

NSU
Florida

SAYING GOODBYE

Longtime leader
retires from NSU.

D.O. DIETITIAN

Multifaceted
student plots
nutritional future.

**FAMOUS
FOOTSTEPS**

Alumna perpetuates
plastic surgical legacy.

LINK

KPCOM

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



SPRING 2025
v4.1



Lippman had the honor of meeting the Dali Lama in 2010 when he visited NSU to speak to students, faculty members, and invited guests about the topic universal responsibility.

WELL-EARNED RETIREMENT: HONORING NSU ICON FREDERICK LIPPMAN

As 2024 came to a festive end, so did the illustrious career of Frederick Lippman, R.Ph., Ed.D., chancellor emeritus of the Health Professions Division (HPD). After almost seven prodigious decades, Lippman retired from a professional life that earned him success as a community pharmacist, civic leader, state representative, health care educator, TV host, and Nova Southeastern University (NSU) administrator.

The roles may have changed over the years, but one aspect that never wavered was his commitment to creating progressive programs and championing policies that benefited all sectors of society. In a career overflowing with accomplishment, Lippman, who will turn 90 in April, helped lead the HPD to esteemed levels of excellence. He also served as a dedicated administrator who considers the multitude of students who graduated from the numerous HPD programs “his family.”

During his years of involvement with Southeastern University of the Health Sciences, which merged with Nova University in 1994 to create Nova Southeastern University, Lippman frequently discussed the sense of pride he felt when he walked through the HPD complex and observed the rainbow of white coat patches and scrubs that exemplify the division’s programmatic diversity.

Over the years, Lippman, who became the first administrative officer of the Barry and Judy Silverman College of Pharmacy in 1987, had the challenging task of overseeing a complex web of HPD activities. Thanks to his professional connections, research laboratories were developed, cutting-edge equipment was acquired to help NSU achieve its goal of becoming a premier research institution in Florida, and protocols for research activity were drafted and implemented.

Although his NSU career spanned more than 30 years, Lippman also spent 20 years as an elected member of Florida’s House of Representatives, where he earned his constituents’ respect by adhering to a policy of open and honest communication. During his legislative career, he focused on several priority issues, including children, the elderly, and health care.

From 1978 to 1998, he played a significant role in enacting legislation that positively impacted the constituents in his district, as well as the state as a whole. Some of the hallmarks of his legislative tenure included serving as lead sponsor of the Seatbelt Act and the Child Restraint Bill, which has since saved the lives of countless children. “During my time in the Florida Legislature, I served as the primary sponsor of 256 pieces of legislation, and 158 of them were bipartisan in nature,” he proudly asserted.

Lippman earned additional esteem by becoming the “father” of Florida’s Area Health Education Center (AHEC) Program—a federally funded program that works to improve the supply and distribution of primary care health providers in medically underserved rural and urban areas by creating partnerships with academic health centers. In fact, NSU’s Dr. Kiran C. Patel College of Osteopathic Medicine AHEC Program began in 1985 as Florida’s pioneer AHEC program.

His commitment to educating and helping people was also evidenced by his role as host of *Dateline Health*—NSU’s public service television program, which celebrated its 600th episode on September 4, 2024. Over the past few decades, the program has been dedicated to promoting the community’s overall health and well-being by covering a variety of contemporary health care issues through interviews with health care experts, researchers, and policymakers. As the winner of several Telly Awards, which honor excellence in video and television across all screens, *Dateline Health* earned the prestigious People’s Telly GOLD prize in 2020 for its coverage of the COVID-19 pandemic.

In the following excerpts from a December 2024 interview with Lippman, he shares his thoughts and recounts some of his most memorable moments, including his career-altering relationship with Morton Terry, D.O., M.Sc., FACOI, who founded Southeastern University of the Health Sciences, which would later merge with Nova University to create the NSU Health Professions Division.

Southeastern Alliance

I had recently sold my four pharmacies, and that’s when Dr. Terry made a crucial call to me. He said, “Why don’t you do something worthwhile? You could be very helpful, because my goal is to establish a college of pharmacy.” And that’s how my official affiliation with Southeastern began.

Student Supporter

I always enjoyed speaking to the new classes. I would look out at the audience and say, “I want the parents, spouses, and significant others to understand that these young people, and now, with your approval—my children...” That’s how I felt. I felt it was my responsibility to make the students understand that they’re not doing this for money or a prestigious title. They’re doing it to help people survive death, cure disease, and make people healthy.

