while the Troubles were still ongoing,” said Breffni, who earned her M.A. in Education from The Open University in Ireland. “Children from each side of the societal divide were educated separately, with almost no integrated schools available. This was unacceptable to me and my husband, so we made the unusual decision to homeschool our children—something virtually unheard of at the time.”

To immerse herself in all things education, she read everything she could on the topic, from John Holt’s *How Children Learn* to Maria Montessori’s *The Absorbent Mind*. “That reading ignited a lifelong passion and set me on my professional path,” she explained. “I became a qualified Montessori teacher and later studied child development in college. While raising and teaching my children, I also worked as an instructor for the Worker’s Education Association Northern Ireland, providing adult education in rural communities to women who had missed out on learning the first time around.”

During this time, Breffni also taught master’s degree-level child development courses through The Open University. “These were my first forays into adult learning, and I loved them. What struck me most was the fascinating

contrast between these two teaching environments. One group was filled with women reclaiming their education after years away, and the other was composed of professional educators advancing their knowledge,” she explained.

“Despite the differences, there were also similarities in their determination and desire for learning,” she added. “These experiences deepened my belief that education at any stage of life has the power to transform individuals, families, and communities. My passion for education has never wavered, even now that my children are all college graduates and parents themselves.”

A New Life Beckons

In 1999, Breffni, her husband Jim, sons Tiarnan and Ailill, and daughter Tailte began a new life in Florida after they applied for and won the Green Card Lottery. Not long after relocating to South Florida, Breffni responded to an ad in the *Sun Sentinel* regarding a faculty position at Nova Southeastern University (NSU).

“Although the role had already been filled by the time of my interview, the person I met with was intrigued by my résumé and said she would keep me in mind. True to her word, she reached out not long after, and that connection opened the door to my NSU future. I started as an adjunct professor in 2000, teaching courses in early childhood education and child development,” she said.

“A few years later, I was offered a full-time role at NSU, which I accepted on January 6, 2003—a date etched in my memory,” she continued. “I have been here ever since, growing alongside the university and continuing to connect with its mission of education and service.”

In 2007, Breffni was named executive director of what is now known as the Marilyn Segal Early

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Childhood Studies Center, where her responsibilities included overseeing early childhood programs, guiding family support initiatives, fostering professional development for teachers, and advancing research and community partnerships.

“I also coauthored textbooks that are still used in colleges nationally. What I loved most, however, was the opportunity to walk alongside families during some of the most joyful, yet stressful, times of their lives,” said Breffni, who earned her Ed.D. in Child and Youth Studies from NSU in 2009. “Parenthood is often overwhelming, and the center gave me a platform to create programs, resources, and spaces where families felt supported, children could thrive, and educators could be empowered.”

KPCOM Contentment

After spending more than 15 years in her executive director role at the Marilyn Segal Early Childhood Studies Center, Breffni decided to step outside her comfort zone and apply for the position of assistant dean of master’s, community education, and doctoral degrees at the KPCOM, which she accepted in 2022.

“Who knew I could find a professional home in a medical college?” she admitted. “In this role, I had the opportunity to lead the AIM High and Higher medical-immersion summer programs for high school students, help relaunch the pediatric feeding clinic, which had previously been housed at the Marilyn Segal Center, and support graduate programs in strengthening their offerings.”

Earlier this year, Breffni accepted a new challenge when NSU moved all degree-level programs from its Dr. Pallavi Patel College of Health Care Sciences to two new schools that operate under either the KPCOM or the Dr. Kiran C. Patel College of Allopathic Medicine. As the inaugural associate dean of the KPCOM’s new Dr. Pallavi Patel School



I find joy in knowing that the work I do contributes not only to my own development, but also to creating environments where others—adults or children—can grow, learn, thrive, and discover their potential.”

of Rehabilitative Sciences, she is overseeing programs such as audiology, health and human performance, occupational therapy, physical therapy, and speech-language pathology.

“I am enjoying getting to know the programs and letting them get to know me,” said Breffni, who also serves as chair of the Student Progress and Advising Committee for non-D.O. programs.



Lorraine Breffni enjoys traveling with her family to various destinations, including to her birthplace.

“Every interaction, whether with students, colleagues, or community partners, offers a chance to see things from a new perspective, to grow personally, and to keep an open mind. I find joy in knowing that the work I do contributes not only to my own development, but also to creating environments where others—adults or children—can grow, learn, thrive, and discover their potential.” ■





WHITE COATS, WARM WELCOMES FOR THE CLASS OF 2029

In a proud tradition of honoring the next generation of healthcare professionals, the Dr. Kiran C. Patel College of Osteopathic Medicine (KPCOM) welcomed 409 future physicians into the class of 2029 during its September White Coat ceremonies. The celebration began on September 5, as the Tampa Bay Regional Campus celebrated the incoming class at the Tampa Convention Center. A week later, on September 12, the Fort Lauderdale/Davie Campus continued the momentum at the Rick Case Arena at the Don Taft University Center, where cheers echoed through the auditorium as students donned their coats that symbolize compassion and commitment.



DYNAMIC DUO: Elaine M. Wallace, D.O., Ed.S., M.S., M.S., M.S., KPCOM dean, and Harry K. Moon, M.D., FACS, FRCSEd, NSU president and chief executive officer

Tampa Bay Regional Campus, September 5, 2025



Fort Lauderdale/Davie Campus, September 12, 2025



CLASS OF 2029

FINDS ITS FOOTING DURING WELCOME WEEK

The week of July 21 was filled with anxiety and eagerness, as both the Fort Lauderdale/Davie and Tampa Bay Regional Campuses rolled out the red carpet for the incoming class. From spirited meet and greets to other engaging events, the college worked hard to ensure the new students felt right at home as new members of the NSU osteopathic family.

