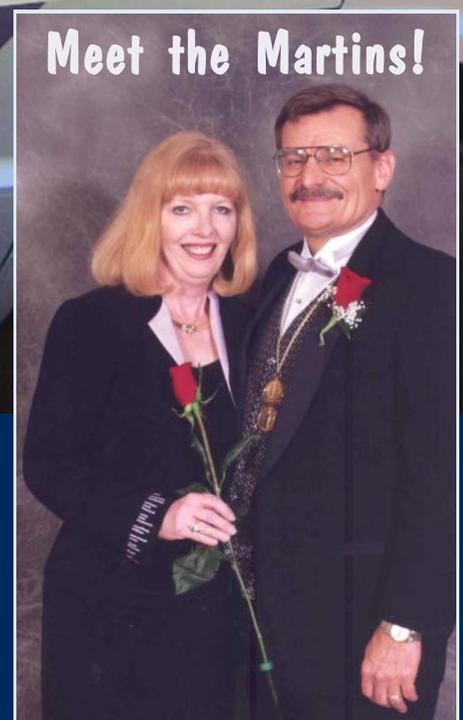


COM outlook

College of Osteopathic Medicine

Winter 2006

Volume 7, Number 1



**Hurricane Help:
NSU-COM Answers
the Call**

Dean's Message



Anthony J. Silvagni, D.O., Pharm.D.

Over the past 18 months, Florida has been struck by an astounding number of hurricanes, but none impacted Broward County more than a nasty category three tempest named Wilma in October 2005. Because it was the worst hurricane to hit our county in about 50 years, the storm's aftermath created enormous stress and unusual challenges for all citizens, who had to contend with everything from sustained power outages to catastrophic damage to their homes.

Not surprisingly, Nova Southeastern University suffered its fair share of damage as well and was forced to close for a full week. When classes finally resumed, one of the first things I did was meet with the students. Amazingly, although about 75 percent of them still didn't have power and many were dealing with damage to their apartments, homes, and property, they showed up in class, ready to study and learn. Their maturity and commitment to their future practice of medicine was readily apparent even though their lives and homes had been thrown into varying degrees of chaos.

It is in times of crisis when our fortitude is most tested, and our students deserve kudos for the grace with which they accepted the significant alterations that were made to their schedules after missing a week of classes. Because of Hurricane Wilma's unwelcome visit to South Florida, we had to reschedule a number of exams and increase the number of hours per week our students attended classes. We also did everything possible to avoid implementing Saturday classes, such as moving some coursework into the second year to prevent student burnout.

The family atmosphere that pervades NSU, the Health Professions Division, and the College of Osteopathic Medicine was on full display in the hurricane's aftermath based on the diligent actions of administration, faculty, staff, and students. In the days following Hurricane

Wilma, a number of administrators and faculty members, who were contending with their own storm-related misfortune, showed up on campus to make sure the curriculum was adjusted for the missing time. It was wonderful to witness everyone working together to ensure that the value of the students' education was not compromised due to severe external circumstances.

The university as a whole also deserves extensive praise for the compassionate way it outreached to the NSU community in the weeks following the hurricane. In a true show of "family" support, NSU immediately offered to help find temporary housing for employees who had been displaced from their homes. Additionally, because all Broward County public schools were closed for several weeks following the storm, the university provided childcare at the Alvin Sherman Library, Research and Information Technology Center for stressed out employees who needed a place to take their children during working hours.

NSU also provided frazzled employees with helpful information related to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) assistance program and coordinated a hurricane recovery workshop entitled "After Wilma: Communication and Conflict Resolution in Times of Crisis" through the Department of Conflict Analysis and Resolution.

When all is said and done, Hurricane Wilma was a catastrophic event that only served to intensify the feelings of respect, compassion, and pride that exist throughout the university, the Health Professions Division, and the College of Osteopathic Medicine.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Anthony J. Silvagni, D.O." The signature is fluid and cursive.





Fred Lippman, R.P.H., Ed.D.
Chancellor

In the days and weeks following the widespread devastation caused by Hurricane Katrina on the Gulf Coast and Hurricane Wilma in South Florida, it was with a great sense of pride and admiration that I witnessed the collective relief efforts of not only the College of Osteopathic Medicine but the interdisciplinary teams from the Health Professions Division and the university.

As you flip through the pages of this issue of *COM Outlook*, you will be able to read a detailed account of the numerous ways NSU colleges and programs united to help alleviate human suffering by providing various medical care or donating money and other needed items. When I visited with NSU President Ray Ferrero in the days following Hurricane Katrina to discuss ways we could help the storm victims, his response was, “Go wherever you have to go,” which is a challenge we willingly accepted.

Over the past several months, NSU has stepped up to the plate in a variety of ways. After an attempt to coordinate medical relief efforts through the Florida Department of Health fell through, the College of Osteopathic Medicine helped establish connections with various religious and jurisdictional organizations to provide ongoing health care outreach in a storm-battered area of Mississippi. Similarly, when Hurricane Wilma ripped through South Florida in late October, the college responded by outreaching to a particularly hard-hit region in the City of Miramar. This relief effort, which was housed at the original Miramar City Hall structure, allowed affiliated NSU-COM residents to participate as well as some of our medical students who are currently doing their clinical rotations.

During these humanitarian missions, we provided some very significant value to the affected areas not only in terms of palliative and general health care but from a financial aspect that had us providing a range of services worth in excess of half a million dollars.

The overwhelming response from our faculty and students to these weather-related crises reminds me of the original

mission stated by the late Dr. Morton Terry when he originally founded Southeastern College of Osteopathic Medicine over a quarter century ago. If you look at the original founding documents, Dr. Terry’s intent was clear—to make rural and inner-city rotations mandatory instead of electives. His goal was to establish an institution that focused on community service by providing health care access to populations in underserved and underrepresented areas.



Irving Rosenbaum, D.P.A.
Vice Chancellor and Provost

Within the fabric of our HPD structure, that’s what we’re all about. Our hurricane relief efforts are just an extension of our longstanding and perpetual commitment to community service. Throughout the programs we present at the six NSU Health Professions Division colleges, each one has an element of community involvement and community service built into it. Am I proud of this fact? Absolutely. Do I expect it? I most definitely do.

My job as an administrator is to expect not only that which is normal and natural to the university community but also to expect things that are extraordinary. When emergency situations arise, I know I can rely on the members of our health care family to provide exemplary community service and treat patients with a healthy dose of what I like to call respect care—just as they do in the normal day-to-day practice of their professions.





Health Professions Division

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

Irving Rosenbaum, D.P.A.
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College of Osteopathic Medicine

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13 NSU-COM Receives \$4.8 Million in Bioterrorism Grants

NSU-COM's Center on Bioterrorism and Weapons of Mass Destruction Preparedness recently took another step toward statewide preeminence when it received two U.S. Health Resources and Services Administration grants totaling \$4.8 million that target interdisciplinary bioterrorism preparedness curriculum development and continuing education.

18 Hurricane Help: NSU-COM Answers the Call

When hurricanes Katrina and William caused a double dose of destruction in the Gulf Coast and South Florida, the College of Osteopathic Medicine and other NSU health-related programs pitched in to provide much-appreciated assistance to the storm-ravaged victims.

22 Dynamic Duo: Dr. Ronnie and Sherri Martin

When Dr. Ronnie Martin met his future wife Sherri in Oklahoma during their senior year of high school in the mid 1960s, they had no idea they were about to embark on a personal and professional odyssey that would produce an osteopathic dynasty and bring them fulfillment beyond their wildest dreams.

28 M.P.H. Program Sets Sights on Future Milestones

The Master of Public Health Program has undergone a number of interesting permutations since it was established in 1994 as a component of what was then known as the College of Allied Health, including being shifted under the NSU-COM academic umbrella in 2001 and quadrupling in enrollment size from about 30 students in 1995 to the current 130.

32 OPP Fellowship Serves as a Labor of Love for Students

To the average student, the thought of enduring an extra year of medical school to pursue an osteopathic principles and practice fellowship probably doesn't rank high on his or her list of things to do. However, for the six students currently participating in the college's elective OPP Fellowship Program, the experience is proving to be both rewarding and fulfilling.

38 Dr. Carlos Levy Earns Acclaim for Domestic Violence Efforts

Becoming an ardent advocate for domestic violence victims was not something Dr. Carlos Levy envisioned becoming when he received a plea in the mail from Florida Governor Jeb Bush several years ago.

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Pictured at the convention are M2 students Olphabine Athouriste, Lynda Goldberg, Meena Makhijani, and Farah Ahmedi.

Thanks to a \$750 American Osteopathic Foundation Savvy Student Traveler Grant, M2 student Olphabine Athouriste was able to attend the AOA's Unified Osteopathic Convention, which was held in October in Orlando, Florida. Athouriste couldn't have picked a better year to attend her first AOA convention since it marked the first time in 108 years that all 23 osteopathic disciplines came together to learn from one another and

continue their quest to provide the best quality patient care possible. "It was very exciting for me to have received the opportunity to attend my first AOA convention," said Athouriste, who was thrilled to meet William G. Anderson, D.O., who was the first African American president of the AOA in 1994-95. "While there, I was able to witness the dedication, commitment, and leadership of many osteopathic physicians. It was a great learning experience and yet another outstanding chance for me to feel proud that I have chosen to become an osteopathic physician."

NSU Anniversary Luncheon Honors Longevity



Mary Allegro

On December 14, NSU held its annual Employee Anniversary Luncheon at the Signature Grand in Davie to recognize staff and faculty members who have reached significant employment milestones. Following are the College of Osteopathic Medicine honorees:

25 Years of Service

Mary Allegro

20 Years of Service

Dr. Steven Zucker

15 Years of Service

Dr. Judith Schaffer

Shelley Warshaw (AHEC)

10 Years of Service

Dr. Camille Bentley

Paul Comeau (AHEC)

Barbara Edwards (AHEC)

Dr. Lawrence Jacobson

Sharon Schmidt (AHEC)

Laura Tokayer

5 Years of Service

Steve Bronsborg

Dr. Jon Dodds

Dr. Michael Patterson

Carol Siu

Dr. Joel Spalter

Dr. Elaine Wallace



Eric Senn

M4 student Eric Senn is involved in a research project titled "The Effect of Low-Dose Transdermal Naltrexone on the Immune Function of Autistic Children." A very low dose of the FDA-approved drug naltrexone has been discovered to be an effective up-regulator of the immune system. The new therapy, called low-dose naltrexone, has shown remarkable effects

on an array of illnesses including cancer, HIV/AIDS, and autoimmune disorders such as systemic lupus, rheumatoid arthritis, and Crohn's disease. Senn is working closely on the project with Jaquelyn McCandless, M.D., who is a pioneer in using a safe, biomedical approach to the treatment of symptoms associated with Autism Spectrum Disorder.

The Federal Bureau of Prisons and the Florida Department of Corrections are providing approximately \$700,000 in funding for the college's new postdoctoral, post-residency Correctional Medicine Physician Fellowship Program, which will officially commence in July 2006. The participating fellows, who will also earn an M.P.H. degree during their stay in the two-year program, will be working at multiple sites, including prisons in Lake Butner, North Carolina, and Lake Butler, Florida. They will also gain experience at other public and private correctional facilities.



Robert Oller, D.O.

On December 1, NSU's Division of Clinical Operations was honored for its excellence when it received the South Florida Business Journal's 2005 Excellence in Health Care Award in the community-based program category at a luncheon ceremony held at the Westin Diplomat Resort and Spa. The Division of Clinical Operations, which is overseen by Chief

Executive Officer Robert Oller, D.O., provides compassionate care for 250,000 patients annually and supplies 33,000 additional community services and screenings outside of the traditional clinical environment. In addition to the Division of Clinical Operations triumph, Naushira Pandya, M.D., C.M.D., who serves as associate professor and chair of the Department of Geriatrics, earned a nomination in the Physician of the Year category.



Dianna Silvagni, J.D.

In October 2005, Dianna Silvagni, J.D., was named president of the Advocates for the American Osteopathic Association (AAOA), which is a nonprofit organization comprised primarily of the men and women who form the families and friends of osteopathic physicians. Its goal is to support the public health and educational activities of those physicians through a wide range of programs in the educational, legislative, and social arenas. Through scholarships, the AAOA also actively supports students' training to become osteopathic physicians and provides social and other support activities for the families of students.

On October 7, the college held its annual Track Day event, which allows M2 students to meet with representatives from the Consortium for Excellence in Medical Education (CEME) and other hospitals to discuss third- and fourth-year clinical rotation possibilities. Track Day has evolved into an extremely beneficial event for the students, who learn what type of programs each participating hospital has to offer and the way each hospital conducts its clinical training.



Ann Duskin

M3 student Ann Duskin was recently accepted into the 2006 Osteopathic Health Policy Intern (OHPI) Program, which is sponsored by the American Osteopathic Association (AOA) and the American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine (AACOM). The OHPI Program provides a rewarding annual opportunity for two osteopathic medical students to spend one month in each of the government relations departments of the AOA and AACOM. The program's objective is to help the participating students develop an understanding and operational knowledge of how federal health care policy is formulated and how to impact that process effectively. During her two-month internship, which includes a \$3,500 stipend, Duskin will be involved in a range of activities, including observing and participating in the legislative and regulatory process and monitoring ongoing policy issues for the AOA and AACOM.



Dr. Lippman (left) receives the Champions for Children Award from Dr. Wendy Masi, dean of the Mailman Segal Institute for Early Childhood Studies, and NSU President Ray Ferrero, Jr., J.D.

On November 11, HPD Chancellor Fred Lippman, R.Ph., Ed.D., was honored by NSU's Mailman Segal Institute for Early Childhood Studies at an upscale luncheon held at the Westin Diplomat Resort and Spa in Hollywood, Florida. Dr. Lippman was honored for being a stalwart supporter of children and families within Broward County and for serving as a true champion for children. The Snowflake Ball is an annual event to raise funds for programs for children with autism at the Mailman Segal Institute for Early Childhood Studies, which is housed in NSU's Jim and Jan Moran Family Center Village.

The Master of Public Health Program of the College of Osteopathic Medicine at Nova Southeastern University is accredited by the Council on Education for Public Health (CEPH) and is completing its third year of full accreditation in 2006. An onsite accreditation review visit of the college's Master of Public Health Program is scheduled for April 19-20, 2006. Written third-party comments will be accepted by CEPH until 30 days before the onsite visit at the following address:

*Council on Education for Public Health
800 Eye Street, NW, Suite 202
Washington, D.C. 20001-3710*



Student Selflessness on Display Thanksgiving Day

On November 24, a number of benevolent M1 and M2 students spent their Thanksgiving at La Caridad Clinic in Boynton Beach, where they volunteered to bag canned foods donated through the ACOFP food drive and help serve Thanksgiving day meals to migrant workers and their families. Pictured (standing from left) are M1 students Christina M. Caito, Aaron R. Farmer, Karina A. Hernández, Shannon M. Cahill, and David R. Jabs. Kneeling are Anthony M. Abraham and Sarah Gomez-Freidel.