Memorable Achievement

I take great pride in the fact that Dr. Terry told me to get my doctoral degree, which I earned when I was well into my 60s. I didn’t know until after he died in 2004 that he wrote a memo to a few top NSU administrators that said, “If I am aging and have certain medical problems or I suddenly pass, I have instructed Fred Lippman to become Dr. Fred Lippman. You would be doing me a favor while standing at my funeral, knowing that everything I wanted to do could be carried forward by Fred Lippman



Morton Terry and Frederick Lippman pose backstage at the 2002 graduation ceremony.

with the doctoral acronym after his name.” It took me a little more than three years to complete the degree, but the greatest sense of accomplishment was honoring Dr. Terry’s long-standing wish.

Milestone Accomplishments

I also feel that getting the College of Dental Medicine accredited was one of my most important successes. Additionally, I take great pride in the fact that, in the last several years, every student who graduated from the Dr. Kiran C. Patel College of Osteopathic Medicine matched into a residency program. We successfully matched every student who graduated in the last four years in the state of Florida. Do I take credit for these accomplishments? Absolutely not. What I was successful in doing was giving the deans and faculty members the opportunity to succeed. I never tried to stand in their way of providing the best education possible to our students. Another proud moment occurred in 2017 when I was asked by Dr. George Hanbury to be the interim executive vice president and CEO of the university for a few months until somebody new was hired. I ended up being in that position for 22 months.



Guiding Principles

Although I was born in the United States, my relatives came here from Belarus and Ukraine. My mother came here when she was about five years old. It was a privilege to have parents who accomplished what was almost impossible at the time—to buy a home in 1931 at the height of the deepest depression in the history of this nation. My parents, my mother's

younger brother and two sisters, my siblings, and me all lived in the same house. I believe that growing up in this environment enabled me to understand what work ethic was really all about.

Retirement Plans

Although I will miss working with so many incredible individuals and interacting with our wonderful students, I look forward to spending more time with my wife Bonnie and my family. However, I intend to remain involved in various community activities. Although I'm retiring, I will always be available to the NSU leadership to help the university continue on its path to becoming one of the finest educational institutions in the United States.



