Cultivating Involvement: NURTURING CHANGE IN COMMUNITIES
The first etymological shift from voluntary (meaning “of one’s free will”) to volunteer occurred around 1600, when the latter originally meant “someone who would offer himself for military service.” The context is useful when we think about the voluntarism at the MSU College of Osteopathic Medicine. There are people here – a whole army of them – who make life-changing commitments to help others.

Of course, we’ve worked hard to make that happen. A demonstrated commitment to service is part of what is assessed in our admissions processes. Selecting students who have proven records of voluntarism pays off. Just stroll through Fee Hall any week classes are in session, and you’ll find collections of food or clothing, bake sales to support community organizations, calls for individuals to assist in some good cause, notices of fundraisers for local charities. Our students staff the free Student OMM Clinic, volunteer at the Friendship Clinic for the homeless, travel on numerous medical missions overseas at their own expense, conduct physicals for school kids and Special Olympics, tutor, teach, do health screenings, serve as role models and mentors, make presentations, build homes for Habitat, work at disaster sites – and the list goes on and on.

Voluntarism is infectious and our faculty and staff are not immune. The nearly 2,000 physicians who volunteer their time to teach our students in clinical settings are a stellar example. Events like the Heart and Sole shoe distribution project and Simple Gifts collections, happen right here in Fee Hall.

This environment has produced alumni who are beacons in their communities, either dedicating their practices to meeting the needs of the underserved, or giving their time, money and leadership to make a capital-D Difference.

From military service in Iraq to a clinic in the Indian jungle to housing the homeless in Lansing, this issue of Communiqué is replete with stories of MSUCOMers giving their best away: their time, their intelligence, their knowledge and their compassion. It’s a great chance to celebrate who we are. Enjoy!

William D. Strampel, D.O., Dean

MSUCOM appreciates the generous and continuing support for Communiqué offered through the Michigan Osteopathic College Foundation. Thank you!
Caring for urban neighborhoods

by Craig Reed

Scattered throughout some of the poorest neighborhoods in the Detroit metro area are a handful of medical clinics whose goals are to provide low cost medical services. Within one of these clinics, Park Medical, are Barry Bronstein, D.O., and Gloria Chaney, D.O., two MSUCOM alumni who have dedicated their time and energies to meeting the needs of the clinic’s neighbors.

“I’ve been working for about 25 years in the Detroit area, at one or another of the clinics here,” explained Bronstein, a ’79 graduate. “We try to do what we can to help them out. A lot of our patients have no insurance and come from single-parent homes without a lot of financial support,” he said. “I mentor students from MSUCOM, and they are often surprised by a number of things while they are at the clinic. For instance, for many of our patients lucky enough to have health insurance, even a small co-pay of a couple of dollars is enough to prevent them from purchasing the medicine we prescribe them. Another thing the students learn is that our patients frequently delay seeking treatment until they are in the late stages of a disease, and by then there are considerably fewer options available. It’s a humbling experience for the students.”

“I had always wanted to do something like this,” explained Chaney, an ’86 alumnus, when asked about how she became interested in helping indigent people. “Originally, I was planning on moving back to where I grew up in the South to do something similar, but I saw the need here and thought I could make a difference. “This type of practice is never boring,” continued Chaney. “This is the first stop for most of our local patients. You see things most people won’t see unless they work in the E.R. As a family practitioner, you’re doing a wide variety of procedures normally performed by specialists in more prosperous areas. You have to keep in mind that your patients can’t easily get across the city to see a specialist so you do what you can right here in the clinic.

“I couldn’t see myself doing anything else,” beamed Chaney. “The training I received to be a D.O. – looking at the whole patient and getting to know your patient – has really paid off for me. You pick up on a lot of things by being observant. Being a general practitioner is one of the most challenging jobs in medicine because you have to constantly consider the whole patient, not just a fragment. For me, not only is it challenging, it’s also the most rewarding.”