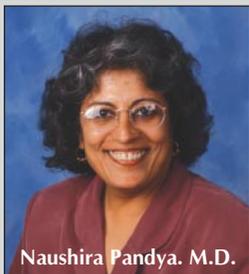


Attendees at the luncheon presentation included (from left): Patrick Hardigan, Ph.D., HPD executive director of assessment, evaluation, and faculty development; Irv Rosenbaum, D.P.A., HPD vice chancellor and provost; Dr. Cary Sutton, director of research services, School Board of Broward County, and Dr. Suci.

The Statistical Consulting Center (SCC)—a service and research unit of NSU’s Health Professions Division—hosted a luncheon for the School Board of Broward County Research Services Division. Gabriel Suci, Ph.D., M.S.P.H., associate professor of public

health, presented his research entitled “Prognostic Factors for the Risky Behaviors of High School Students that Can Lead to the Leading Causes of Death Among Youths and Tomorrow Adults.” The SCC and the Research Services Division are forming a research and statistical partnership to better serve the educational and research communities in Broward County and Nova Southeastern University.

Geriatric Grand Rounds Added to Educational Mix



Naushira Pandya, M.D.

On December 9, 2005, the NSU Senior Services Team kicked off its inaugural Geriatric Grand Rounds series with a lecture that addressed the latest information and strategies for identifying and managing dementia. The interdisciplinary Geriatric Grand Rounds series is a forum designed to illustrate cutting-edge information in geriatric issues from a variety of disciplinary viewpoints. The Senior Services Team is comprised of faculty and staff from geriatric medicine, dental medicine, physical therapy, occupational therapy, nursing, psychology, neuropsychology, pharmacy, optometry, audiology, speech/language, public health, biological sciences, education, behavioral sciences, library sciences, clinic operations, and the Institute for Learning in Retirement.

The inaugural lecture, which was held in the Terry Building, featured a discussion on “Clinical Recognition and Management of Dementia” by Naushira Pandya, M.D., CMD, who serves as associate professor and chair of NSU-COM’s Department of Geriatrics. Megan Ehert, Pharm.D., who is a psychopharmacology and pharmacogenomics fellow in the College of Pharmacy, also presented a lecture on the “Pharmacological Management of Dementia.”

In commemoration of World AIDS Day on December 1, the Student Osteopathic Medical Association and Public Health Student Association collaborated to bring in two dynamic speakers who enlightened the approximately 120 students and faculty members in attendance at the luncheon and dinner events. Luncheon speaker Joey Wynn, who serves as chairman of the South Florida AIDS Network and past president of the People with AIDS Coalition in Miami-Dade County, discussed public policy/funding issues, while evening presenter Franklin Zavala, an HIV/AIDS educator and disability rights advocate, spoke candidly regarding his experiences living with the disease and his attitudes toward noncompliant HIV-positive/AIDS patients.



U.S. Senator Bill Nelson

On September 24, NSU’s Health Professions Division played host to the Fourth Annual Conference on Health Care Access: A Glimpse of the Future of Health Care in America. Two prominent Florida politicians—U.S. Senator Bill Nelson and Congresswoman Debbie Wasserman Schultz—joined local, state, and national experts in morning panel discussions

covering challenging issues such as

- Boutique Medicine: Bandwagon Model or Dead Access Issue?
- Will Pay-for-Performance Plans Work for Physicians or Should We Put “Tip Jars” in Offices?
- Direct-to-Consumer Advertisement: A Pitch to Empower Consumers

A number of NSU-COM faculty members and distinguished alumni participated in the panel discussions, including James Howell, M.D., M.P.H., Morton Morris, D.O., J.D., Joshua Lenchus, D.O., A. Alvin Greber, D.O., and Anthony J. Silvagni, D.O., Pharm.D. During the afternoon lectures, experts discussed topics ranging from “Drug-Induced Diseases: A \$100-Billion-Plus Patient Care Issue” to “Dangerous Doses: Where Has Your Medicine Been?”

The NSU-COM Grand Rounds program, which was launched in August 2005, has already reached a significant milestone by becoming the first grand rounds podcast in the world. To download the podcast, users simply need to visit the iTunes music store, type NSU in the search bar, and click subscribe next to NSU Grand Rounds. For more information, please contact Dr. Robert Hasty at (954) 262-1473.

SNMA Symposium Enlightens Attendees



Pictured (from left) are Eddie Seaton (FAMU), Monica R. Rider, Eric Oliver (co-coordinator, University of South Carolina School of Medicine), and Arianna Burgess (FAMU).

On November 18-21, members of the NSU-COM chapter of the Student National Medical Association (SNMA) attended the 2005 SNMA Region IV Medical

Education Conference in Charleston, South Carolina. The conference, which focused on the theme Educating Our Community, Training Our Leaders: Disparities, Access, and Compliance, offered students an opportunity to attend sessions such as

- Hypertension and Kidney Disease: The AASK Study
- African Americans and Mental Illness
- Minorities in Clinical Research
- Obesity/Gastric Bypass Surgery

In addition to providing sessions geared toward medical students, there was a premed student component that was co-coordinated by M2 student Monica R. Rider, M.P.H., who serves as second vice president of the NSU-COM SNMA chapter and SNMA regional premed liaison to the south. The conference's premed portion focused on the various issues undergraduate students face while applying to medical school, including discussions on medical school admissions criteria, student skills, and interviewing expertise.

Panelists included Dr. Hattie Myles of the University of South Alabama College of Medicine, Dr. Deborah Deas of the Medical University of South Carolina in Charleston, and Dr. Ronald Berezniak of the Lake Erie College of Osteopathic Medicine (LECOM) in Bradenton, Florida.

"Dr. Berezniak's passionate presentation raised an exciting interest in osteopathic medicine and has prompted many undergraduate students from Florida A&M University and Florida State University to seek further information regarding the D.O. program at both LECOM and NSU-COM," said Rider. "Because of this interest, the NSU-COM chapter of SNMA will be working to increase awareness of osteopathic medicine among undergraduate students in South Florida."



Jennifer Diamond

M3 student Jennifer S. Diamond is currently the only student representative on the AOA's Committee on Osteopathic History and Identity for the 2005-06 academic year. The committee met at the AOA's Unified Convention in Orlando last October, where topics of discussion included the AOA's history essay contest and new branding initiative. The focus of this

committee is on the strong history of osteopathic medicine and maintaining its identity in the years to come.



NSU-COM was a major presence at the Florida Society ACOFP 25th Annual Convention held July 28-31, 2005, at the Hyatt Regency Grand Cypress in Orlando, Florida.

COMmunications

The Division of Geriatrics, which was formerly housed under the auspices of the Department of Family Medicine, was upgraded to department status in October 2005 and is now known as the NSU-COM Department of Geriatrics.

With total enrollment surpassing 26,000 students, NSU now ranks as the nation's 7th largest independent not-for-profit university out of the 1,600 private U.S. colleges and universities.



In November, Rural Medicine Club members helped two underserved families in Clewiston, Florida, that had suffered severe financial setbacks after Hurricane Wilma by raising money to purchase \$100 worth of Thanksgiving food for each family. Pictured delivering the food to

one of the appreciative families are Allison Arent, Minerva Ellis, and Viet Nguyen.

NSU-COM Communications Excellence Acknowledged with Four AACOM Awards



AHEC representatives were thrilled to learn of their win in the Best Public Education Program category.

In October, NSU-COM further cemented its reputation as a communications leader when it received four national awards in the 2005 American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine (AACOM) Communications Awards Competition.

The Area Health Education Centers (AHEC) Program's annual Tobacco Cessation/Prevention Project captured first-place in the Best Public Education Program category. The program, which is offered to all first-year medical students and second-year pharmacy students, allows the participants to gain preventative health training by utilizing a variety of modalities, including group instructional technology in patient-oriented problem solving modules.

Following their comprehensive training, the College of Osteopathic Medicine and College of Pharmacy students bring their prevention message to nearly 18,000 middle and high school students at 77 public

schools throughout Broward County.

Scott Colton, who serves as the college's director of medical communications, earned multiple honors in the competition as *COM Outlook* earned a second-place award in the Best Magazine category, while an article featured in the publication titled "NSU-COM Reaches Out to Hurricane Ravaged Floridians" earned Colton an award in the Best Article or Feature Story category. This marks the fourth consecutive year that Colton has received a top writing award in the competition and the third time in four years that *COM Outlook* has been recognized for its editorial and aesthetic excellence.

Sigma Sigma Phi Maintains Busy Schedule



M2 students Stephanie Markle and Megan Hanson answer questions posed by an NSU undergraduate student at the COM-PALS presentation.

The college's Sigma Sigma Phi fraternity agenda was action-packed throughout the fall 2005 semester as its members participated in a range of educational activities that benefited students

within and outside of the NSU-COM campus structure.

Rotation Luncheon

On October 8, Sigma Sigma Phi hosted its annual rotation luncheon at the Renaissance Hotel in Plantation, which featured 18 M3 and M4 students who returned to the area to represent their core rotation sites. The 100 or so M2

students in attendance received informational packets and benefited from the presentations from the senior students who talked about and answered questions regarding their core rotation experiences in an informal, off-campus setting.

COM-PALS Program

Now in its third year of existence, the COM-PALS Program seeks to promote osteopathic awareness to the undergraduate population at NSU and other universities throughout Florida. On November 10, the program staged its first event of the semester for 30 undergraduate members of the Premedical Society at NSU's Farquhar College of Arts and Sciences. As a result of that encounter, six undergraduate students have been invited to shadow a medical student for half a day sometime in January 2006. In addition, on November 30, Sigma Sigma Phi members gave a presentation to undergraduate students at Florida Atlantic University in Boca Raton.

"Each student's path is different, and we each have a different story to tell," said COM-PALS Program Coordinator Melissa Hartman. "But we all have one common dream, which is becoming a physician. I think it is really important to share with other students the journey we have been on in medical school because I know how valuable that information was to me as an undergraduate student and the influence it had on my decision to come to NSU."

Because many of the universities in the tri-county area are unaware of what osteopathic medicine is or that Nova Southeastern University actually houses a medical school, Sigma Sigma Phi members plan to contact local premed advisers and offer NSU-COM students as liaisons and mentors. COM-PALS also plans on expanding its services to the entire state of Florida this year by outreaching to other universities such as the University of Florida and Florida State University.

Exploring Program Benefits from SNMA Participation

By Monica R. Rider, M.P.H., SNMA Second Vice President and Regional Premed Liaison to the South



The core of the Student National Medical Association (SNMA) has always been community service. That is why it's no surprise that the NSU-COM chapter of the SNMA has been a proud participant in the Health Sciences Exploring program.

Each year, we invite students from various high schools in the area to weekly sessions that explore the different fields of medicine such as dentistry, suturing, physical therapy, and OMM. This year the college's SNMA chapter is host to the Explorers Post 739. During the fall semester, the high school students participated in an OMM presentation, a pediatric lecture, a vascular sonography seminar, and a "College Talk" session. During the OMM presentation, the students learned what steps it takes to become an osteopathic physician. They also got to see a technique being performed on M2 student Cynthia Benson, the co-troop leader of Explorers Post 736 hosted by Sigma Sigma Phi, and learned the art of palpating the back.

During the pediatric presentation, Dr. Edward Packer discussed the many components of a pediatric well-child exam, quizzed the students, and eagerly answered their various questions. In the vascular sonography seminar, the students were allowed to use the equipment on each other and were taught how to detect blood vessels in the neck and the organs of the abdomen. There was also an informative discussion of the many uses of sonography and the various job opportunities available in the field.

During the "College Talk" session, the SNMA recruited four medical students to discuss the paths they have taken from high school to professional school. There were students representing the "traditional medical student" who went straight from high school to college to medical school as well as those representing the "nontraditional medical student" who took a different route. We were able to answer questions regarding the undergraduate application process, college life, volunteering, and applying to medical school.

Health Sciences Exploring is not all work and no play. We also have "Fun Days" for the students to relieve some of the stress of their everyday high school activities. This year, we will be working with the Explorers Post 736 hosted by Sigma Sigma Phi to encourage socializing and networking

among the students from different schools.

In the spring 2006 semester, the high school students will be participating in a range of activities that include a dentistry lecture, physical therapy seminar, a suture clinic, and a financial aid presentation. If there are any students interested in assisting the SNMA with this project, please do not hesitate to contact Monica R. Rider at monialex@nova.edu.

NSU-COM celebrated the holidays by coordinating a festive employee party on December 6 at a restaurant/musical comedy skit club called Laffing Matterz in Fort Lauderdale. The evening served as the perfect way for staff, faculty, and family members to share a good meal, revel in the camaraderie, and enjoy an uproarious show that lampooned a number of political and entertainment industry icons.



Holiday Revelry at Laffing Matterz

NSU Fast Fact

Since its establishment in 1964, five distinguished individuals have served as president of Nova Southeastern University:

- Warren J. Winstead, Ph.D. (1964-1970)
- Abraham S. Fischler, Ed.D. (1970-1992)
- Stephen Feldman, Ph.D. (1992-1994)
- Ovid C. Lewis, J.S.D. (1994-1997)
- Ray Ferrero Jr., J.D. (1997-present)



In December, Myint Myint Aye, M.B.B.S., D.T.M.H., director of systems, retired from NSU-COM in grand style with a reception thrown in her honor in the Chancellor's Dining Room of the Terry Building. Dr. Aye, who is originally from Burma (now Myanmar) has been an NSU-COM faculty member since July 1994.

Student Government Association Gets Fit in '06



Clearing their minds during a meditation session are (from left): Meena Makhijani, M2; Farah Ahmedi, M2; Lena Weinman, OPP fellow; Dr. Edey Groseclose, professor of biochemistry; and Melchiorra Mangiaracina, OPP fellow.

Get Fit in '06 is one of many exciting Student Government Association (SGA) initiatives taking place this year. Our goal is to encourage students to improve their overall physical and mental health since they sit in class for up to eight hours a day. Unfortunately, sitting for these long periods doesn't end with class time because students need to go home and study what they learned in class, which leads to an extremely sedentary lifestyle.

Results from an informal questionnaire submitted to the class of 2008 stated

By Kathryn Rooth, SGA Vice President

that out of 141 students, 51.8 percent of them have worse eating habits since starting medical school, 79.4 percent get less sleep, and 67.4 percent have decreased the amount of time they spend exercising. This is clearly not a healthy lifestyle. As medical students, we work so hard to learn how to improve the lifestyles of our future patients that we often neglect our own lifestyles in the process.

The SGA wanted to help students build better lifestyle habits during their time in medical school. As a result, there is currently a running club that meets three times a week at 6:00 a.m. and offers levels from beginner to marathon. Andrew Schlusel, an M2 student, said, "I would not have been motivated to start running again if it were not for this group." There is also a meditation group that meets on a weekly basis during lunch. In fact, there has been so much positive feedback on this group that some students are trying to implement mindful meditation into the school's curriculum. For

beginners, non-runners, and those trying to get back into it, there is also power walking available.