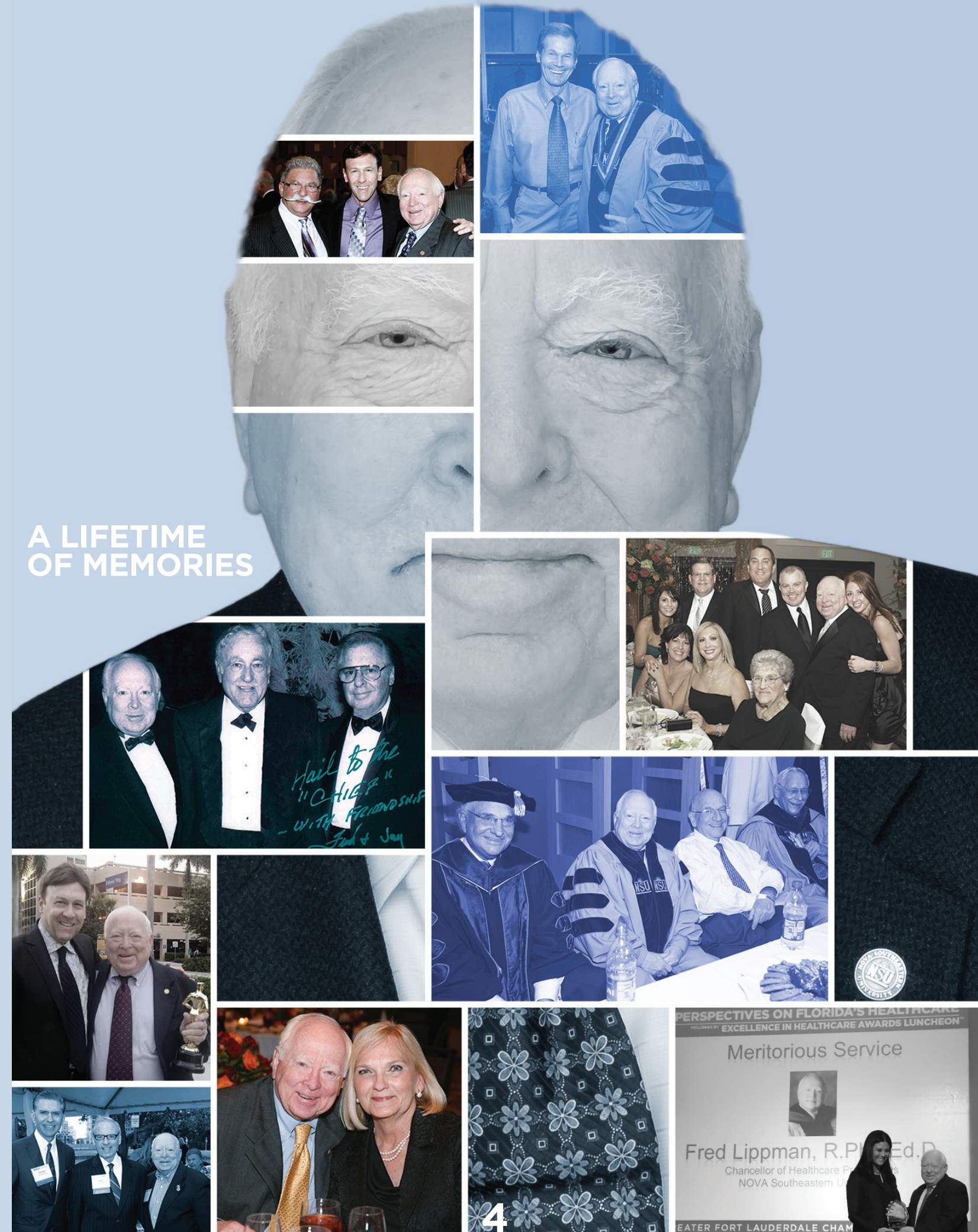
Thoughts on Aging

Most people don't know how old I am, so when I'm asked, I say, "Don't ask me how old I am. Just call me vintage."

Final Words of Wisdom

My father used to say, “Don’t ever count the money that’s in your friends’ pockets as a symbol of success. Count the memories that have brought much happiness to those you care about. ■

A LIFETIME OF MEMORIES





DANIELLE
BROUSSARD
BRINGS KEEN
INSIGHT TO
FUTURE PRACTICE

Danielle Broussard treats a patient during a Galápagos Islands medical outreach trip.

Because she’s lived an interesting life filled with educational adventure, it’s not surprising to discover that third-year student Danielle Broussard, RD, had other vocational interests before she decided to become a student at NSU’s Dr. Kiran C. Patel College of Osteopathic Medicine.

While attending high school in Green Bay, Wisconsin, Broussard’s favorite subjects were biology, math, and psychology. “I really enjoyed the puzzle that math is, learning about how the brain works, and studying living organisms,” she said. During this time, she also took an Introduction to Health Careers class, which compelled her to become a certified nursing assistant.

“A neonatologist named Dr. B spoke to our class, and I remember thinking, ‘I want to do that.’ I shadowed Dr. B and read so many books on neonatology that I became convinced saving babies was going to be my future career,” she revealed. “No other field made sense to me. I wanted to be instrumental in improving people’s lives, be with them in a time of vulnerability, connect with them on a humanistic level, and use my knowledge to assist in their healing.”

During her junior year of college, however, while studying at Saint Mary’s University of Minnesota, Broussard had the opportunity to study abroad in Italy for a semester—an experience that would prove life-altering. “Although I was on the premed track, I started to understand health in a new way while living in Italy. I realized that the people were thriving not necessarily because of the country’s great health care system, but because they prioritize other aspects of their life that bring them joy and, ultimately, health,” she explained.

“For example, their focus isn’t on how much money they make or how many hours they work in a day,” she added. “Instead, they take time to spend with family, friends, and community. They invest in quality ingredients and get lots of rest. I witnessed Italians take immense pride in their connections with people, which are so strong. When I studied the Blue Zones, I learned a lot of these same characteristics and priorities existed in these communities as well. This intrigued me.”

Broussard was so intrigued that she modified her career course to become a dietitian, because she realized she “wanted to assist others to not only heal from but prevent

disease through the use of nutrition.” After completing a dietitian internship at the Edward Hines Jr. Veterans Administration Hospital in Chicago, Illinois, she embarked on her new vocation.

“I educated patients about nutrition and administered medical nutrition therapy as part of the health care team,” she said. “I assisted and counseled them in healing from and preventing disease via nutrition. In my private practice as a sports dietitian, I assisted my clients in meeting their fitness goals through nutrition, as well as provided them with a healthy, fun activity like cooking to aid them in their long-term success.”