Providing care to the uninsured

by Craig Reed

Nestled within the wooded office areas of south Lansing, a team of compassionate people has joined together to offer quality health care to residents, especially for those who have no health insurance coverage.

“My wife and I opened up the first Care Free clinic in Mason in July of 2004,” said Barry Saltman, M.D., a ’79 graduate from the MSU College of Human Medicine and clinical faculty member for MSUCOM. “Originally we were a non-profit organization targeting just the uninsured, but as we grew and opened a second clinic in Lansing, we found that by having a blend of patients with different levels of health care coverage, we are able to offer improved care to the uninsured. Some of those with health care coverage, when we first started seeing them, were worried that they were taking time away from the uninsured. In fact, it’s quite the opposite. They are helping to support our mission to serve as many people without health care as possible.”

“Dr. Saltman and I both believe that health care for those who are not insured cannot be segregated. This innately produces inequality,” said Steven J. Dupuis, D.O., associate professor and a ’76 graduate of MSUCOM, who is delighted to be medical director for the Care Free Clinic.

“Our goal is to provide the same quality health care to everyone who walks in our door.”

Dupuis’ involvement was made possible in part by a four-year agreement made between MSUCOM and Care Free Medical Inc. “Through this agreement, Dean William Strampel has provided the financial support which has made it possible for me to split my time between teaching and research as a faculty member of MSUCOM and seeing patients at Care Free,” he said.

“Since relocating my practice to the Lansing clinic in July 2006, we have grown our patient base from 800 to 4,000 with three-quarters of them on Medicaid, Ingham Health Plan or uninsured,” continued Dupuis. “Our full time patient advocate and our medical students work very hard to find resources for our patients without commercial health care coverage. Our students alone have helped obtain $850,000 worth of medications donated to our patients.”

“Bringing Dr. Dupuis on board was important to our educational mission,” said Saltman. “Each year, we have over 50 medical students from MSUCOM and the College of Human Medicine who volunteer or rotate through our clinics. We wanted to provide these students with a high-quality professional experience. This allows us to care for more uninsured and needy members of our community. We plan to grom these relationships with both colleges as well as add new academic programs with similar mutual benefits.

“When my wife and I first started this, we were seeing it as a way to give back to the community during our retirement years,” explained Saltman. “We had no idea that it would grow into what it is today. It hasn’t been easy finding the necessary resources to keep this going. We’ve been fortunate enough to have help from many generous people to provide these services, but there is a constant need to find more assistance.”

Highlights

Alumni Chaney (left) and Bronstein (right) work as a team to provide health care for the uninsured in Detroit.

Through the non-profit Care Free Medical, Saltman (left) and alumnu Dupuis care for many of the area’s underserved.
While the urban regions work to provide health care to their indigent citizens, rural areas, facing a constant shortage of physicians, look for doctors willing to set up their offices in the more remote areas of the country. For Robert Gross, D.O., a '98 alumnus, the idea of moving to Kernville, California, and setting up a clinic in the nearby small town of Mt. Mesa was an easy sell.

"Every morning I drive to work on the side of a mountain overlooking this beautiful pristine lake," said Gross. "I'm in awe of it every time I see it."

Just this last November, Gross and his wife Holly Spohn-Gross, D.P.M., also an MSU graduate, opened the Sienna Wellness Institute. "The institute was designed with preventive care in mind," explained Spohn-Gross. "In addition to my practice and my husband's, we have a stress test center, yoga classes, and seminars on nutrition and preventive medicine. We're also hoping to get some specialists to join us as well. Right now, if a patient needs a cardiologist, they have to go outside the valley to get to the nearest one, and it's a long, treacherous drive to get there."

"One of the things we did when we built the institute was to think of what would make the patient more comfortable," said Gross. "In the waiting room for instance, we took out all the clocks and gave it a relaxing Mediterranean décor so it feels less like a medical facility. You'd be amazed at how much it lowered people's blood pressure."