Lastly, to get the first- and second-year medical students through the end of the semester—the most stressful time of the year—we implemented a friendly competition based on a "who can exercise their way out of Florida the fastest?" premise. Each student keeps a tally of how much he or she works out, and the time spent exercising is then converted into mileage. The objective is to see which class can exercise their way out of Florida the fastest. "Nothing like some peer pressure to get your butt in gear to work out," said M2 student Melissa Hartman. "It has truly been a great motivating factor."

As students, it can be a challenge to find the time and the energy to exercise. Our hope is that the Get Fit in '06 initiative will provide enough encouragement and enthusiasm for students to become active outside the classroom.

AMOPS Commemorates Veteran's Day



AMOPS members took time to pose in front of the Blue Star Flag to help commemorate Veteran's Day on November 11, 2005.

On November 11, Association of Military Osteopathic Physicians and Surgeons members wore their uniforms to school in order to recognize Veteran's Day. AMOPS is made up of students who will eventually serve in the U.S. military as part of the Health Professions Scholarship Program.

Originally called Armistice Day to

By John M. Hatfield, AMOPS President

celebrate the cessation of hostilities between the allies and Germany on the 11th hour of the 11th day in the 11th month (November 1918, near the official end of World War 1), Veteran's Day is a time to remember all those who have sacrificed for this country. The original concept for the Veteran's Day celebration, before it became a federal holiday, was for the suspension of activities for a two-minute period beginning at 11:00 a.m. This year, the thoughtful M2 class leadership performed a similar remembrance in the Morris Auditorium.

In addition, the Blue Star Flag was placed in the Health Professions Division complex in front of Steele Auditorium. NSU students, faculty, and alumni were

encouraged to bring in photos to hang next to the flag of friends and family in the military who are currently serving or recently served in the Middle East. The flag's history dates back to World War I, when in 1917 an army captain who had two sons serving on the frontline designed it.

This small flag quickly became the unofficial symbol of a child in the service. Today, families who have a loved one serving in the Armed Forces display the Blue Star Flag on the inside front window of their homes because it shows pride in their loved ones serving in the military and reminds others that preserving America's freedom demands much and sometimes all. Indeed, freedom has a price.

Student Government Association Report



By Rob Zesut, M.P.H., SGA President

Greetings from the College of Osteopathic Medicine Student Government Association. As some of you may know, it has been a very busy semester here at NSU. The end of 2005 has brought us hurricanes, creative scheduling, and a lot of hard work and determination by everyone to stay the course. At every turn, our students have risen to the challenge and shown outstanding willpower. As always, we have some interesting news to share.

Hurricane Wilma

Wilma, the most intense hurricane ever recorded and the 21st named storm of the season, hit Florida on October 24 as a category three hurricane. It brought high winds, heavy rains, and storm damage throughout most of South Florida, and classes at the college were suspended for a week due to massive power outages, debris, and structural damage in the area surrounding the school. The administration, along with the M1 and M2 class governments, worked diligently to find a way to reschedule the number of classes missed with limited time left in the semester. They should all be commended for their efforts as the class schedule was normalized in a relatively short period of time.

COSGP Meeting in Orlando

The Council of Osteopathic Student Government Presidents (COSGP) is an organization that represents all osteopathic

medical students and consists of SGA leadership from every osteopathic medical school in the nation. This year, NSU-COM is on the Legislative Affairs Committee and has been quite busy helping to sort and evaluate multiple resolutions in order to bring a collaborative student voice to important issues.

COSGP Annual Student Seminar

The October 2005 COSGP Annual Student Seminar, titled "Developing Research Awareness Among Osteopathic Medical Students," provided attendees with a practical introduction to student research, including information regarding the current state of research in the profession, easy methods for journal article analysis, and practical evidence-based medicine.

National Student D.O. of the Year

Already in its 14th year, this prestigious award continues to evolve and grow in significance. The award's primary focus is to acknowledge students' commitment to their school, their community, and the osteopathic profession. This year presents unique changes for the award as the COSGP has standardized the selection process across all osteopathic campuses in preparation for the selection of a National Student D.O. of the Year. In response to student input, we have increased the nomination's essay word count to a 1,000-word maximum and have changed the essay question to better reflect the nominee's character. Further changes have also been made in the selection committee makeup and process. As always, a fellow medical student nominated each candidate.

This year, nomination forms were taken until December 31, 2005, and all osteopathic medical students were eligible for nomination by their peers. The NSU Student D.O. of the Year winner will be notified by mid-March 2006. The winning student's application will then be forwarded to the National COSGP Selection Committee for consideration for the National Student

D.O. of the Year Award. This is the first year that a national award will be given. The national winner will receive a plaque and a \$500 scholarship.

Board Review Seminar

The SGA, along with the class of 2008, held a seminar on December 8 for M1 and M2 students to help them prepare for their COMLEX Level I exams. The speakers were composed of M3 and M4 medical students who volunteered their time to talk about what worked, what didn't work, and what they wished they had done in preparation for their boards. The speakers were drawn from a mixture of students with a variety of results from their boards. Those participating—as well as those unable to participate but still wanting to contribute—were asked to fill out a survey that contained a list of the most frequently asked questions. Attending M1 and M2 students were given the results of this survey as a backup to the open forum.

This meeting represented the first time our M1 and M2 students had the opportunity to ask questions about board preparations from a variety of senior students in a structured manner. We would like to send a special thank you to Dana Block, Barry Gibney, Dionne Casthely, Brian Delashmitt, Carol Lieb1, and Jen Hailey for volunteering their time to share their experiences.

2nd Annual Residency Seminar Series

This is an exciting event in which we invite fourth-year students to come and talk about their residency applications and match process. It is held in late spring when our graduating seniors know what programs they are going to be attending. This is a unique event where our more junior students can learn the proper procedures for being accepted into the residency program in which they are most interested. We should have representatives from multiple residency programs, including osteopathic, allopathic, and military available to share a wide range of experiences.

NSU-COM Receives \$4.8 Million in Bioterrorism Grants



In September, NSU-COM's Center on Bioterrorism and Weapons of Mass Destruction Preparedness (CB-PREP) took another step toward statewide preeminence when it received two U.S. Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) grants totaling \$4.8 million that target interdisciplinary bioterrorism preparedness curriculum development and continuing education.

The three-year, \$4.2 million continuing education grant will help the college train practicing health professionals who are located throughout South Florida and represent a variety of health care disciplines. In addition, NSU-COM will be partnering with neighboring Broward Community College through a subcontract to provide additional training to health professionals who require two years or less to earn their professional degrees. James Howell, M.D., M.P.H., professor and chair of the Department of Rural Medicine, has been designated to serve as project director of the grant.

"Florida is vulnerable to potential acts of terrorism and natural disasters, and our health professionals need to be able to react effectively," Dr. Howell stated. "This unique program will help doctors, nurses, pharmacists, and others in the medical field address their professional and community obligations—and potentially save a great number of lives in the process. Those trained through this program will be able to respond to a catastrophic event and act in the public's best interest without under- or overplaying a crisis situation."

"In this partnership, we become major players in the state of Florida in the provision of education for health professionals in training and health professionals in practice," said Leonard Levy, D.P.M., M.P.H., who serves as director of the college's CB-PREP. "As a result, we will be helping health professionals to better prepare to react to acts of bioterrorism and other catastrophes such as hurricanes, tornadoes, and other natural disasters. This is a major responsibility, and we don't accept it lightly."

The second grant—a three-year, \$600,000 fiscal award—will

assist the CB-PREP to plan, develop, and provide a curriculum that prepares health professional students to work as a coordinated team in the event of bioterrorism, acts employing weapons of mass destruction, natural disasters such as hurricanes, or other catastrophes. To accomplish this task, students are provided the requisite knowledge and skills through discussions provided by experts in the field, case studies, and responses to events simulating actual events. To assure students achieve identified competencies, they are evaluated through the use of a series of scenarios employing trained people who—in a standardized way—simulate casualties that could occur in the event of terrorist acts or natural disasters.

"These evaluation techniques allow for the assessment of all students' knowledge, how they employ that knowledge, and the way they interact with other members of the response team and casualty victims," said Dr. Levy, who is serving as project director of the \$600,000 curriculum development grant. "Because Florida has so many tourists and temporary residents, students also learn how to reach them and other hard-to-reach populations, including the homebound, the physically and mentally challenged, and the homeless."

In addition to NSU-COM medical students, curriculum development includes training other NSU Health Professions Division students who are studying to become dentists, optometrists, pharmacists, nurses, public health professionals, occupational therapists, physical therapists, audiologists, and physician assistants. Psychologists and health care administrators also are trained in the program. Faculty development seminars prepare those responsible for the education of students to properly respond to bioterrorism and other catastrophic events. Vehicles to facilitate the educational process include classroom activities, demonstrations, and computer-based interactive learning.

The CB-PREP, which has an existing \$530,000-plus grant from the Florida Department of Health to conduct bioterrorism and weapons of mass destruction training seminars for the state's public and private schools, now has over \$5.3 million in funding to be a comprehensive education, training, and research resource for the health care community and the community at large. The new grants require the addition of eight new administrative, faculty, and staff positions to assist with the center's increased responsibilities.

"As a result of receiving these grants, we have become a major resource in the state of Florida in providing bioterrorism and disaster preparedness training for health workers at every level," Dr. Levy said. "The participants will learn how to work together synergistically to achieve the best response in potentially catastrophic situations."

Faculty Focus



Margaret Wilkinson, Ph.D.

Margaret Wilkinson, Ph.D., who has served as executive director of the Consortium for Excellence in Medical Education for many years, was named assistant dean of preclinical education effective October 1, 2005. In her new role, Dr. Wilkinson will be responsible for the planning, directing, and oversight of the college's first- and second-year medical students. She

will also be involved in the professional growth and development of the NSU-COM faculty and have oversight of curriculum development and modification in conjunction with the Curriculum Committee.



Camille Bentley, D.O.

Camille Bentley, D.O., assistant professor of family medicine, was elected president of DOCARE International, NFP, which is a nonprofit, tax-exempt organization comprising health care professionals representing many disciplines. DOCARE's primary objective is to bring needed health care to primitive and isolated people in remote areas

of Western Hemisphere countries. Dr. Bentley, along with Dr. James Howell, also presented a seminar on "Hurricane and All-Hazards Preparedness" and the college's Hurricane Katrina Gulf Coast disaster relief efforts at the Georgia Osteopathic Medical Association's Fall CME Conference, which was held in November in Atlanta, Georgia.



David Thomas, M.D., J.D.

In December, **Joseph DeGaetano**, D.O., FAAFP, FACOFP, and **David Thomas**, M.D., J.D., became the first NSU-COM faculty members to earn a master of science degree in medical education in the collaborative degree program which was established in 2003 and is offered through the Health Professions Division and the Fischler School of

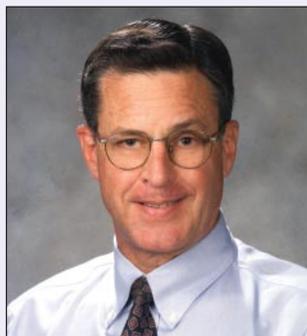
Education and Human Services. Dr. DeGaetano serves as associate professor of family medicine and assistant dean of clinical curriculum and GME; Dr. Thomas acts as professor and chair of the Department of Surgery. Other HPD faculty members who recently earned their M.S. in medical education are Graciela Armayor, Pharm.D., Stuart Caplan, D.D.S., John Antonelli, D.D.S., Antón Gotlieb, D.D.S., Harry Lehrer, D.M.D., Wallace Marsh, Ph.D., Irwin Niditch, D.D.S., and Carla Luque, Pharm.D.



Morton Morris, D.O., J.D.

Morton Morris, D.O., J.D., FAOAO, who serves as HPD vice chancellor for professional affairs, was accorded a prestigious honor in October when he received the Distinguished Service Certificate from the American Osteopathic Association's Board of Trustees. The award, which was presented to Dr. Morris during the opening session of the AOA's Unified

Osteopathic Convention in Orlando, Florida, is the association's highest award and is granted to deserving members for their accomplishments in scientific, educational, or professional affairs.



Joel Spalter, M.D.

Joel Spalter, M.D., assistant professor of internal medicine and chair of the Division of Infectious Diseases, is presenting a series of nine monthly two-hour lectures to the M3 students. These lectures comprise the content of the "Approach to the Adult Patient with Fever, Cough, or Diarrhea" course, which is the first formal didactic course for third-year students. The

major focus of these lectures is infectious disease, but the course is designed to afford third-year students a springboard from which to review and systematize what they have previously learned. The course, which is supported through a HRSA grant, is envisioned as the prototype for an expanding number of formal didactic courses to be included in the M3 curriculum.



Naushira Pandya, M.D.

Naushira Pandya, M.D., CMD, associate professor of internal medicine and chair of the Department of Geriatrics, maintained a busy agenda throughout the fall semester that included providing a lecture on "Stroke Prevention Strategies" and serving as a panelist at the annual meeting of the American Society of Consultant Pharmacists in

Boston, Massachusetts, in November. In addition, her article titled "Differences in Diabetes Management of Nursing Home Patients Based on Functional and Cognitive Status" was published in the November 2005 issue of the *Journal of the American Medical Directors Association*. She also lectured on "Documentation" at the Florida Medical Directors' meeting in Orlando and represented NSU-COM at a health fair held at the Cooper City Church of God.



Hilda DeGaetano, D.O.

Hilda DeGaetano, D.O., FAAP, FACOP, clinical associate professor of pediatrics, was named director of systems curriculum in December, replacing Dr. Myint Myint Aye, who recently retired from NSU-COM. In addition, Dr. DeGaetano will continue with her prior responsibilities involving patient care and teaching for the departments of pediatrics and

osteopathic principles and practice. In November, Dr. DeGaetano presented an interactive luncheon lecture to NSU undergraduate students as part of the Office of Career Services Director Invite Series. The lecture, which was held in the Rosenthal Building, allowed Dr. DeGaetano to discuss her own educational experiences as a medical school student and answer questions from inquisitive attendees.



Ronnie Martin, D.O.

Ronnie Martin, D.O., FACOPF, associate dean of academic affairs, received a significant honor at the ACOFP's Conclave of Fellows' Awards Ceremony in Orlando last October when the designation of Distinguished Fellow was conferred upon him. This designation honors exceptional members of the Conclave of Fellows who have exhibited

exemplary service to the ACOFP by attendance as well as by support of the governance and committee structures both locally and nationally.



Edward Packer, D.O.

Edward Packer, D.O., FAAP, FACOP, associate professor and chair of the Department of Pediatrics, was named one of the region's top physicians in a special feature that ran in the September 2005 issue of *South Florida Hospital News*. Over the past several months, he also gave a lecture for the Broward County PTA on "The Impact of Obesity

on Classroom Performance in Children" and published an article titled "Members Speak: Improving Relations with Pediatric Training Programs" in the American College of Pediatricians' journal called *Pulse*. Dr. Packer also participated in the Fourth Annual Raising Healthy Children Seminar and A Day for Children event that were held at NSU's Alvin Sherman Library, Research, and Information Technology Center in September.