Although she enjoyed her work as a dietitian, something was missing. “Ultimately, I wanted to be able to provide more

for my patients,” said Broussard, who plans to pursue a residency in physical medicine and rehabilitation and incorporate lifestyle medicine into her practice when she graduates from the college in 2026. “I thoroughly enjoyed being a dietitian, but I was limited in my capabilities to treat the entire patient. As an osteopathic physician, I will be more equipped to provide for my patients beyond my dietary expertise.”

Of course, her experience in the nutritional realm will provide her future patients with enhanced expertise. “As we age, no one teaches us how to eat. Most of our knowledge and nutritional habits are passed down to us from our parents or those we grew up with,” Broussard said.

“Most physicians don’t have a lot of training in nutrition; however, most patients ask about it,” she continued. “There is a disconnect/information gap. I believe my nutrition background and experience counseling patients will help me connect with them on a deeper level. I will also be able to assist them in a more holistic way because of my confidence and ability to link nutrition to their disease/illness. Finally, my conversations about nutrition can assist my patients in preventing health issues in the future.” ■



cooking class

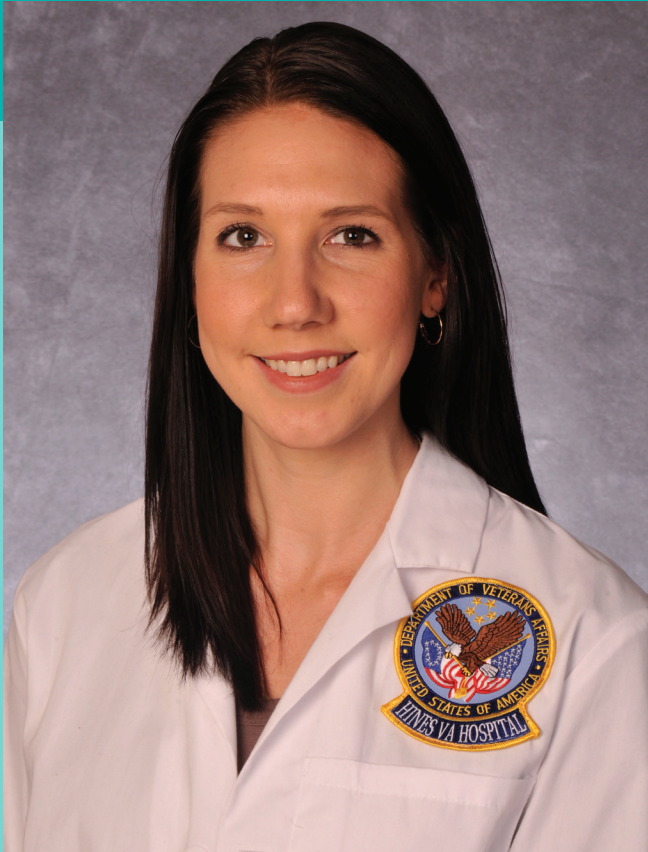
DIETITIAN VS. NUTRITIONIST

According to Broussard, most people, including those who work in health care, don’t know the difference between a dietitian and a nutritionist. To set the record straight, she discussed the differentiation.

“Nutritionists are technically anyone who knows something about nutrition. They rarely have any official training in nutrition. However, registered dietitians (RDs) are required to complete an undergraduate and graduate degree in nutrition and dietetics; complete an accredited, unpaid, 12-month dietetic internship; and pass a national examination. RDs are also required to complete continuing professional education requirements to maintain their registration.

A common misconception is that dietitians just create meal plans or menus. A great dietitian considers all aspects of the patient—abilities, disabilities, schedules, goals, as well as the micro- and macro-nutrient needs dependent on the patient’s current situation.

Like great physicians, great dietitians can build rapport with their patients, intentionally listen to them, and use skills such as motivational interviewing to provoke a behavioral and long-lasting change for the greatest success.”
—Danielle Broussard





Daliana Almeida Garcia and her mom

DALIANA ALMEIDA GARCIA FINDS STRENGTH IN OPTIMISM

As a child growing up in the coastal city of Caibarién in Cuba, first-year student Daliana Almeida Garcia’s fervent desire was to become a physician.

“Although I grew up in a country where medical care wasn’t the best, I was inspired by the idea of diagnosing and treating people to improve their quality of life,” she explained. “However, my life changed drastically when I was 16 years old, and with it, the dream of one day becoming a health care professional faded, as my circumstances made it seem impossible to achieve.”

When Garcia was 15, her father decided to move to the United States to give the family a shot at a better life. However, with her mother now solely in charge of raising Garcia and her brother, the stress began exacting a physical toll.