"The other important thing we did, I think, was to make all the staff feel they are an important part of the team," continued Gross. "We encourage our staff to learn more things and to think of this as more than just a way to get a paycheck."

For the citizens of Mt. Mesa, it has taken a little time to adjust to some of the new ideas Gross and Spohn-Gross have brought with them. "A lot of people here are accustomed to not going to see a doctor unless the problem is inhibiting their day-to-day activities," said Spohn-Gross. "My patients come in with all sorts of foot problems that are in pretty advanced stages. With the free seminars we put on, we're able to educate the population to come in sooner when a problem is in its early stages and more easily treated."

"A lot of people in the area thought no one would want to take up yoga for instance," explained Gross, "but shortly after we started offering the class, it was filled to capacity. This is an area that's not accustomed to a lot of change, which can be challenging for anyone wanting to come in and try something new."

"It's been scary, taking a chance that the institute will work out," continued Gross. "Yet, every time I walk in and see all the patients and how happy our staff is, it's very rewarding. I'm happy to have married someone who shares a lot of my values and is willing to take a chance on this with me."
Recently, I traveled to an orphan camp in Ukraine with an organization called Ukrainian Children’s Aid and Relief Effort (UCARE). The purpose of this camp was to provide orphans with a rare break from the walls of their orphanage and to educate them on the principles of self-care and self-esteem.

Much to the children’s delight, we took them swimming in the Black Sea, hiking in the Crimean Mountains, and to museums and water shows at nearby towns.

In addition to having a little fun, they also attended workshops led by camp counselors. My workshops included health issues such as hygiene, smoking, first aid, drug and alcohol addiction, and most importantly AIDS. Ukraine has the highest rate of infection in all of Europe. Teaching in a second language to children who have had little exposure to these topics was challenging and mentally exhausting. I tried to make certain every child understood and learned.

As the camp “medic,” the children would often approach me with cuts, bruises, headaches, and all types of injuries. When one of the children has to go to the hospital, the orphanage has to dip into its limited funds to pay the often expensive care. Ingeniously, the directors have discovered some effective folk remedies to cure many of the children’s ailments. For instance, we used a honey mixture to treat a large abscess on one of the girls. After one day, it was nearly gone. In general though, the best cure for many of their ailments was comfort, attention, love and the occasional Jolly Rancher – all of which they rarely get.

Thanks to donations from individuals and organizations, the children received new clothes, pens, bracelets and handbags and other personal items – all of which brought joy and excitement to the children.

This camp was a learning experience for me, but for the kids, it was the highlight of their entire lives thus far. Their day-to-day life is drastically different than a typical American child’s life. Though they receive an education, it is often dismal. The knowledge that they gain rarely provides them with any skills to function within society. Furthermore, once these children reach 18 years of age, they “age-out” and are forced to leave the orphanage.

The government rarely provides funding for additional educational or vocational opportunities for them after exiting the orphanage. Often, the future of these children is grim and unpromising; over 80% of them will end up on the streets, in jail, or conned by human traffickers into slavery. UCARE’s goal is to encourage education, self-esteem, and opportunities for them.

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Leaving was emotional for both counselors and children. The children’s ease of attachment and difficulty with separation illustrated their longing for family and need for human bonding. We gave the orphans an experience of a lifetime, but they also changed our entire outlook on life. Orphan children are in increasing worldwide. I encourage anyone interested in helping to get involved with these types of organizations and see for yourself.

The clinic provides much needed medical care for the village of Payingdem.