Cyril Blavo, D.O.

Cyril Blavo, D.O., M.P.H. & T.M., FACOP, professor and director of the Master of Public Health Program, was recently appointed to the Advisory Committee of the Florida Pediatric Society on the Florida Immunization Registry. In December, Dr. Blavo presented lectures on "Travel Medicine" and "Communicating with Adolescents

in the Office Setting" at the Southwest Florida Osteopathic Medical Society meeting held at Sanibel Island, Florida. He also served on the Selection Committee for The Blue Foundation Sapphire Award, which is designed to recognize and promote programs that have demonstrated impact in improving the health-related outcomes of Florida's at-risk populations and communities.



James Howell, M.D.

James Howell, M.D., M.P.H., professor and chair of the Department of Rural Medicine, was recently reappointed to the Florida Medical Association's Council on Public Health. The Florida Medical Association (FMA) is the largest, most effective organization representing the interests of Florida physicians and their patients. Based in Tallahassee, the FMA provides

its 17,000 member doctors with a strong voice and active representation in state legislation, medical economics, practice issues, and medical, ethical, and legal affairs.

Faculty News Flash

Richard D. Kimmel, D.O., FACOS, FCCP, clinical assistant professor of surgery, who recently completed his tenure as chairman of the cardiothoracic and vascular surgical discipline of the American College of Osteopathic Surgeons, was elected to represent the discipline as a member of the ACOS Board of Governors during the AOA's Unified Osteopathic Convention. In addition, Dr. Kimmel was named medical director of the Cold Laser Therapy Center, Inc. in Boca Raton, Florida.

Eric Shamus, Ph.D., assistant professor of osteopathic principles and practice, was honored with a 2005 Alumni Torch Award from his alma mater—Florida International University (FIU) in Miami—on October 22 at Parrot Jungle on Watson Island.

Monica Warhaftig, D.O., FAAFP, assistant professor of geriatrics, had her article titled "Case Study: Anticoagulation in a High-Risk Nursing Home Resident" published in the October 2005 issue of the *Annals of Long-Term Care*.



Jennie Q. Lou, M.D.

Jennie Q. Lou, M.D., M.Sc., associate professor of public health, had her article titled “When Computer Bytes, Byte Back” published in a recent issue of *MS Focus*, which is the official publication of the Multiple Sclerosis Foundation. She was also featured in the article “Optical Coherence Tomography in MS” on the Multiple Sclerosis Foundation’s Internet newsletter called *MSFYI* in November 2005.



Joseph DeGaetano, D.O.

Joseph DeGaetano, D.O., FAAFP, FACOFP, who serves as associate professor of family medicine and assistant dean of clinical curriculum and GME, had his job duties expanded in November when he was appointed as the new executive director of the Consortium for Excellence in Medical Education. Dr. DeGaetano replaces Dr. Margaret Wilkinson, who was named assistant dean of preclinical education in October.



Loretta Graham, Ph.D.

Loretta Graham, Ph.D., assistant professor of internal medicine and medical education specialist, presented a workshop on “Taking the Mystery out of Statistics 101” at the Fourth Annual Association of Standardized Patient Educators Conference in Chicago, Illinois, last September. The workshop’s goal was to inform standardized patient professionals on how to interpret and use existing data to evaluate students, exams, and curricula.



Pablo Calzada, D.O.

Pablo Calzada, D.O., M.P.H., assistant professor and interim chair of the Department of Family Medicine, coauthored a manuscript called “Using Community Outreach to Promote Integrated Health Care: A Pilot Project” that was accepted for publication in the journal entitled *Professional Psychology: Research and Practice*. During 2005, he also served as an editor/

reviewer for *Family Medicine*, which is published by the Society of Teachers of Family Medicine, and was appointed as a member of the American College of Osteopathic Family Physicians Research Committee.



Kenneth Johnson, D.O.

Kenneth Johnson, D.O., assistant professor of obstetrics and gynecology and director of NSU’s Women’s Health Center, presented an OB/GYN grand rounds lecture in September at Broward General Medical Center on “The Epidemiology of Fetal Alcohol Syndrome.” He also spoke on the topic of “Hormone Replacement Therapy and Bioidentical Hormones” at the November 13 Speaking on Women’s Health Conference, which was hosted by WPBT/Channel 2 at the Signature Grand in Davie, Florida.



Jay Fleisher, Ph.D.

Jay Fleisher, Ph.D., associate professor of public health, recently coauthored an article on “Risk Perception Bias, Self-Reporting of Illness, and the Validity of Reported Results in an Epidemiologic Study of Recreational Water Associated Illnesses” that was published in the *Marine Pollution Bulletin*. He also made a presentation on “Assessment of Human Health Effects Caused by Bathing Waters” at the November 2005 Sustainable Beaches Conference held in St. Petersburg, Florida.

AOA Unified Convention

A number of NSU-COM faculty members served as speakers, presented posters, or acted in leadership roles at the AOA’s Unified Osteopathic Convention in October:

Camille Bentley, D.O. – “Prevalance of Anemia in Mayan Females of Childbearing Age Living in a Rural Community”

Cyril Blavo, D.O. – “Pediatric Tropical Diseases,” “International Health Initiatives: Lessons Learned,” and “Travel Medicine”

Robert B. Contrucci, D.O. – “Multidimensional Approach to Velopharyngeal Insufficiency”

Hilda DeGaetano, D.O. – “Counterstrain Techniques in Children”

Robert Hasty, D.O. – “Anticoagulation”

Kenneth Johnson, D.O. – “Female Sexuality: Devices”

David Levine, D.O. – Program Chair, ACOFP

Ronnie Martin, D.O. – “New Advances in the Diagnosis and Treatment of Metabolic Disorders and Bone Disease”

Morton Morris, D.O., J.D. – “The Surgeon and the Law”

Edward Packer, D.O. – Program Chair, American College of Pediatrics

Joel Rush, D.O. – “Orthopedics for the Primary Care Physician”

Gay and Lesbian Medical Association



Sharing a collegial moment at a recent social event are GLMA members Derrick Williams (M1), Khoi Luong (M3), Patrick Kenney (secretary), and Jeffery Johns (treasurer).

When it comes to the composition of its student population, NSU-COM is clearly a microcosm of the United States in terms of cultural, religious, and sexual diversity. This undeniable multiplicity is best reflected in the college's 30-plus student organizations, which offer a kaleidoscope of choices to NSU-COM's student physicians.

The latest offering to spring up on the NSU-COM campus is the student chapter of the Gay and Lesbian Medical Association (GLMA), which is a national organization that works to ensure equality in health care for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and intersex (LGBTI) individuals and health care professionals.

"Our GLMA student chapter has three major goals, which are education, advocacy, and outreach," said M2 student and inaugural GLMA President Gregory Semon. "Education is the most important area because statistics show that 60 percent of LGBTI patients are uncomfortable revealing their sexual orientation to a physician, but 90 percent feel it's important for their physician to know their sexual orientation. Unfortunately, 30 percent of the LGBTI patients reported receiving inferior medical care after they revealed their orientation."

The club's 40 or so members, which include several students from the colleges of dentistry and optometry, plan to educate the greater NSU community with events and speakers to introduce students to "queer culture" and the unique concerns of LGBTI patients. It also strives to serve as an advocacy arm of the national GLMA by working with the American Medical Student Association's Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender People in Medicine (LGBTMP) group.

"We are going to be part of a national movement through the LGBTMP to help introduce LGBTI health into the medical school curriculum," Semon stated. "A lot of medical schools have it already, but we don't have it here at NSU yet. We're hoping to get a Gay 101 segment placed into the ethnocultural medicine M1 course. It would also be great to have a course about the unique medical aspects of the gay and lesbian patient implemented in the second or third year of study. Beyond the classroom, our advocacy goal is to increase awareness of civil rights issues facing the gay population right now such as same-sex marriage, gay adoption rights, and hate-crime legislation."

According to Semon, GLMA club members have already made significant strides in terms of its third objective—outreach. "We've already had interaction with local gay and lesbian physicians," he said. "We recently coordinated a dinner and discussion with the Northpoint Medical Group, which consists of HIV physicians who deal with gay men's health. And we're going to work hard to promote a healthy lifestyle for the gay and lesbian population in Fort Lauderdale.

"We have the third largest gay population in the nation here in the greater Fort Lauderdale area behind San Francisco and New York City," added Semon, who attended the 24th Annual Conference of the GLMA in Montreal, Quebec, this past September. "As a result, we are going to advocate for HIV education and testing and address issues such as the syphilis epidemic in the area and crystal methadone abuse. We're also partnering with the NSU undergraduate Gay Straight Student Alliance and planning to get involved with health fairs that target the gay population."

Semon and his fellow GLMA members also implemented their educational efforts internally by coordinating an entertaining Guess the Straight Person Contest during the M1 class orientation this past summer to help students overcome some of the stereotypes they may harbor about gay people. "We got a great response from the students," said Semon of the contest that



During the 24th Annual Conference of the Gay and Lesbian Medical Association in Canada, Gregory Semon had the privilege of meeting former U.S. Attorney General Janet Reno.

involved putting eight people (seven gay and one straight) in front of the class and asking the students to identify who the straight person was. "Not surprisingly, the students had a difficult time choosing the straight individual."



NSU-COM Pitches in to Assist Victims of Hurricanes Katrina and Wilma

By Scott Colton

Director of Medical Communications

Over the past two years, Florida and other sections of the southern United States have endured a relentless onslaught of hurricanes that have claimed thousands of lives, displaced countless residents from their homes, and produced billions of dollars in storm-related damage.

As was the case last year when NSU-COM pitched in to help victims of Hurricane Charley on Florida's West Coast, the college sprung into action again in 2005 by outreaching to storm-ravaged victims of Hurricane Katrina in Mississippi and Hurricane Wilma in its own backyard.

NSU-COM Mobilizes in Mississippi

When Hurricane Katrina barreled through the Gulf Coast in late August 2005, the horrific devastation and vast human suffering it left in its wake in the coastal areas of New Orleans and Mississippi compelled NSU-COM to mobilize a university-wide medical relief effort. The multidisciplinary endeavor, which was spearheaded by Camille Bentley, D.O., assistant professor

of family medicine, featured participation from NSU-COM, the College of Allied Health and Nursing, the College of Pharmacy, the Center for Psychological Studies, the Graduate School of Humanities and Social Sciences Family Therapy Program, as well as a number of non NSU-affiliated health care providers.

In the weeks following Hurricane Katrina, Dr. Bentley, who also serves as medical coordinator for the college's Area Health Education Centers (AHEC) Program, was caught up in a nonstop whirlwind of activity as she attempted to coordinate relief teams that would provide ongoing health care in the battered regions of Biloxi, Mississippi, and other neighboring areas.

"It was a massive coordination effort because we had to solicit participation from the NSU community as well as work with government officials in Mississippi to grant us temporary medical licensing rights for the physicians," Dr. Bentley explained. "With the help of the governor's office, the licensing board of Mississippi, and Dr. Jeffrey Leboeuf from the Mississippi

Hurricane Help: NSU-COM Answers the Call

Osteopathic Medical Association, we were able to learn what the needs were up there and assemble the appropriate type of health care teams.”

Because over 80 percent of the medical practitioners in the affected Gulf Coast area lost their homes and offices during Hurricane Katrina’s devastating onslaught, most of them immediately relocated to other areas of the country and had no plans to return in the foreseeable future. Consequently, the NSU relief teams comprised physicians, physician assistants, and mental health specialists who were responsible for providing primary and follow-up care to victims suffering from chronic illnesses and acute injuries sustained during the cleanup and rebuilding process.

Dr. Bentley, who was a participant in the initial medical team that traveled via an NSU van to the First Baptist Church clinic site in Biloxi on September 23, said she was prepared for the devastation she knew she would witness once she arrived in Mississippi. “We had all seen the images on T.V., so we kind of knew what to expect,” said Dr. Bentley, who helped coordinate four teams that each spent a week in Mississippi through late October. “Many of the beautiful mansions were completely destroyed, and the only thing you saw on the coastline was devastation and tents. Also, because the storm surge had traveled several miles inland, there was debris all over Interstate 10, including mattresses, refrigerators, and other large household appliances.”

During their week in Biloxi, Dr. Bentley and her team tended to a host of patients who required assistance with everything from prescription refills to treatment for upper respiratory ailments brought on by the black mold growing in homes that had not been completely destroyed by the storm. “We dealt with a number of chronic problems such as diabetes and



Physician assistant student Margot Fernandez and other Team 2 members used the NSU van to make a mobile clinic and provide care for those who could not find transportation to the clinic sites.

hypertension that required immediate attention because the patients needed refills on their prescriptions but no longer had physicians they could go to for them,” explained Dr. Bentley, who says the four health care teams treated about 3,000 patients during their time in Mississippi. “Fortunately, all the medications and surgical supplies had been donated by Catholic Charities and various pharmaceutical companies, so we always had what we needed.”

By this time, a month had passed since Hurricane Katrina made landfall, so many of the patients seen were suffering from foot-related fungal infections caused by the standing water or had been injured in a post-hurricane accident. “We treated a number of lacerations and puncture wounds that occurred from incidents like stepping on nails or getting injured while clearing debris,” she said. “We distributed many tetanus vaccines, did minor surgical procedures, performed osteopathic manipulation, and visited a local Red Cross shelter where we provided care to a number of people.”

A few days later, when she and her team were assisting patients at nearby Bethal Lutheran Church, Dr. Bentley experienced a truly heartwarming encounter that brought the enormity of the population’s suffering and loss into vivid view. “During our time at Bethal Lutheran, I ended up helping for awhile in an area where donated dry goods like sheets, clothing, and towels were available for the hurricane victims,” she explained. “This one lady picked out a set of lavender sheets and seemed so excited by her good fortune, so I said, ‘Let me see if I can find you some matching pillowcases.’ I eventually found them, but as I was searching the lady smiled at me and said, ‘They really don’t have to match.’ That’s when the impact of it all really hit me. In my frame of reference, I’m trying to coordinate colors while this woman is so thrilled to get a clean pair of sheets she can sleep on that she is hugging me with gratitude.”

Unimaginable Images Greet Dr. Joel Spalter

While Dr. Bentley was dealing with less severe injuries and



The first Hurricane Katrina relief team comprised (from left): Ronald Bekic, D.O., NSU-COM family medicine resident; Adam Axler, physician assistant student; Samuel Perna III, D.O., NSU-COM family medicine resident; John Rafalko, PA-C, College of Allied Health and Nursing faculty; Charles Lewis, P.A., M.P.H., College of Allied Health and Nursing faculty; Dr. Camille Bentley; and Sean Leonard, Ph.D., College of Pharmacy faculty.