“The transition was challenging, as the responsibility of taking care of us, as well as managing the household, weighed heavily on my mom,” Garcia explained. “She began to get sick more frequently. What began as seemingly minor stomach problems escalated into fainting spells, extreme weight loss, and skin rashes. However, no doctor could explain her symptoms, and some even attributed them to hypochondriasis.”

A year later, the Garcia family reunited in the United States, relocating to Orlando, Florida, to make a fresh start. Unfortunately, her mother’s health continued to decline. After visiting Catholic Charities of Central Florida, the family was directed to a nonprofit organization that provides medical care to low-income and uninsured people. After enduring two blood tests and a biopsy, Garcia’s mom was diagnosed with papillary thyroid cancer.

“Hearing the word cancer is not easy for any family,” Garcia said. “Regardless of your age—whether you’re a child or an adult—it fills your mind with countless questions. ‘What will her life be like after surgery?’ ‘How is she feeling right now?’ And, most importantly, ‘Is there still hope for her to survive?’ My father had only been in the United States for a year, my brother was 10 years old, and I was 16.”

Garcia and her family also had the added burden of knowing there was no conceivable way they could afford the surgery and accompanying hospital expenses. Happily, the clinic where her mother was diagnosed arranged the surgery, taking into account the family’s financial situation. “My mother had successful surgery, and our family did not incur any medical expenses. Her subsequent iodine treatment and specialized medical care were also arranged by the clinic at no cost to us,” Garcia explained.

“I will never forget that my mother is alive today thanks to the health care professionals who helped her, and I will always be deeply grateful for everything they did for our family,”

she added. “Their dedication and motivation left a lasting impact on me, inspiring me to work even harder to achieve my dream of becoming a doctor. I aspire to one day make a meaningful difference in the lives of my patients, just as my own life was shaped by a doctor during my teenage years.”

About a year before she began applying to various medical schools, Garcia worked as a medical scribe for Robin Healthcare, where she had the opportunity to work for an osteopathic physician who specialized in orthopedics. “I remember him performing the muscle-energy technique on a patient who had been suffering from chronic lower back pain for years,” she explained. “At that moment, I knew I would be interested in a career in osteopathic medicine. I found it fascinating how I could improve the quality of life of my patients just by using my hands, combined with a more integrated approach to medical care.”

Although Garcia is only in her first year as a Dr. Kiran C. Patel College of Osteopathic Medicine student, she already has a specific idea of what her future will look like when she graduates. “I am interested in internal medicine, because I consider it a way to provide comprehensive and patient-centered care,” she revealed.

“As a future health professional, I believe my osteopathic studies will provide me with the skills needed to take a holistic approach to patient care,” she continued. “Medical care is about kindness, generosity, perseverance, knowledge, and, most importantly, support. As health care professionals, we can make a transformative difference in the lives of our patients by going beyond just diagnosing and treating. As Abel Salazar once said, ‘A doctor who only knows about medicine does not even know medicine.’”

Just as Garcia’s future looks bright, so does her mother’s. While she needs to take thyroid medicine for the rest of her life, the side effects are minimal, allowing her mom to “live each day to the fullest, surrounded by the people she loves.”

Because she’s already dealt with her share of weighty challenges, Garcia believes in living life optimistically—even in the face of uncertainty. “There is always hope, even in those moments where all paths seem blocked,” she stressed. “If we continue to persevere and take one step at a time, we will find a light or an alternative path that will lead us to where we need to be.” ■



Garcia is involved with the NSU Interprofessional Diabetes Education and Awareness program.



SAVANNAH MOON FOLLOWS PARENTAL CAREER ORBIT

“Your patient always comes first.” —Harry K. Moon, M.D., FACS, FRCSEd, NSU president and chief executive officer

As a child growing up in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, Savannah Moon, D.O., had the aforementioned principle instilled in her by her father—a respected plastic surgeon and the seventh president of Nova Southeastern University (NSU).

Given her parental pedigree, it’s not surprising Moon pursued a medical career after watching her dad and mom—a critical care nurse—help others. “We frequently received house calls, from split chins and scraped shins to dog bites and fishing injuries,” said Moon, a 2013 Dr. Kiran C. Patel College of Osteopathic Medicine (KPCOM) alumna.

“Our kitchen door was always open. I would sit next to my father, hand him his instruments, and hold the patient’s hand—a slight comfort from one child to another,” added Moon, the oldest of

four siblings. “My parents eventually built their own surgical practice, so I observed my father’s gentle bedside manner and detailed precision in the operating room and my mother’s compassion for their patients and families.”