Establishing clinics in Northern India

by Craig Reed

Jane Klaes, D.O., an ’04 alumna, has had a zest for helping people in remote regions of the world since she was a medical student at MSUCOM. “In 2003, I traveled to a village in India called Payingdem, which is in the northeastern state of Arunachal Pradesh, to see what the conditions were like. Reaching the village was a major undertaking, requiring several flights, a boat ride and traveling by jeep on outlandish roads until there was no road. From there we had a 12-hour hike through lush, beautiful jungle while carrying all the equipment we needed for our stay in the village. On this first trip, I assessed Payingdem’s health care needs. It became clear that the community needed a basic medical facility and that there were individuals in the village willing to learn the necessary skills.”

After the first trip, villagers worked on projects that needed to be completed before the group’s return. "They built latrines as well as a building that would eventually house the medical clinic. The key issue for us was to make certain the clinic, once it was established, would be self-sufficient, run by members of the village who were trained to be community health workers,” said Klaes. “We wanted the facility to be their clinic in every sense of the term.”

Last year, Klaes returned to the Payingdem to finish setting up the clinic. “This time we were weighted down with a lot of medical supplies, including a ‘Lab-in-a-Suitcase,’ which is a great device when you want to run some basic tests far away from the nearest laboratory. We brought the supplies to the village, set up a solar-powered water purifier, and provided education on hygiene and disease prevention. We treated patients for parasites as well as other infectious and chronic diseases. I had the opportunity to use osteopathic manipulative medicine pretty regularly during my stay. Two of our translators during the trip expressed interest in medical training and are applying for nursing and medical school. After their training they will staff the clinic year-round.”

Not wanting to end her assistance to remote villages, Klaes volunteered to serve as medical director for Vision Builders, the group that sponsored the trips to Payingdem. “Vision Builders is a non-profit organization that offers support to people in Himalayan regions who wish to provide education and health care, as well as environmental and cultural preservation for their communities,” Klaes explained. “I’ll be spending about a month out of each year traveling to help provide medical care and establish more clinics. My next trip is already set for a village located in Tibet. “I feel like I’m working my dream job,” continued Klaes. “I had always wanted to travel to remote areas, learn about their communities, and to offer them the tools they need to help themselves. It’s a rewarding experience, and I can’t wait to put on my backpack and hike into the next mountain village.”
by Amanda Maas & Craig Reed

CMA: Gifts for 200 Orphans

Winter break is usually an opportunity for students to kick back, but for members of MSUCOM’s Christian Medical Association (CMA), it was an opportunity to help an orphanage in India.

“One of our churches is affiliated with the orphanage that cares for almost 200 orphans,” said Michelle Doran, treasurer for CMA. “With that connection, we were able to make arrangements to visit them. “During fall semester we did some fundraising to get some gifts for the orphans,” said Adrienne Ardis, a second-year member. “We were able to raise enough money to buy each child a pair of shoes. Most of the money we raised came from our fellow students.”

“Our typical day was to lend a hand with breakfast, usually cleaning the dishes, assist the kids in packing up their lunches and then we would go to the clinic to help out with patients, or teach some of the classes at school,” said Prasanth Pillai, president of CMA. “At the clinic we worked with a doctor who taught us a lot about the tropical diseases he commonly comes across and what limited treatment options he had available. When we were teaching, we taught the kids about body systems and helped them study for their other classes. “The kids were incredible,” continued Michelle. “The orphanage has a pretty rigid routine that they all know by heart, yet they also have a lot of energy and fun and helped take care of one another since there are so few adults available to supervise them. It was a memorable experience for all of us, and I hope it won’t be our last.”

AMWA: Promoting breast cancer awareness

Helping others can start right here in the Lansing area as the American Medical Women’s Association (AMWA) has done by promoting breast cancer awareness. “We invited breast cancer survivors to our meeting to share their experiences with us,” said Abha Gupta, AMWA president. “It is important for us, as medical students, to understand and to learn from the experiences of others.”

In addition, AMWA formed a team to participate in the “Making Strides Against Breast Cancer” fundraising walk in October at the state capitol in Lansing, raising more than $900 for the American Cancer Society.