Hurricane Help: NSU-COM Answers the Call

maladies, Joel Spalter, M.D., assistant professor of internal medicine and chair of the Division of Infectious Disease, was busy handling time sensitive life-and-death situations as a member of the FL-5DMAT (Disaster Medical Assistance Team) stationed in the parking lot of Crosby Memorial Hospital in Picayune, Mississippi.

During his nearly two-week deployment, which occurred a few days after Hurricane Katrina ripped through the Gulf Coast, Dr. Spalter and his fellow DMAT members handled a never-ending parade of cases that ranged from semi-serious to extraordinarily acute. However, in terms of sheer gruesomeness, nothing came close to the unfortunate gentleman who was brought to the DMAT site by area police.

“The most severe case we saw occurred after the Mississippi Highway Patrol called to say they were bringing in someone who had been impaled through the neck,” Dr. Spalter explained. “As it turned out, this person had been out driving and was thrown from his car after hitting some debris. Unfortunately, he landed on a downed tree and was impaled through the neck on a sharp tree limb that went through his head and took out one of his eyes.”

To free the man, the highway patrolmen had to cut him loose from the tree and bring him in with a two-foot-long branch protruding from both sides of his head. “Fortunately, his carotid artery was not punctured, so we immediately intubated him and helped control his bleeding so he could be airlifted to a functioning hospital in Jackson, Mississippi.” he stated. “We learned afterward that this person had survived and was sitting up, watching television, and responding to commands. As you can imagine, uncommon suffering was a common occurrence in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, so this was a tremendously gratifying save.”

Evacuees Find Refuge in South Florida

Because innumerable Gulf Coast residents were displaced from their dwellings, the nation warmly responded by opening its hearts and homes to many of these bereft souls who had no place to go in Katrina’s aftermath. One individual who showcased his benevolence was the owner of Palm Meadows, which is a cutting-edge training track for thoroughbred horses located in Boynton Beach, Florida, that can house 400 people.



“Since Palm Meadows has spacious apartments for the jockeys, stewards, and other help, the owner reached out and said, ‘Hey, I don’t have to open up my training track for another two-and-a-half months, so why not use it as a temporary site for folks who were left homeless from the hurricane?’” said Jean Malecki, M.D., M.P.H., FACP, who serves as chair of the Department of Preventive Medicine and director of the Palm Beach County Health Department. “They were brought in by plane late Saturday night after Katrina hit, and we were there at 7:00 a.m. the next morning to start triaging the sickest people.

“It’s important to note that these individuals didn’t have identification or medication with them when they arrived; they barely came with the shirts on their backs,” she added. “We admitted seven adults to the hospital right away, primarily insulin-dependent diabetics who had been without their insulin for a week, people in congestive heart failure, or those who had chronic lung disease and needed immediate treatment. We also brought in psychiatrists, psychologists, and psychiatric social workers from the community to make sure everyone was okay from a behavioral health perspective.”

With the help of the six residents participating in the NSU-COM Preventive Medicine Residency Program at the Palm Beach County Health Department, Dr. Malecki and her staff set up a temporary clinic as well as an additional site where adult and child immunizations could be given. “We also treated a number of broken bones, sprains, and cuts and brought in pharmacy services through Walgreen’s, CVS, and Wal-Mart, which donated a lot of over-the-counter medications,” she stated. “All the evacuees eventually had a history and physical taken, just to assess where they were. Once that was completed and all the acute care needs had been taken care of, we pulled out of the site after about two weeks and merged the patients into the local medical care system.”

Wilma Makes Unwelcome Appearance

While the fourth NSU medical relief team was in Mississippi ministering to Hurricane Katrina victims in late October, a catastrophe was looming in South Florida as another menacing wind maker named Wilma focused its attention on Broward County. “Once we started hearing about the impending arrival of Hurricane Wilma, we decided not to send a fifth team up to Mississippi,” said

Hurricane Help: NSU-COM Answers the Call



The NSU medical teams were always ready and willing to take a few minutes to help unload the truckloads of supplies that arrived daily at the volunteer relief sites.

Dr. Bentley, who was attending the AOA's Unified Osteopathic Convention in Orlando when Wilma and her category three winds slammed into South Florida.

Although Hurricane Wilma left behind a less-destructive swath of destruction in the United States than her predecessor Katrina, damage estimates still soared into the billions as South Floridians struggled to deal with damaged roofs, blown-out windows, widespread power outages, and streets strewn with debris. Nevertheless, when NSU-COM reopened a week later, it immediately sprang into action by providing medical outreach to stricken Broward County communities.

"When we returned to school on October 31, we got a call from the City of Miramar asking us to provide basic medical assistance at an emergency clinic that was being set up at the old Miramar City Hall complex," she explained. "We ended up staffing it with a faculty physician as well as several residents and students for about a week. During this time we also got a call from the Broward County Health Department's emergency operations division to provide similar assistance at McNicol Middle School in Hollywood, which was being used a temporary hurricane shelter for displaced residents."

Thanks to the generosity of Memorial Healthcare System, which allowed the county to use its mobile health unit, a number of NSU-COM faculty members were able to treat patients in an environment that mimicked a full-service doctor's office. When the McNicol shelter shut down a short time later, the remaining evacuees were relocated to the Police Athletic League Multipurpose Center in Davie, where NSU medical services continued to be offered until the evacuees were provided housing by FEMA in late November.

With yet another highly destructive hurricane season drawing to a close, Dr. Bentley was able to find the heartwarming silver lining in a year filled with weather-induced misery and mayhem. "The thing that really impressed me was the phenomenal number

of people who were willing to come out and volunteer their services," she stated. "In Mississippi, there were people from other states who came to shovel mud out of homes, cook meals, clear debris, and help distribute supplies. It was wonderful to see so many people come together for a common cause—helping humanity."

Altruistic Acts



In the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, the college's Pediatrics Club had the opportunity to help some of the storm's tiniest victims in a very unique way. The club helped raise money and collect supplies for a new not-

for-profit organization called Coloring Away Pain, Inc. that was created to help children facing traumatic events cope through art. The program collects art supplies and monetary donations to send to children affected by the recent hurricanes. Although these coloring books are not intended to replace therapy, they do offer children a chance to tell their stories through drawing, coloring, and writing. Thanks to its efforts, the Pediatrics Club was able to collect enough money to purchase 121 coloring books, 75 boxes of colored pencils, and 10 drawing tablets.

■ As soon as storm-ravaged images from the Gulf Coast were flashed across the airwaves, the college's Student Government Association sprung into action by mobilizing a fund-raising effort that solicited donations from the various NSU-COM student organization club accounts as well as the M1 and M2 classes. When the final amount was tallied, \$3,096 had been collected to aid the disheartened residents of Louisiana and Mississippi.

■ Dr. Ronnie and Sherri Martin went above and beyond the call of duty in the wake of Hurricane Wilma by graciously feeding and sheltering two student applicants from New Jersey who had arrived for an upcoming interview at the college—only to find their hotels closed due to lack of power. When the Martins discovered their plight, they immediately offered to house the appreciative applicants. "They were so thankful because they thought they were going to have to sleep on the grounds of the university and not even have an opportunity to take showers the next morning," said Sherri, who serves as the college's coordinator of grants and special projects. "Interviewing for medical school is a very stressful experience, so we were more than happy to help them out."

■ A number of NSU-COM faculty members donated their time to participate in the Hurricane Wilma medical relief efforts in Broward County: Camille Bentley, D.O.; Jeffrey Bleicher, D.O.; Peter Cohen, D.O.; Robert Hasty, D.O.; Ronnie Martin, D.O.; Stanley Simpson, D.O.; Samuel Snyder, D.O.; and Joseph Stasio, D.O.



Dr. Ronnie and Sherri Martin Inspire Current and Future Generations of D.O.s

By Scott Colton

Director of Medical Communications

When Ronnie Martin, D.O., FACOFP, met his future wife Sherri in Oklahoma during their senior year of high school in the mid 1960s, they had no idea they were about to embark on a personal and professional odyssey that would produce an osteopathic dynasty and bring them fulfillment beyond their wildest dreams.

For Dr. Martin, the path to osteopathic immortality began innocuously enough in his birth town of Amarillo, Texas. Because his father worked in construction as a glazier, Dr. Martin and his younger brother and two sisters had a fairly itinerant youth, bouncing around from Texas, California, and Oklahoma several times before settling in Davis, Oklahoma, when Dr. Martin was a teenager. "I ended up going to 16 different schools before I graduated from high school," said Dr. Martin, who currently serves as professor and associate dean of academic affairs at NSU-COM. "When I look back on my childhood, I

realize I didn't make a lot of really good friends until college because we moved around so much.

"When we moved to California, I actually got thrown out of third grade on the first day of school because somebody made fun of my accent," he recalled. "I got into several fights on the playground that morning, and my mother had to come and get me, which was not a good thing. Fortunately, athletics was my saving grace, and I became a good enough athlete to be able to letter in four sports (football, basketball, baseball, and track), which earned me some degree of acceptance by the time I was in high school."

Unlike Dr. Martin, who came from a family that relocated often, Sherri's childhood was far more stable and idyllic. Following her birth in Oklahoma City, Sherri was adopted by a caring couple that showered her with love and catered to her every whim. "My dad was 40 and my mom was 36 when they

Dynamic Duo: Ronnie and Sherri Martin

adopted me, and since I was their only child, I was quite indulged,” admitted Sherri, who serves as the college’s coordinator of grants and special projects. “I grew up on a ranch because my dad raised and traded cattle. I even got a horse for my fifth birthday, which I rode to first grade because the first school I attended was actually a one-room school located on our ranch.”

Sherri, who was a self-professed tomboy and daddy’s girl, channeled her energy into a range of childhood pursuits that included participating in rodeos, playing basketball, baking, and cheerleading. However, her life was about to take a dramatic turn thanks to a matchmaker-induced meeting with a high school jock from a neighboring town.

When Ronnie Met Sherri

Thanks to a cosmic twist of fate, Dr. Martin’s aunt, who was only four years old than him, taught chemistry at the high school Sherri attended in Maude, Oklahoma. Consequently, when Sherri began taking chemistry in her senior year, Dr. Martin’s aunt instinctively knew a love match was in the offing if she could somehow get her nephew and her student to meet. “My aunt kept trying to get Sherri to see her nephew who was a jock,” Dr. Martin explained. “There was a science fair in Oklahoma City, which all the high schools participated in. I had a project or two in it, so my aunt took Sherri to the fair.”

And the rest, as they say, is history. After dating each other exclusively in their senior year of high school, Dr. Martin and Sherri tied the knot in 1968 during their freshman year of college at East Central State University in Ada, Oklahoma, where Sherri took business courses and Dr. Martin pursued a bachelor of science degree in chemistry.

“I always loved science, but I never thought I would get the opportunity to pursue some kind of medical career because I was a poor kid from a divorced family who lived in a small town,” said Dr. Martin, who earned his pharmacy degree from Southwestern Oklahoma State University in 1974. “Fortunately, a wonderful lady in our town named Faye Lowther took an interest in me, as did my English teacher Mary West and my science teacher Bill Springer. They began convincing me about what I might be able to do if I wanted it badly enough, was willing to work hard, and was not willing to



settle for merely working in a lumberyard or joining the Air Force.”

Although he treasures his pharmacy degree and still maintains his license to this day, Dr. Martin says he felt a sense of incompleteness and yearned to take his love of science to a higher level. That chance came courtesy of his postgraduate position as director of pharmacy at a small osteopathic hospital called Enid Memorial. “As I worked there, the doctors started teaching me about osteopathic medicine, and I became increasingly fascinated by it,” said Dr. Martin, who went on to earn his D.O. degree in 1979 from Oklahoma College of Osteopathic Medicine and Surgery in Tulsa.

While Dr. Martin was busy pursuing his education and providing for his family by working nights and weekends in a hospital pharmacy or in the area’s oil fields, Sherri alternated her time between working, receiving her bachelor of science degree in education from Southwestern Oklahoma State University, and giving birth to three children over a 10-year span—Shawn (age 35), Natasha (age 28), and Amanda (age 25).

An Osteopathic Dynasty Emerges

After spending three years serving as a brigade surgeon in the U.S. Army National Guard and working as a family practice physician with another osteopathic physician in Enid, Oklahoma, Dr. Martin decided the time had come to launch his own practice that would focus on family medicine and obstetrics. In May 1983, Dr. Martin established a solo practice in Enid that quickly turned into an all-encompassing family affair, with Sherri serving as office manager and their children assisting with various duties after school.

“The kids all went to a Montessori school, and either Ron or I would pick them up every afternoon at 3:00 and bring them to the office,” said Sherri, who also served on the local school board while maintaining the day-to-day operations of the practice. “When Natasha was in seventh grade, she worked as a temporary receptionist for the entire summer while our regular receptionist was out on maternity leave. She did all the filing, scheduled appointments, input all the charges, handled the collections, and pulled charts. My son’s wife Julie also worked for us while she was in college.”

Dynamic Duo: Ronnie and Sherri Martin



Celebrating daughter Amanda's 2005 graduation from OSU-COM are (from left) Dr. Natasha and Matthew Bray, Sherri Martin, Brent Askeland, Dr. Amanda Martin, Dr. Ronnie Martin, and Dr. Julie and Shawn Martin.

The next 15 years proved to be extremely fruitful for the Martins, who always tried to strike a healthy balance between dedicating time to their numerous professional pursuits and spending quality time with their kids. "Because I was basically on call 7 days a week, 24 hours a day unless we were out of town on vacation, we would sometimes shut the practice down at noon and go to one of the kid's games or concerts," said Dr. Martin, who actually had the privilege of delivering both his daughters when they were born. "Family is far more important than your job. Don't get me wrong, your job is important, but when all is said and done, your family comes first."

In addition to running his practice, Dr. Martin was involved in a staggering array of extracurricular activities that included serving as team physician for the local high school, moonlighting as a radio and T.V. sportscaster for various local college and high school games, working as a prison physician, and serving as a medical examiner in the county coroner system. In fact, Dr. Martin's previous experience as an oil-field worker proved to be extremely beneficial in one exceptionally explosive circumstance.

"One night there was an oil-well blowout, and Ron was called to the scene as the medical examiner to determine the cause of death for whoever had perished," Sherri explained. "There was a man who was still alive and trapped at the top of the oil rig, so once the fire was extinguished, Ron climbed up about 90 feet. Once he reached the man, Ron started an IV, gave him some pain medication, and then cut him out and got him down."

As if his professional plate wasn't already brimming with activity, Dr. Martin also worked three grueling emergency room night shifts a week from 1980 through 1998. The exhausting workload may have felled many a lesser man, but there was clearly a method behind Dr. Martin's madness. "Sherri and I made a promise to ourselves that the one thing we would give our children was an education," said Dr. Martin, who also helped fund the education of his three siblings. "There was a purpose behind my working so hard because I didn't want our kids to

struggle to get an education like their mom and I did. As parents, what you work your whole life for is to give your children opportunity. It's up to them to take advantage of their opportunities, and we've been blessed that our children have done that."

Have they ever.