Although medicine was a predominant theme of her upbringing, Moon and her siblings enjoyed a childhood filled with love of learning and exploration. “We were always outdoors, and we had tremendous autonomy,” she explained. “Because we lived on the water, we learned to navigate boats by the age of 10 and spent weekends snorkeling, fishing, and wakeboarding together. Summers were also special, as we had our own sleepaway camp at our mountain cabin in northern Georgia. We explored the woods, fished in the creek, and spent the days tubing down the river.”

Her athletic leanings and love of the outdoors reaped major dividends when Moon earned a Dean’s Academic Scholarship to Tulane University, where she excelled in Division

I cross-country and track, became team captain during her senior year, and graduated cum laude with her Bachelor of Arts degree in 2008.

Surgical Focus

Because her dad is a renowned M.D., it seemed almost preordained that she would follow the same allopathic path. Moon’s instincts, however, pulled her in a slightly different direction. “I was drawn to osteopathic medicine because of its comprehensive approach to patient care,” said Moon, who completed a one-year research fellowship at the University of Miami’s Interdisciplinary Stem Cell Institute in 2009.

“NSU’s osteopathic college stood out to me because of its focus on treating the person as a whole—mind, body, and spirit,” added Moon, who was the first D.O. in her general surgery residency, plastic surgery fellowship, and craniofacial fellowship. “This philosophy aligned with my vision of medicine and

allowed me to honor the values I learned from my father, while forging my own unique path as a physician.”

After graduating from the KPCOM, Moon did her general surgery residency at Cleveland Clinic Florida in Weston, where she received both junior and senior resident of the year awards. “I always knew I wanted to be a surgeon,” she said. “During my general surgery residency, I was fortunate to train under phenomenal mentors, true general surgeons—minimally invasive surgeon Dr. Raul Rosenthal, vascular surgeon Dr. Mark Grove, and pediatric surgeon Dr. Julie Long. Their dedication to excellence and patient-centered care set a high standard that shaped the advancement in my career.”

While her love for general surgery and pediatrics seemed to forecast a career path in these areas once she completed her residency training, her unintended introduction to the vast field of plastic surgery significantly altered her vocational trajectory.

“During a medical outreach trip to Rwanda with my pediatric surgeon attending, we collaborated with the plastic surgery team on a complex head and neck reconstruction,” she explained.

“I was inspired by everyone’s skill, creativity, and innovative approach,” she continued. “I witnessed how plastic surgery is practiced beyond the limitations of other surgical specialties. Plastic surgeons pursue the surgical solution regardless of the patient’s age, anatomic location, or complexity of the deformity. This explains my great attraction to plastic surgery. It is like no other surgical discipline.”

Honoring the Past

After completing her residency training in 2019, Moon continued her educational exploration by doing a plastic and reconstructive surgery fellowship at Cleveland Clinic Florida, followed by a craniofacial surgery fellowship at Nicklaus Children’s Hospital in Miami, Florida. Then, in 2023, Moon honored her parents’ legacy by reestablishing



Savannah Moon with husband Jim Sautter and daughter Rosemary

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ALUMNI ACHIEVEMENTS

Sonny Achtchi, D.O., FACC, FSCAI ('08), a board-certified interventional and endovascular cardiologist, joined Hamilton Physician Group-Cardiology in Dalton, Georgia. Achtchi completed fellowships in internal medicine, cardiovascular disease, and interventional cardiology at Emory University. He is a fellow of the American College of Cardiology and the Society for Cardiovascular Angiography and Interventions.



Kayvan Amini, D.O., FACC ('01), was appointed to Florida's Graduate Medical Education Committee by the state surgeon general. The committee's responsibility is to evaluate and optimize the effectiveness of state investments in shaping Florida's physician workforce. He was also inaugurated as the 98th president of the Broward County Medical Association on February 1, becoming only the second D.O. to be elected president of the organization.



Joe Bhagratie, D.O., M.S., CAQSM, RMSK ('19), joined Baptist Orthopedics to spearhead the launch of its new nonsurgical sports medicine practice in Jacksonville, Florida. As the inaugural physician in this role, Bhagratie provides advanced care, including ultrasound-guided diagnostics, regenerative therapies, and osteopathic manipulative treatment for musculoskeletal injuries. He also specializes in concussion management and acupuncture.



Tyler Cymet, D.O., FACP, FACFP, FACHT ('88), is the new chair of primary care and internal medicine at the proposed Illinois College of Osteopathic Medicine at The Chicago School.