Following is a pictorial overview of the activities.









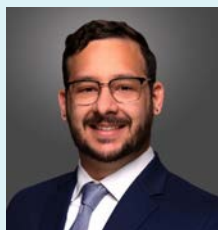
ALUMNI ACHIEVEMENTS



Farhan Ayubi, D.O., FACS, FSVS, RPVI ('04), who is board certified in both surgery and vascular surgery, joined the medical team at Nevada Heart & Vascular Center. While serving in the U.S. Army, Ayubi was staff vascular surgeon and chief of vascular lab at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center in Bethesda, Maryland, and chief of vascular surgery at Tripler Army Medical Center in Honolulu, Hawaii. He achieved the rank of colonel before retiring after 20 years of service.



Jonathon Fox, D.O. ('22), a board-certified family medicine physician, joined the medical team at Prosser Memorial Health in Prosser, Washington, where he provides care for patients of all ages, including annual physicals, well-child checks, women's health services, chronic disease management, and mental health services. He previously worked as a mental health case manager.



Jamie Hale, D.O. ('11) and **Stacey Pilkington**, D.O. ('11), recently founded Skin Relief Hub, which focuses on delivering high-quality, board-certified dermatology care through the convenience of teledermatology. They provide patients with accessible, personalized treatment options from the comfort of home, ensuring professional skin care is only a click away.



Hale



Pilkington

Colonel John Hatfield, D.O. ('08), is the new commander of the 62nd Medical Squadron at McChord Air Force Base in Washington, where he oversees all active duty U.S. Air Force medical capabilities in the coastal Pacific Northwest. Additionally, he serves as part of the Defense Health Network-Indo-Pacific, which is based in Hawaii, as the military treatment facility director.



Tyler Heinrich, D.O. ('20), recently accepted a position at the Medical College of Wisconsin Comprehensive Epilepsy Center, which will commence in 2026 after he completes the final year of his epilepsy fellowship.



Joshua D. Lenchus, D.O., R.Ph., FACP, SPHM ('00), who served as the Florida Medical Association's 146th president from 2022 to 2023, received the organization's Gerald L. Schiebler, M.D. Advocate for Medical Students Award at its annual meeting held July 25-27 in Orlando, Florida. Lenchus has consistently demonstrated a willingness to understand medical students' unique concerns and struggles, making him an invaluable mentor and advocate. Additionally, he was elected as first vice president and as a member of the American Osteopathic Association's Board of Trustees at its House of Delegates meeting in July 2025.



David B. Scholl, D.O. ('14), a family medicine physician, joined Baptist Health Primary Care in Pinecrest, Florida. He has more than 20 years of experience in various aspects of patient care, including preventive medicine, nutrition counseling, wellness screenings, treatment of acute illnesses and injuries, and chronic disease management. Prior to joining Baptist Health, he was the medical director of Claremedica of Homestead.



Jennifer Wellington, D.O., M.Sc. ('14), is the program director for the gastroenterology and hepatology fellowship program at Atrium Health Carolinas Medical Center in Charlotte, North Carolina, after serving as the associate program director since September 2021. Additionally, she was chosen to participate in the Harvard Macy Institute Health Professions Leadership Program that will begin this fall.



Taylor Smith, D.O. ('23) and **Joshua Wright**, D.O. ('22), who are certified by the American Osteopathic Board of Family Physicians, joined Holy Cross Medical Group—a multispecialty, physician-employed group of more than 180 physicians providing services throughout Broward County, Florida. Their focus areas include adult medicine, primary prevention, care management, preoperative evaluation, as well as school and work physicals.



Smith



Wright

Thomas Summers, D.O. ('06), joined the Baptist Health Miami Cancer Institute as a hematologist/oncologist at the institute's new location in Key West, Florida. He possesses 25 years of experience in hematology/oncology and has held staff and leadership positions at Cookeville Regional Medical Center in Tennessee, Southern Ohio Medical Center in Portsmouth, and Cleveland Clinic Florida.



KPCOM WINS *INSIGHT INTO ACADEMIA* MENTAL HEALTH AWARD

In October, the KPCOM received the 2025 Excellence in Mental Health and Well-Being Award from *INSIGHT Into Academia* magazine. The award honors institutions that foster a culture of mental health wellness by providing innovative support for the emotional well-being of students, as well as faculty and staff members. Awardees demonstrate campus-wide integration of mental health initiatives, including accessible services, peer support, emotional resilience, and proactive policy.

WAYS TO SUPPORT

Establish a Scholarship or Programming Endowment

With a minimum gift of \$50,000, which can be paid over multiple years, individuals or companies can establish an endowed fund to support the general operations, student scholarships, or research projects or outfit a space/area with the latest technology. Endowed funds can be named for the donor, the donor's family or business, or in memory of a loved one.

Support Groundbreaking Research and Compassionate Patient Care

Individuals, companies, and foundations can support cutting-edge research and treatment for patients suffering from complex neuro-inflammatory illnesses or children with autism struggling with feeding and swallowing disorders. Gifts to support research and clinical care have the potential to impact the lives of patients today and for generations to come.

Leave a Legacy

Leaving a legacy gift is simple and, in most cases, does not impact your current financial situation. We accept gifts of life insurance, retirement assets, and bequests. Our advancement professionals will work with you (and your legal and financial advisers, when appropriate) to create a philanthropic plan customized for you.

All gifts to NSU are tax-deductible and can be customized. You will be provided with a receipt for your records.

Interested in Partnering?

Contact: Kathryn W. Miller, J.D.
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