In the greatest compliment a child can give a parent, all three of the Martins' offspring pursued careers in osteopathic medicine, with their daughters becoming D.O.s and their son Shawn serving as deputy director of government relations and congressional affairs for the American Osteopathic Association (AOA). According to Sherri, one of the keys to their children's personal and professional successes sprung from the rearing techniques she implemented when they were very young. "I always set high expectations and boundaries," she explained. "I believed they needed to learn to make decisions from an early age. I set the boundaries, but they were allowed to make all the decisions within those boundaries. When they're able to make decisions from the time they're two years of age, they've had experience with making bad decisions and learning from them by the time they've reached adulthood."

Not surprisingly, Dr. Martin credits Sherri's progressive parenting skills—and a little bit of luck—for helping to ensure their children's success. "I'm very thankful to Sherri because she basically raised our kids. I loved them and participated in their lives, but I didn't raise them because I was busy building a career and making a living," he admitted. "We tried to do things right, and thankfully our children did well, but we know we were blessed. I know a lot of parents who tried to do everything right, who loved their kids, nurtured them, sent them to school, took them to church, and participated in their lives—and they still turned out bad."

NSU Looms in the Martins' Future

Although Dr. Martin loved being in private practice and interacting with his patients, he also harbored a deep desire to



The Martin family was a vocal presence at the 2005 college football national championship game between the Oklahoma Sooners and the USC Trojans, which was contested at Dolphins Stadium in Miami Gardens, Florida.

Dynamic Duo: Ronnie and Sherri Martin



Dr. Martin enjoys some snow-time fun.

give back to the osteopathic profession at the academic teaching level. "I had been in practice for about two years, and I was sitting and talking with Sherri one day when I said, 'You know, the people who trained me—the docs I had in medical school—were very good, very smart, and very conscientious, but none of them had ever practiced medicine, and they didn't know how to teach me how to practice medicine,'" he explained. "They taught me theory and a lot of facts, but they had come straight out of their training and gone directly to medical school to teach. They'd never made payroll or been sued for malpractice. So I told Sherri I wanted to practice for about 15 or 20 years and then go back to teach medical students how to practice medicine because it's more than just facts—it's ethics, morality, professional involvement, and commitment. I knew this was what I wanted to eventually do, and Sherri was very supportive."

When Amanda, their youngest child, went off to college, Dr. Martin made good on his promise by selling his practice and initiating a search for a position in academia. In July 1999, his efforts paid off with an offer to become chair of the Department of Family Practice at Des Moines University College of Osteopathic Medicine in Iowa, which he gratefully accepted.

Over the next two years, Dr. Martin quickly established a reputation for excellence at Des Moines. Consequently, when Dr. Anthony J. Silvagni, who has a keen nose for sniffing out talent, ran into Dr. Martin at an AOA meeting in October 2000, he wasted no time in offering him an opportunity to

become professor and chair of the Department of Family Medicine at NSU's College of Osteopathic Medicine.

Interestingly, while Dr. Martin was being solicited by Dr. Silvagni to come to NSU-COM, Sherri was embroiled in her own bit of employment intrigue. Because their two-year stay in Des Moines marked the first time in their marriage Sherri had chosen not to work, she was thrilled to leave this relative life of leisure behind to accept a management position at the University of Iowa Family Practice Residency Clinic.

"At first we didn't know what to do," said Sherri, who has served as president of both the Auxiliary to the Oklahoma Osteopathic Association and the Auxiliary to the American College of Osteopathic Family Physicians. "The lady who I was going to be replacing had resigned because she wanted to spend time with her husband, who had terminal cancer. We were still trying to decide whether Ron should take the job at NSU when I got a call from the program director telling me that this lady's husband had passed away sooner than expected, and would I have a problem if she continued working, with me serving as her boss, since they had already offered me the position. I told them I would think about it, and that turned out to be the catalyst that proved it was meant to be for us to move to Florida."

NSU-COM Energy Impresses Dr. Martin

When Dr. Martin arrived on campus for his initial interview, one of the first things that struck him was the amazing energy he could feel emanating throughout the Terry Building. "It's like you can almost lay your hand on the building and feel it vibrate," said Dr. Martin, who served as president of the Oklahoma Osteopathic Association in 1996-97. "There's an energy, a dynamism, and a sense of optimism that pervades the school. Dr. Morton Terry and Dr. Fred Lippman also impressed the heck out of me with their commitment to osteopathic medicine and osteopathic education.

"This profession gave me an opportunity to raise my family, have a career, and help a lot of people, and I am very appreciative of that," he added. "I truly felt I could make a difference here, and I felt there was tremendous opportunity and potential. Sometimes things just feel right, and coming to NSU was one of those times. It felt like the right place at the right time because the college had enough stability to be solid, but it wasn't a stodgy institution where you couldn't make changes."

A few months later, Sherri also joined the NSU-COM team as coordinator of grants and special projects. "I had gone two years without working in Des Moines, so I was more than ready to rejoin the workforce. Plus, I didn't want to lose my skills," she admitted. "At the time, I was doing research to see where I wanted to work because I wanted to be involved with an organization where I wouldn't have to compromise my ethics.

Dynamic Duo: Ronnie and Sherri Martin

So when Dr. Silvagni approached me at an FSACOF meeting and said, 'I am trying to create a position in the college for a finance person, would you be interested?' I said yes."

Of course, the major selling point for both Dr. Martin and Sherri was the chance to rekindle a close professional working relationship. "Sherri and I have always enjoyed working together," he stated. "Since we are both very involved in the profession, she also gets to travel with me to various meetings around the country because she is as well known around the profession as I am. Sherri always accompanies me when we lobby the legislature for money for the college or for recognition of osteopathy. In fact, the proudest thing I have ever done professionally was having Sherri work beside me for seven years in Oklahoma to get the first antidiscrimination law in the nation passed that said you couldn't discriminate against a D.O. based upon his license or where he did his residency."

"Because I feel so strongly about the profession, I am always advocating for it, and I wanted to continue to have the ability to do that," said Sherri, who handles all budget and finance issues related to the college's multifaceted programs. "When we lived in Des Moines, I was very involved in the student organizations on a volunteer basis, and I knew I could do that here as well. With all the things I do at NSU-COM, I basically see my role as facilitating the resources that enable education of the students to take place in order for us to meet the mission of our college."

Since they arrived at NSU-COM in 2001, both Dr. Martin and Sherri have seen their job responsibilities increase, which is a testament to their dedication to the college and the osteopathic profession. In addition to his current duties, Dr. Martin has been charged with overseeing the management of professional medical services at the Davie and North Miami Beach clinics under the direction of Dr. Silvagni. "I'm very excited about being involved with the clinics because I see an opportunity to improve their efficiency, which will then benefit the education of our students and the care of our patients," Dr. Martin stated.

In terms of future plans, one of Dr. Martin's primary goals is step up his efforts to nurture and support the college's diverse and dedicated faculty. "I don't just mean faculty development but also in regard to personal and professional growth," he explained. "I also hope to continue being a role model in professionalism, involvement, and ethics for our students. The fact is patients don't know what you know, but they know how much you care. That's why I always tell our students, 'You don't want to be a doctor; you want to be a physician.' A physician is a nurturer, a healer, and a problem solver—a doctor is a keeper of knowledge. I don't want to graduate doctors; I want to graduate physicians."

The mutual admiration society that is Ronnie and Sherri Martin has continued to flourish throughout the decades because of the

shared love, respect, and commitment to excellence that define this dynamic duo. "I love my wife a great deal, but I also have an ungodly amount of respect for her intellect, for her passion, and for how effective she is," Dr. Martin proudly proclaimed. "I'm a big-picture visionary, and she's a detail-oriented person, so we complement each other in that regard. I know it's a cliché, but Sherri truly is the wind beneath our family's wings."

Osteopathic Obsession Runs Deep for Offspring



Misty water-colored memories of the way they were: Natasha, Shawn, and Amanda.

Because the Martins' three children witnessed their parents' undeniable zeal for osteopathic medicine and were immersed in the profession at an early age, it's not surprising to discover that all three have launched careers that closely parallel their parents.

Shawn – When Shawn was studying premed at Phillips University in Enid, Oklahoma, he suddenly came to the realization that becoming a physician was not his destiny. After flirting with the idea of majoring in theology, Shawn decided to pursue a bachelor's degree in communications and marketing and marry his college sweetheart Julie, who is now an osteopathic physician at the National Institutes of Health. After working in development, fundraising, and public relations at Oklahoma State University College of Osteopathic Medicine (OSU-COM), Shawn landed his current position as deputy director of government relations and congressional affairs for the American Osteopathic Association in Washington, D.C.

Natasha – Following in her famous father's footsteps, Natasha attended his alma mater after receiving a bachelor's degree in micro and cellular biology from the University of Tulsa and earned her D.O. degree in 2003 from OSU-COM. Like her parents, she also married her high school soul mate, Matthew Bray, while attending college. Natasha is currently doing an internal medicine residency at Harvard University in Cambridge, Massachusetts, while Matthew is a third-year law student at Harvard.

Amanda – 2005 proved to be quite a milestone year for Amanda, who earned her D.O. degree from OSU-COM after receiving a bachelor's degree in biochemistry from the University of Arizona. In addition to earning her D.O. degree, Amanda got engaged to boyfriend, Brent Askeland, and was accepted into the Orthopedic Surgery Residency Program at the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey School of Osteopathic Medicine. While in D.O. school, both Natasha and Amanda quickly showcased their commitment to the profession by serving as two of the first four student members of the AOA's Board of Directors in 2002 and 2004, respectively.

Staff Snapshot: Gustavo Saldias, M.P.H.



Gustavo Saldias, M.P.H.
AHEC Associate Director

Family Facts: Happily married to Mariateresa for five years. The couple has three children: Elisa (age three) and Rafael (age one).

Date of Hire: April 1994.

Official NSU-COM responsibilities: I am responsible for providing oversight and management assistance to the director of the NSU-COM Area Health Education Centers (AHEC) Program, which is an integrated system of multidisciplinary community and academic-based primary care education and training initiatives designed to enhance access to primary health services in medically underserved areas within 19 counties throughout South and Central Florida. My responsibilities include managing contracts, budgets, and human resources, as well as program development and preparation of reports and grants. I serve under Dr. Steven Zucker, who is the associate dean for community affairs and AHEC program director.

Reasons I enjoy working at NSU-COM:

There are a number of reasons that make working at NSU-COM an enjoyable experience for me. Perhaps the

most important is the privilege to work every day with wonderful people who appreciate my capabilities, respect my input, and who are constantly supportive of one another.

What did you do professionally before joining NSU-COM?

Before coming to NSU-COM, I was director of a worker safety and health project in North Carolina. My work consisted of developing instructional programs and educating migrant farm workers about the many health risks present in their work and living environments and about their rights under various worker protection laws. In addition, I was also actively involved in advocating for improving working conditions and defending the rights of workers when their employers were violating these rights.

Greatest achievement in life: Without any doubt, my greatest achievement is becoming a father.

Favorite way to unwind when not at work: Being with my family, playing the piano, and cooking.

My coworkers would be surprised to know this about me:

Difficult question. Anything that would surprise them would surprise me as well.

The most frightening thing that ever happened to me:

Perhaps the most frightening thing that has happened to me is experiencing a catastrophic earthquake. When I was nine-years-old and still living in Peru, a very strong earthquake that killed tens of thousands of people hit the country. I recall running out of my house with my parents and brother and seeing the walls around me swaying back and forth, not knowing if they would fall on us. Fortunately, the house was not damaged, but the feeling of an earthquake of such magnitude is one that stays with you your entire life.

When I retire I plan to: Move to the Saldias family vineyard on the foothills of Peru. Once there, I hope to make wine and a traditional Peruvian grape brandy called Pisco, which I can then proudly share with dear friends and visitors.

Three words that best describe me: This depends on whom you ask. According to my wife, being reliable, considerate, and responsible are my strongest qualities. I seem to agree with her.



Discussing a public health-related issue at a self-study meeting (from left) are: Cyril Blavo, D.O., M.P.H. & T.M., director of the M.P.H. Program; Rosebud Foster, Ed.D., special assistant to the chancellor; Jon Dodds, Ph.D., M.P.H., assistant director of the M.P.H. Program; and James Howell, M.D., M.P.H., chair of the Department of Rural Medicine.

Master of Public Health Program Sets Sights on Future Milestones

By Scott Colton, Director of Medical Communications

The Master of Public Health (M.P.H.) Program has undergone a number of interesting permutations since it was established in 1994 through major financial and technical support from NSU-COM's Area Health Education Centers (AHEC) Program as a component of what was then known as the College of Allied Health. This included being shifted under the NSU-COM academic umbrella in 2001 and quadrupling in enrollment size from about 30 students in 1995 to the current 130.

According to M.P.H. Program Director Cyril Blavo, D.O., M.P.H. & T.M., FACOP, "The Public Health Program was founded as an opportunity for health professions students to enhance their professional preparation with a broader community-based, systems perspective through pursuing an M.P.H. in combination with their other professional degree," he explained. "The program was designed around an interdisciplinary core faculty from the Health Professions

Division who had been trained in public health. Gradually, public health professionals and scientists were recruited to bolster the diverse faculty."

The Early Years

Throughout its early years, Raul Cuadrado, Dr.P.H., Ph.D., a highly respected national and international public health professional, served a dual role as dean of the College of Allied Health and director of the public health program. "The basic goal was to develop an internal generalist public health program that provided public health education to our health professional students," said Dr. Blavo, who taught the program's inaugural maternal and child health class. "And since it was based in the College of Allied Health, the first cohort of students was those enrolled in the Physician Assistant Program, although there were always a few osteopathic medical students and several others from dental, optometry, and pharmacy who pursued an M.P.H. degree simultaneously."

Master of Public Health Program

Because the initial student base was small, the program consistently strove to develop innovative ways to outreach to affiliated individuals outside the hallowed halls of NSU. "In the mid 1990s, one of the unique aspects of the program was a pilot project we developed in distance learning," Dr. Blavo explained. "It was a pilot program of a cohort from our West Coast Academic Center at Sun Coast Hospital in Tampa, which included Dr. Anthony Ottaviani, our regional dean at Sun Coast, Dr. Paula Anderson-Worts, who is an assistant professor of family medicine and public health, a number of the administrators and nurse practitioners, and a couple of family medicine physicians including Dr. Greg James. Approximately a dozen individuals from Sun Coast earned their M.P.H. degree by utilizing our compressed video capabilities."

The initial M.P.H. faculty, led by Dr. Cuadrado, included among others Dr. Blavo, Dr. Rosebud Foster, who serves as special assistant to the HPD chancellor, Dr. Manuel Bayona, current AHEC Associate Director Gustavo Saldias, Dr. Barbara Kornblau, Dr. Carole Palmer, and Dr. Patti Rose. "We wanted to promote among our students a broad awareness of the complexity of health issues of importance to our local communities, as well as throughout the world, to better prepare them to practice in underserved areas," Dr. Cuadrado explained. "Toward this end, through our success in receiving major external funding from highly regarded national and international agencies such as the Pan American Health Organization, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, several members of our M.P.H. team embarked on major international public health initiatives. These included the development of a graduate training program in tropical disease epidemiology in Venezuela and the performance of field research in malaria and cyclosporidiasis in Guyana and Peru."