Ahmed Aly Elghawy, D.O. ('15), a board-certified rheumatologist and sports medicine physician, is the new division chief of rheumatology at Mount Sinai Medical Center in Miami Beach, Florida.



Britta Gray, D.O., M.P.H. ('15), joined the Cottage Obstetrics & Gynecology Clinic team in Santa Barbara, California. Prior to her new role, she practiced at the Ravenswood Family Health Center in East Palo Alto, where she had hospital privileges at Lucile Packard Children's Hospital at Stanford University.



Jonathan T. Grossman, D.O. ('18), joined the Northwest Medical Group—Neurology office in Valparaiso, Indiana. He completed residencies in neurology at the University of Chicago and at Boca Raton Regional Hospital in Florida.



Victor A. Jaffe, D.O. ('06), was named chief medical officer of HCA Florida Northwest Hospital, a 289-bed facility located in Margate, Florida, that is part of HCA Florida Healthcare. Prior to joining HCA, he served as the physician adviser at Delray Medical Center, where he led utilization management.



Will Kirby, D.O., FAOCD ('00), a board-certified dermatologist and chief medical officer of LaserAway, is featured on the NBC TV show *Deal or No Deal Island*. The show focuses on a group of 13 contestants who compete in dangerous games on a private island for a cash prize in an intense, season-long reality competition.



Joshua D. Lenchus, D.O., R.Ph., FACP, SFHM ('00), was elected third vice president of the American Osteopathic Association's Board of Trustees at its annual House of Delegates meeting in Chicago, Illinois. He is also the new medical director for Aetna's Florida market in the state's southeastern region. Additionally, he received the Florida Osteopathic Medical Association's Distinguished Service Award during its live conference held February 21-23 in Orlando, Florida. The award—the highest honor the association can bestow—is given to an individual in recognition of outstanding accomplishments in science, professionalism, osteopathic education, or service to the osteopathic profession or citizens of Florida at the state or national level.



Christopher (C.J.) Mancuso, D.O., M.H.S. ('19), recently opened his dermatology office—The Skin Institute of New York (SINY Dermatology) in Delray Beach, Florida. His office is an extension of a larger private practice in New York with nine other offices in Brooklyn, Queens, Manhattan, and Long Island. With the goal of strengthening the continuity of care between the two regions, Mancuso is accepting new patients for medical, surgical, cosmetic, and pediatric dermatology.



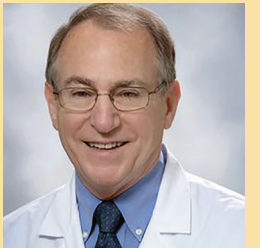
Earle M. Pescatore, Jr., D.O. ('89), was named a full-time faculty member at Southern Illinois University School of Medicine. He serves as an assistant professor and division head of urogynecology in the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology.



Bruce G. Rankin, D.O., CPI, FACFP ('85), medical director and principal investigator at Accel Clinical Research in Deland, Florida, was installed as president of the Florida Osteopathic Medical Association at its annual convention on February 22 in Orlando, Florida.



Joel L. Rush, D.O., FAOAO, FAAOS ('85), is the new associate designated instructional official (ADIO) for the Broward Health Graduate Medical Education program. The ADIO's responsibility is to assist the DIO to work in collaboration with the Institutional Graduate Medical Education Committee to oversee all ACGME-accredited programs of the sponsoring institution—Broward Health. He will continue to serve as program director of the Broward Health Orthopedic Surgery Residency program.



Jason C. Sniffen, D.O., J.D., MACOI, FACP, FIDSA ('96), an infectious disease practitioner in the Orlando area since 2001, was elected to his fourth term and second consecutive term as chair of infectious diseases at AdventHealth's Central Florida Division for 2025-26. Additionally, he was elevated to master fellow of the American College of Osteopathic Internists at its October 2024 conference and attained his Juris Doctor degree in August 2024. He graduated summa cum laude and was the salutatorian for the class of 2024.



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 recently appointed co-chair of the National Cancer Institute/SWOG Cancer Prevention, Screening, and Surveillance Committee. In this role, he will oversee clinical trial development and provide mentorship to young investigators involved in cancer prevention clinical trials research.



IN MEMORIAM

Kerry L. Nagel, D.O. ('91), a beloved husband, father, brother, physician, and friend, passed away on January 8 at the age of 68. Nagel, who grew up in Miami, Florida, had a profound desire to help others—a passion that would guide his life's work. According to those who knew him well, his life was a testament to the power of kindness, passion, and perseverance.