According to Dr. Foster, who has worked with Dr. Cuadrado and Dr. Blavo on the program's administration since its inception, "Our M.P.H. Program also gained great visibility in those early years through numerous professional



Full-time M.P.H. faculty members include (standing from left) Jon Dodds, Ph.D., M.P.H., Alina Perez, J.D., and Gabriel Suci, Ph.D., M.S.P.H. Sitting are Jay Fleisher, Ph.D., M.S., M.A., Cyril Blavo, D.O., M.P.H. & T.M., and Jennie Q. Lou, M.D., M.Sc. (Not pictured: Ayleen Godreau, M.D., M.P.H.)

presentations by both faculty and students at a wide range of national and international conferences."

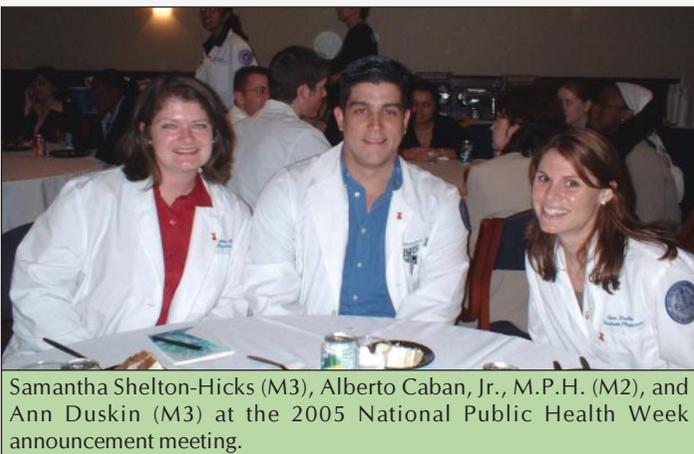
Transition to NSU-COM Takes Shape

When the new millennium dawned, major changes within the M.P.H. Program were already in the process of occurring. NSU's Physician Assistant Program, which had served as the primary source for creating a pool of M.P.H. students, was undergoing a major development that would eventually redirect its student base to a new dual offering called the master of medical sciences, which was developed specifically for P.A. students.

In addition, around the same time, the M.P.H. Program began widening its scope by opening up the program to outsiders. "We've always had one or two non-HPD students who took courses, but we formally started making an effort to recruit from the outside in 2000," Dr. Blavo stated. "That concept has grown to where we now have about 20 students per year who are not internal students."

In 2001, a decision was made by the late HPD Chancellor Dr. Morton Terry to officially relocate the program from the College of Allied Health to the College of Osteopathic Medicine because Dr. Terry decided it would be a better fit for the evolving public health field. As always, Dr. Terry's prodigious foresight proved to be amazingly accurate. Housed under the auspices of NSU-COM, the number of osteopathic medical students deciding to pursue a dual M.P.H. degree skyrocketed. Within a year, the program reaped additional dividends from its alliance with NSU-COM when a preventive medicine residency program, which included an M.P.H. component, was developed in conjunction with the Palm Beach County Health Department.

Over the next several years, the enhancements kept coming, including a major curricular shift and the accreditation of the college's M.P.H. Program in June 2003 by the Council on



Samantha Shelton-Hicks (M3), Alberto Caban, Jr., M.P.H. (M2), and Ann Duskin (M3) at the 2005 National Public Health Week announcement meeting.



Recent M.P.H. graduate Steve Andescavage conducted his field experience with the Healthy Beaches Program, where he investigated harmful algae blooms. A portion of his work entailed exploring what types of animals and sea life were being killed by red tide, which is a common form of harmful algae blooms that plagued the Gulf Coast in the summer of 2005.

Education for Public Health (CEPH). Although public health programs don't require CEPH approval to operate, Dr. Blavo acknowledges the benefits of meeting the rigorous standards set forth by the national accrediting body for public health. "It's important because it ensures that there's some quality assurance in regard to what you're doing," he explained. "By having oversight through a peer-reviewed process, you assure that the quality of the education you're delivering to the students is sound."

After conducting an extensive internal review, the program decided to jettison the research practicum portion of its curriculum in favor of field experience, which allowed the students to go out and actually work with public health practitioners in public health settings. "The M.P.H. practicum served as the culminating or capstone experience because its purpose was to bring everything the students had learned together and allow them to apply it in a practical sense," said Jon Dodds, Ph.D., M.P.H., who serves as assistant director of the program. "In the early years, it was a research project the students would take on involving the collection and analysis of data. Some would get data by mailing out surveys to the community while others would find existing statistics at a hospital and analyze it.

"Later on we broadened the practicum to include not only research projects but also what we called program development projects where they would do surveys for needs assessment and actually propose a hypothetical program for the community," Dr. Dodds added. "They would give some degree of detail about the proposed program that would meet the needs of the community they had surveyed, and they could also discuss which organization in the community should take it on. The third option we eventually offered was a program evaluation practicum where they would take an existing program and gather data about it to see how well that program was accomplishing its goals. In all three of these cases—the research practicum, the program development practicum, and the program evaluation

practicum—the students would write a report. It looked a little like a thesis, but there was more of an emphasis on identifying an issue of interest in the community, conducting a needs assessment of the community, and conducting program development or program evaluation."

Field Experience Enhances M.P.H. Education

Based on CEPH recommendations, in the summer of 2003, the M.P.H. Program switched to its current field-experience model that allows students to apply what they've learned in actual public health settings such as the Broward County Health Department and other appropriate sites. "If students are going to become public health practitioners and not exclusively public health researchers, then they need to go out and interact with people who are doing public health work in the community at the present time," Dr. Dodds stated. "Our job is to find them preceptors who can teach them how things can really get done in the public health community. We now send our students out to a community public health agency like a health department, hospital, community health center, or a volunteer organization like the Multiple Sclerosis Society, where they spend at least 200 hours at that site.

"The students work under the supervision of preceptors who are employees at that agency," he continued. "We also give the students and the preceptors certain guidelines about the various types of experiences we want the students to have while they're out there. We don't just send them out to a facility and say, 'Do whatever the preceptor tells you.' We work with the preceptors and students to plan projects and experiences that fit into eight different major categories called domains of competencies."

Those eight competencies, which were established by the Council on Linkages Between Academia and Public Health Practice to help students transition smoothly from academia to actual public health practice, encompass

- analytic/assessment skills
- policy development/program planning skills
- communication skills
- cultural competency skills
- community dimensions of practice skills
- basic public health science skills
- financial planning and management skills
- leadership and systems thinking skills

The program currently has about 18 affiliation agreements with a range of agencies, including the county health departments in Broward, Miami-Dade, and Palm Beach as well as the Broward Regional Health Planning Council, which

Did You Know?

As of September 2005, there were 62 accredited graduate M.P.H. programs and 37 accredited graduate schools of public health in the country.

does a significant amount of coordination among diverse public health agencies in the county.

Future Plans Portend Additional Success

Like most successful endeavors, the M.P.H. Program is an entity that perpetually evolves to meet the fluctuating needs of its students and the public health environment. As a result, the program has spent a significant amount of time evaluating itself via self-study and long-range strategic planning processes. "One area of interest communicated to us by prospective students is an online version of our M.P.H.," Dr. Blavo stated. "In fact, a survey of students conducted in 2003 and 2005 revealed a significant interest in an online degree."

As a result, the faculty is already assessing the possibility of establishing a comprehensive online curriculum for the program. "We already have online versions of some of our courses available as electives, so what we need to do is develop new courses and the curriculum," he said. "We also recognize that NSU has a long history and numerous resources to provide online delivery, so we feel that's a good fit. We're just trying to do it in an organized fashion and make sure the quality of the online program is equivalent to the quality of the onsite program."

Another area the faculty is investigating to meet the continuing education needs of the public health community is the possible implementation of certificate programs. "These are not degree programs but rather a collection of courses," explained Dr. Dodds, who coordinates a series of 15 public health seminars for the students each semester. "It would be geared toward public health practitioners who already have a bachelor's degree and want additional education in an area of particular interest but don't want to earn an M.P.H. degree. Some of the proposed certificate programs we're investigating offering include substance abuse prevention, disaster preparedness, and domestic abuse prevention."

"We offer a well-rounded generalist M.P.H. degree program," Dr. Blavo said. "Although we do not as yet offer specialized areas, we do provide a variety of electives in various disciplines in public health, so individuals can actually tailor their electives into an area of interest or on the basis of skill sets. As a generalist program, we provide our students with reasonable flexibility in regard to selection of their specific areas of interest in their course plan, which I think is one of our strengths."

Field Experience In Flight

When it comes to gaining hands-on experience, the college's M.P.H. Program provides that—and much more—when it's time for the students to perform their offsite training. For example, one student, Roger D. Jackson, who had a military background and was knowledgeable about working with antidotes for toxic nerve agents, found himself immersed in a true crash course in public health when he conducted his field experience at the Broward County Health Department. Because of his prior experience, Jackson was asked to help target and develop a site to stockpile supplies of nerve agent antidotes in Broward County in preparation for potential terrorist attacks. "This student's job was to bring information to the Broward County Health Department to help the organization develop its plan," Dr. Dodds explained. "Our students provide many other valuable types of services to their agencies, and the agencies in turn give them insight into aspects of the program the students may have little knowledge of such as financial management, purchasing, or personnel. It's definitely a two-way street in terms of the benefits the students and the organizations receive in these field-experience situations."

Success Stories



Since earning their degrees, a number of M.P.H. graduates have gone on to acclaimed careers in the public health realm. Following is a look at how some graduates have put their degrees to good use:

- **Listia Ahmed, M.P.H.** – doing a fellowship at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in Atlanta, Georgia.
- **Jo Ellen Alvarez, M.P.H.** – working as a nursing program specialist coordinator in the areas of epidemiology and disease control at the Palm Beach County Health Department.
- **Paula Anderson-Worts, D.O., M.P.H.** – serving as an assistant professor of family medicine and public health at NSU-COM, where she coordinates an annual medical mission to Jamaica.
- **Joanna Drowos, D.O., M.P.H.** – conducting her preventive health residency at the Palm Beach County Health Department.
- **Michael Funk, PA-C, M.P.H.** – working as an assistant professor in the Physician Assistant Program at NSU's College of Allied Health and Nursing, where he teaches health promotion disease prevention.
- **Connie Maggi, M.D., M.P.H.** – serving as assistant public health officer and children's services medical consultant in Stanislaus County, California.
- **Courtney Merritt, M.P.H.** – working as assistant to the executive director of the Georgia Dental Association, where she is responsible for a range of duties that includes networking with other state dental associations and the American Dental Association.
- **Swathy Sundaram, M.P.H.** – currently pursuing a Ph.D. in epidemiology at the University of Florida.
- **Daniel Ukpong, M.P.H.** – Working for the Agency for Health Care Administration as an inspector of nursing homes, assisted living facilities, and related centers.
- **Jason Zell, D.O., M.P.H.** – conducting research in the molecular epidemiology of cancer in the Division of Epidemiology at the University of California, Irvine, where he is working as a clinical fellow in hematology/oncology via the American Board of Internal Medicine Research Pathway.



OPP fellows Melchiorra Mangiaracina and Sean Goddard observe as Dr. Elaine Wallace demonstrates an OMM technique.

OPP Fellowship Serves as a Labor of Love for Participating Students

To the average student, the thought of enduring an extra year of medical school to pursue an osteopathic principles and practice (OPP) fellowship probably doesn't rank high on his or her list of things to do. However, for the six students currently participating in the college's elective OPP Fellowship Program, the experience is proving to be both rewarding and fulfilling.

"I like the idea that you're able to fix a problem or help the body heal with your own hands without using outside resources," said M3 student Melchiorra Mangiaracina, who was attracted to osteopathic medicine because of its much-heralded holistic approach to health care. "Holistic medicine, which is a big blanket term for dealing with a patient's mind, body, and spirit—dealing with the whole person—is what health is all about. No one had to teach me that concept because it makes absolute sense; in fact, I don't know why more doctors don't adopt this philosophy."

M3 student Sean Goddard, who shares Mangiaracina's penchant for osteopathic manipulative medicine (OMM), became a fan of

osteopathic medicine once he learned about the profession while pursuing his undergraduate degree. Still, he never thought he would be intentionally extending his matriculation by an additional year to pursue an OPP fellowship. "When I first got here I had no idea I wanted to become an OPP fellow," he admitted. "During my first year I thought I could learn the OMM techniques just by doing them with the other students during our labs or in the clinic. It was in my second year that I realized it takes much more training to become really good at it. Since I was at a D.O. school and OMM is something I really enjoy—the ability to heal some people with just your touch—it made it more of a purpose for me to try and get into the fellowship program."

During their one-year OPP fellowship, students are exposed to a diverse mix of activities that includes working with patients in the OMM Clinic, assisting the faculty with training students during the biweekly OMM labs, and participating in a journal club as well as weekly medical didactic classes. "The college

OPP Fellowship Offers Diverse Curriculum

wants us to keep abreast of the things we learned in the first two years of medical school, so we have didactic sessions where we're each assigned a different medical topic to research," Goddard explained. "For example, the week I was assigned chest pain, I had to research it and come up with the various differentials and treatments we can do for different types of chest pain."

Although they have yet to reach the halfway point in their fellowship, both Goddard and Mangiaracina already have a wealth of stories to share about their OMM experiences. "I recently saw a patient who had been suffering with severe elbow pain for about 18 months," Goddard stated. "He had seen an orthopedic specialist and a family practice doctor, but neither was able to provide him with any kind of relief. It turned out he had hurt the elbow while weightlifting and one of the bones was out of place. I watched as Dr. Elaine Wallace came in to assess the injury, and within one treatment the man's problem was fixed."

Goddard actually experienced the benefit of OMM treatment firsthand after he was struck in the face during a softball game and began suffering debilitating and daily bouts of migraine headaches. "I never had headaches in my life, and all of a sudden I was getting one every single day," he explained. "I was taking Motrin every hour, but I knew I couldn't continue to live like that, so I went to see Dr. Louis Hasbrouck in our OMM Clinic. He did some cranial work on me, and within a few treatments the headaches diminished."

"Many people come to see us who have diffuse pain throughout their body," he added. "Many times they've already been to an acupuncturist, seen a physician, or tried massage therapy. Then they come to see us, and we end up giving them more relief than they received anywhere else. Even when it comes to illnesses like pneumonia, performing lymphatic OMM treatments can increase function and decrease the amount of time you are sick. I've done OMM treatments on a couple of elderly people who had pneumonia, and it made them feel better for days, which is amazing to see. Getting an OMM treatment is not something people really think about when they're sick."

Not surprisingly, the further along they get in their fellowship, the more engrossed the students become regarding the results they are witnessing following their OMM ministrations. "The amazing part about manipulation is how everything is interrelated, and we see it everyday," Mangiaracina stated. "It

just reinforces the fact that your whole body works together; it's not just one complaint spot. The philosophy of the profession's founder Dr. A.T. Still that the patient is our best teacher is so true. That's what we really get out of this fellowship. We are seeing people with actual problems and seeing how we can help them while continuing to hone our skills. That's definitely an invaluable part of the fellowship."

Unfortunately, in spite of all the obvious benefits OMM treatment provides patients, osteopathic medicine continues to evoke derision in some educational and medical circles while remaining a largely unknown entity to the masses. Just ask Mangiaracina, who learned about osteopathic medicine when she was a premed student. "When osteopathic medicine was described to me, it was initially presented as this alternative you could pursue if you didn't have the best MCAT scores or the best grades," she admitted.

According to Mangiaracina, ignorance and fear play a part in explaining why misconceptions still exist about the profession. "I think our generation and the past few generations of doctors don't harbor these misconceptions anymore," she said. "But in many cases, it stems back to the early days of the profession when M.D.'s didn't really understand how you could cure someone without drugs and just by using your hands. They just considered it to be some sort of voodoo. Also, D.O.s were basically taking patients away from M.D.s, so the M.D.s probably felt they had to do something to counteract the growth of osteopathic medicine by saying it was a form of quackery."

Goddard also makes a salient point by saying, "Everything in osteopathy cannot be proven beyond a shadow of a doubt scientifically, and most people nowadays want concrete proof. In contemporary medical practice, the theory is that this drug is going to work on this receptor—and we know it's going to cause this effect. That's what insurance companies like to see as well. In addition, osteopathy can't be standardized. For example, Dr. Elaine Wallace can teach each one of us how to do specific OMM techniques, but we will not all perform them the same way.

"It's been a great experience for me to learn how OMM integrates into medicine in general," he added. "After being at NSU-COM for two years and now doing the fellowship and continually performing these techniques, I'm still amazed every day to see how they actually help our patients on so many levels."



Mangiaracina (top photo) and Goddard put their training to good use in the OMM Clinic.

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1999 - Dr. Archie H. McLean ('88)
 2000 - Dr. James Turner ('88)
 2001 - Dr. Daniel McBath ('90)
 2002 - No Ceremony
 2003 - Dr. Joel Rush ('85)
 2004 - Dr. Jeffrey Grove ('90)
 2005 - Dr. Gregory James ('88)

Alumni in the News

Tyler Cymet, D.O. ('88), who serves as section head of family medicine at Sinai Hospital of Baltimore, was an active presence at the AOA's Unified Osteopathic Convention in Orlando, Florida. In addition to conducting a lecture on low-back pain, he presented a research poster on knuckle cracking that discussed the pros and cons of joint cracking when done by oneself to oneself.

John Geake, Jr., D.O. ('93) gave an informative talk to the college's Rural Medicine Club in September, where he discussed his experiences as a student, resident, and practicing physician. Dr. Geake, who was involved in a tragic motorcycle accident that left him paralyzed from the waist down in the late 1990s, continues to pursue his love of medicine as a practicing physician in the rural town of Labelle, Florida.

Earle M. Pescatore, Jr., D.O. ('89) was sworn in as president of the Illinois Osteopathic Medical Society in December. Dr. Pescatore currently works as an urogynecology specialist at the Rock Valley Women's Health Clinic in Rockford, Illinois.

David Pizzimenti, D.O. ('02) recently joined the staff at Alliance Health Care System and Williams Clinic in Holly Springs, Mississippi, where he serves as medical director. After earning his D.O. degree from NSU-COM, Dr. Pizzimenti, who is a National Health Service Corps scholar, completed his internal medicine residency at Mount Sinai Medical Center in Miami Beach, Florida.

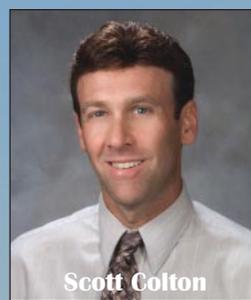
Michael X. Rohan, Jr., D.O. ('01) was selected to participate in a spine surgery fellowship at the prestigious Texas Back Institute in Plano, Texas, which is the largest freestanding spine specialty clinic in the United States. Dr. Rohan will serve as a fellow

from August 2006 through July 2007 following the completion of his residency in orthopedic surgery at UMDNJ-SOM.



Ronald J. Renuart, D.O. ('90), who is currently serving as chief medical officer for the Florida Army National Guard squad stationed at Camp Phoenix in Afghanistan, was surprised to find himself working beside a number of alumni from NSU's Health Professions Division. Pictured in the accompanying photo are (from left): Colonel Mark A. Denner, D.O. ('90); Dr. Renuart; Captain James W. Robinson, O.D., College of Optometry ('00); and Captain Nabil Youseff, D.M.D., College of Dental Medicine ('01).

Submission of Alumni News Items



Scott Colton

In my role as editor-in-chief and graphic designer of *COM Outlook*, I am always seeking ways to enhance the publication's content and make it as informative as possible for our readership. One of the ways I hope to accomplish this is by providing expanded coverage of the myriad individuals who comprise NSU-COM's distinguished alumni base. If you've published a book, received an award, or been promoted or elected to a lofty professional position, please contact me at (954) 262-5147 or submit the information via email to scottc@nsu.nova.edu.

Alumni Association Fund Honor Roll

In the spring of 1999, NSU-COM launched an alumni-based fundraising effort to generate dollars that would be used to create an endowment fund to reduce future tuition costs for NSU-COM students and produce a funding pool that would be utilized for discretionary purposes as determined by the Alumni Association Executive Committee. Every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of the following list of donors; however, if you notice an error or omission, please contact Lynne Cawley in the Office of Alumni Affairs at (954) 262-1029 to rectify the matter.

2005 Alumni Association Fund Donors

NSU-COM Society (\$10,000-\$24,999)

Dr. George Linsey

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Dr. John Geake ('93)

(in memory of John Geake, Sr.)

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500 Club (\$500 - \$999)

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Alumni Association Fund Honor Roll

Cumulative List (1999-2005)

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Represents donors that have made a significant deferred gift via life insurance policies, insurances, or trusts.

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Ms. Lorraine Snyder

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Zelnick ('87)

Dr. Sonia Talarico ('03)

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Dr. James ('88) and Sherry Turner

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Dr. Lee L. Gibson ('85)

Dr. A. Alvin Greber

Dr. Thomas Green ('98)

Dr. Andrew Gross ('93)

Dr. Diane Haisten ('93)

Dr. Jason D. Hatcher ('99)

Dr. Michael Krutchik ('88)

Dr. Stephen MacDonald ('90)

Dr. Henry Malczak ('90)

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Dr. Tricia Percy ('95)

Mr. John Potomski

Dr. Isidro Pujol ('94)

Dr. Steven Reeves ('95)

Dr. Ronald Renuart ('90)

Dr. Hector Rodriguez ('90)

Dr. Steven Sager ('90)

Dr. Lawrence Schwartz ('90)

Dr. Sandi Scott-Holman ('93)

Ms. Louise Todaro

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Dr. Richard Wolonick ('91)

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Dr. Shoaib M. Ayubi

Drs. Seth and Mary Baker ('88)

Dr. Daniel Barkus

Dr. Douglas Baska ('86)

Dr. Paul Bates ('86)

Dr. Shaughn Bennett ('86)

Dr. Camille Z. Bentley ('92)

Dr. Peggy Benzing ('87)

Dr. Deidra Bergmann ('85)

Dr. Andrew Biondo ('00)

Dr. Kenneth Bresky ('92)

Dr. Melissa Broadman ('98)

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Dr. Douglas Bushell ('98)

Dr. George Campbell ('99)

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Dr. Robert Darrel Collins ('93)

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Dr. Anthony Dardano ('90)

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Dr. Thelma Jamison
Dr. Andrew Kahn ('91)
Drs. Kurt Kantzler ('93) and
Yoyen Lau ('93)
Donna Kaplan
Dr. Barry Karpel ('89)
Dr. Julie Katz-Gerrish ('93)
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Dr. Charles A. Wilson ('96)
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Dr. Stephen Yandel ('89)
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Dr. Carlos Levy Earns Acclaim for Assisting Domestic Violence Victims



Family Portrait: Dr. Levy with his son Tony, daughter Celeste, wife Josephine, and son Taylor.

Becoming an ardent advocate for domestic violence victims was not something Carlos G. Levy, D.O., envisioned becoming when he received a plea in the mail from Florida Governor Jeb Bush several years ago.

The mass mailing, which was sent to all Florida-based physicians, dentists, and chiropractors, served as a heartfelt appeal for the recipients to donate their time and services to abused and battered women throughout Florida. In the end, the governor's entreaty didn't trigger an outpouring of altruism. However, it did strike a nerve with Dr. Levy, who contacted Women In Distress of Broward County, which is the county's only state certified and nationally accredited comprehensive domestic violence center.

"When I received the information I said, 'Wow, I have a lot of patients who fall under this category.' So I called up Women in Distress and met with the volunteer coordinator," said Dr. Levy, who graduated from Southeastern College of Osteopathic Medicine in 1987. "I wanted to make a difference, so I volunteered to provide free medical care for their clients at my family practice office. Sadly, many of these women have been in abusive relationships for quite some time and have no money, insurance, or self-esteem."

In addition to volunteering his own time and expertise, Dr.

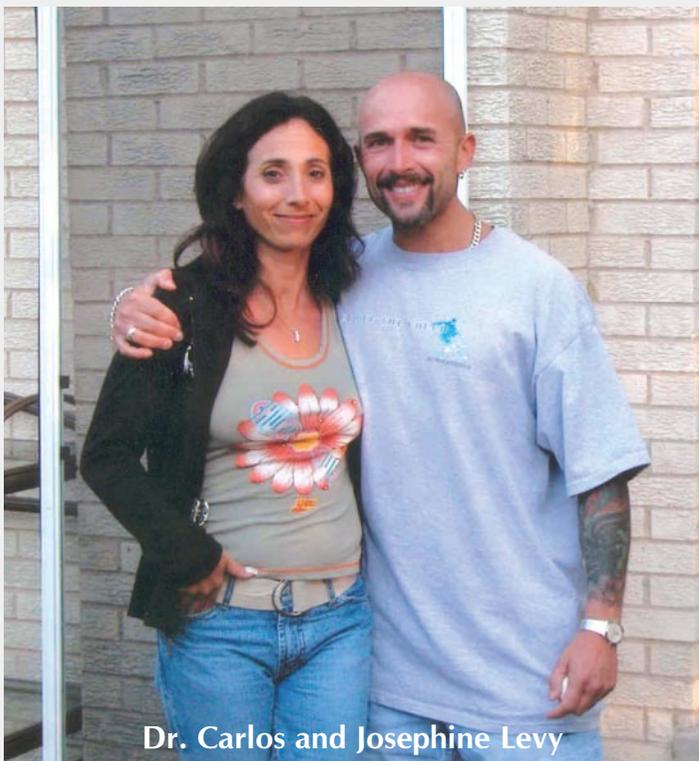
Levy managed to convince some of the diagnostic laboratories he works with to donate their services as well. "As a result, the women don't get charged a dime," he proudly stated. "And that's important because domestic violence knows no age, cultural, or socioeconomic bounds, and many of these women haven't had any health care in years."

One particularly poignant case touched Dr. Levy so deeply that it compelled him to become the woman's savior in ways that extended far beyond the medical realm. "One day I treated a 68-year-old woman who had been in an abusive marriage for over 40 years, but when it escalated to the point where her husband put a knife to her, she finally found the courage to leave," he recalled. "She had no training, but I used my connections to help get her a job as a receptionist. It's a vicious cycle in the sense that because these women been trapped in an abusive relationship for so many years, they're brainwashed by their abusers into thinking they deserve to be treated so badly."

Because he was so moved by the plight of abused women, Dr. Levy decided to take his volunteerism to another level by organizing an ongoing clothing, toy, and shoe drive. Thanks to the generosity of his family, patients, and friends, Dr. Levy receives a constant flow of items, which are then sold at the Women in Distress thrift store to raise money for the organization's clients. "My patients bring me clothing on a daily basis, so I collect everything and store it at my



Dr. Levy receives his Governor's Peace at Home Award from Guy Gunnell, who serves as commissioner of the Florida Department of Law Enforcement.



Dr. Carlos and Josephine Levy

house,” he explained. “It’s really rewarding to see how my patients and children have joined the cause as well. Sometimes I think my wife is going to throw me out of the house because I have so much stuff piling up, but once I collect enough items, one of my patients will come over and help me load everything into his truck to take to the thrift shop.”

In April 2005, Dr. Levy received some well-deserved recognition for his philanthropic efforts when he was presented with a Governor’s Peace at Home Award at a special ceremony held at the Florida Capitol in Tallahassee. The awards are granted in several categories to individuals or organizations that have worked in their respective areas to develop, enhance, or promote programs that raise awareness and help to decrease the incidences of domestic violence. Overall awards also are presented to individuals and organizations whose efforts toward ending domestic violence far exceed the requirements of their employment, organizational mission, or program activities.

“My feeling has always been the more you give—and the more you give unconditionally—the more the laws of physics mandate that it will come back to you tenfold,” said Dr. Levy, who also provides lectures to local physician groups and other organizations on domestic abuse. “Winning the award was a great thrill, but nothing could replace the feeling of satisfaction I get from the work I do. Getting a hug, a kiss, and a thank you from a patient is the most priceless gift I could ever receive.”

Dr. Carlos Levy Fact File

Birthplace

Argentina, but moved to Skokie, Illinois, when he was two years of age.

Family History

Grandparents left Europe and moved to Argentina to escape the Holocaust. Father was a tool-and-dye maker; mother was a homemaker who also worked at a variety of jobs outside the home. Dr. Levy is the oldest of three children.

Medical Origins

“I knew I wanted to be a physician since the age of five,” he stated. “I had bad allergies as a kid and used to go to the pediatrician for allergy shots on a weekly basis. It just fascinated me, and I became intrigued by the human body and everything it does.”

Florida Connection

Moved to the Sunshine State in the winter of 1979. “It was a horrible winter that year, and roofs were caving in everywhere,” he recalled. “I was on the roof of our house shoveling snow with my brother one day when my dad came out and said, ‘That’s it, we’re moving to Florida.’”

Education

B.A. degree in biology from University of South Florida in Tampa; D.O. degree from Southeastern College of Osteopathic Medicine in North Miami Beach; internship and residency in family practice at Southeastern Medical Center in North Miami Beach.

Current Position

Private family practice at Weston Regional Health Park (a component of the North Broward Hospital District) in Weston, Florida.

Family Man

Met wife Josephine while attending college in Tampa and has three children—Tony (16), Taylor (14), and Celeste (5). “I always tell my patients that the most important thing in life is the health and happiness of your family,” he stated. “I wouldn’t be where I am today if it wasn’t for my wife and family and the support and love I get from them.”

Special Interests

Martial arts, rock climbing, surfing, literature, cooking, and music.



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