Brian Schmidt, D.O. ('06), a general surgeon, passed away on February 21 in Sarasota, Florida, at the age of 53 after waging a valiant battle against ALS (amyotrophic lateral sclerosis). During his accomplished career, he practiced at Northeast Surgical Specialists in Dunmore, Pennsylvania, and worked as a general surgeon at various hospitals in Southwest Florida.



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their Himmarshee Plastic Surgery practice in Fort Lauderdale.

“Reestablishing it with my practice partner and friend Stephanie Scurci, M.D., felt like the perfect way to honor them, while bringing a fresh, feminine perspective to the practice,” she explained. “The practice has always been known for exceptional patient care and outcomes, and Stephanie and I share a vision of continuing that tradition, while expanding services to meet our patients’ diverse needs. As mothers and surgeons, we understand the unique challenges of balancing a demanding career with family life, and we lean on each other for support.”

In its current incarnation, Himmarshee Plastic Surgery offers a comprehensive range of aesthetic and reconstructive procedures, including facial rejuvenation surgeries, such as facelifts, neck lifts, brow lifts, blepharoplasty, rhinoplasty, and otoplasty. “We also offer breast surgery procedures, including augmentation, revision, and reconstruction for breast cancer patients. Additionally, we provide body-contouring procedures like abdominoplasty and liposuction, along with reconstructive surgeries,” she said.

“The most fulfilling aspect of plastic and reconstructive surgery is the privilege of caring for patients—it is a profound relationship built on hope and trust,” added Moon, who is happily married to Jim Sautter, the finance

director at a local construction software company, and is the mother to three-year-old daughter Rosemary, as well as daughter June who was born on February 10, 2025. “Patients place their trust in me with the expectation of achieving an outcome that enhances their

the effort. “If you have a calling to medicine, especially surgery, the journey demands immense dedication, resilience, and grit—but the rewards are worth every challenge,” she stressed. “I spent 10 years in training after medical school, enduring long hours and



Moon family portrait

confidence and quality of life. I become an integral part of their journey, from our initial consultations to surgery day and throughout the recovery process.”

In addition to her private practice, Moon remains committed to assisting pediatric patients through her role as a pediatric plastic surgeon at Nicklaus Children’s Hospital. “One day a week, I see pediatric patients at one of its satellite offices, and once a month, I operate at the main Nicklaus Children’s Hospital,” she said. “Having my own practice allows me the flexibility to continue contributing to the children’s hospital and stay active in pediatric care.”

Moon acknowledged that the journey to fashion a thriving surgical career can be an arduous one, but the rewards are well worth

intense demands, but remained focused on my goal of practicing plastic surgery.”

She also credited her days as a student-athlete at Tulane University for providing her with the essential toughness needed to thrive in demanding situations. “Running instilled invaluable lessons of perseverance and resilience—how to summon strength when exhausted and how to visualize the finish line,” she acknowledged.

“My surgical training and career have been the ultimate marathon,” she added. “For those considering a career in surgery, know that the path is challenging, but it is also one of profound fulfillment. The ability to transform lives through skill, dedication, and compassion makes every step of the journey worthwhile.”

Nova Southeastern University admits students of any race, color, sex, age, nondisqualifying disability, religion or creed, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, military service, veteran status, or national or ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school, and does not discriminate in administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship and loan programs, and athletic and other school-administered programs. Any such acts are unacceptable and strictly prohibited by the university. • Nova Southeastern University is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) to award associate's, baccalaureate, master's, educational specialist, doctoral, and professional degrees. Nova Southeastern University also may offer credentials such as certificates and diplomas at approved degree levels. Questions about the accreditation of Nova Southeastern University may be directed in writing to the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges at 1866 Southern Lane, Decatur, GA 30033-4097, by calling (404) 679-4500, or by using information available on SACSCOC's website (www.sacscoc.org).



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With a minimum gift of \$25,000, 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.

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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.

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

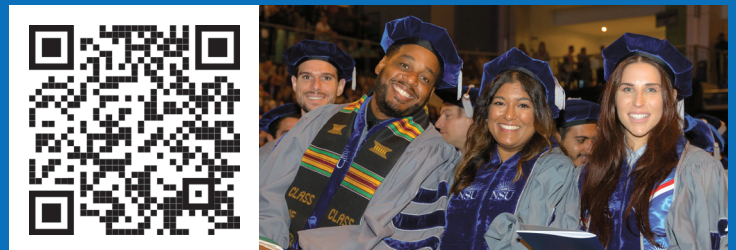
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