In November, AMWA held its first “Women in Medicine: A Night of Storytelling” event. Throughout the evening, three female physicians, including Dr. Terre Taylor, Dr. Lisa DeNefano and Dr. Margaret Agwu, all MSUCOM faculty, shared their inspirational life stories. The event was also a fundraiser for the MSU Safe Place, the only on-campus shelter for those affected by domestic assault. “It was inspiring to see this community of women in medicine come together to raise awareness and support for the MSU Safe Place and to learn from the stories of other women in our profession,” said Jenifer Balawender, vice president of AMWA.

“As another result of our November event, our organization has coordinated a mentorship program between physicians and students within the MSUCOM,” Gupta said. “We all have an interest in women’s health and we can use this common thread to build relationships, create a sense of unity throughout the profession, and gain strength in numbers.”

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Sigma Sigma Phi: A Mongolian fundraiser

Take one restaurant, add 200 participants and a few students grilling and you’ve got the recipe for a successful fundraiser with Sigma Sigma Phi (SSP), MSUCOM’s academic fraternity/sorority.

“We had heard about the fire which destroyed Cristo Rey’s clinic and decided we should do something to help them rebuild,” said Niamh Condon, secretary/treasurer for SSP. “We talked with Mongolian Barbeque restaurant and they were happy to work with us.”

“Several of us cooked the food on the grills during the event. It was hot back there and was a lot more physical work than what I was expecting,” said Jovana Koscica, a member of SSP. “Everybody’s arms were tired by the end of the night, but we had a lot of fun doing it and raised close to $1,200.”

“I think the success of the event was that we turned it into both a fundraiser and a social event for the college,” said Niamh. “We filled the restaurant with people who wanted to show their support. The end result is a great fundraiser where everyone had a fun time.”

AMWA’s presentations have created comfortable environments for focusing on women’s issues.

OBITUARY

Candice Rizzo was a second-year osteopathic medical student who passed away in late summer 2006. Candice was known as a caring, compassionate person who also had a great love for animals. Candice’s legacy will be carried on in the lives that she touched.

This program is run through MSUCOM’s Office of Public Relations. To suggest a monthly recipient or offer donations, please call (517) 353-0616 or email: pat.grauer@hc.msu.edu. Simple Gifts’ information is at www.com.msu.edu.

AMWA’s presentations have created comfortable environments for focusing on women’s issues.
Developing Research at MSUCOM

Walter F. Patenge Endowed Chairs

by Craig Reed

MSUCOM is ranked first in the nation among the osteopathic schools for National Institutes of Health research dollars. Part of the college’s success stems from its ability to draw exceptional researchers to the campus. Endowed chairs, positions which are funded annually through the interest accrued from donations to the college, offer one method of drawing talent to the college. Walter F. Patenge, known for his strong support for osteopathic education, made a generous donation to create an endowed chair within the college many years ago. With permission from the heirs of Mr. Patenge, it is now possible to use the donation to support two endowed chairs – both for research positions. This year marks an important milestone in this process with the filling of one of those positions by Jacek Cholewicki, M.Sc., Ph.D., a biomechanics scientist from Yale University.

“I’ll be part of a team looking into various orthopedic concerns, using my expertise in biomechanics and motor control,” continued Cholewicki. “These days, one researcher can’t do it alone anymore. It requires putting together a team of people from different fields who can offer different perspectives on a problem. In my case, this has usually meant teaming up with physicists and engineers. Having a team with a variety of expertise creates a great synergy and quality research to show for it.”

While a considerable amount of his time will be spent with ONCOR, Cholewicki is performing other research as well. “I have some research looking into the effects of mechanical weight lifting belts and other support devices – studying how wearing them can change muscles and motor control,” said Cholewicki. “I’m also back looking into studying osteopathic manipulative medicine (OMM), which is one of the research priorities in the college. I’m excited to have this opportunity to look deeper into the field of OMM.”

Cholewicki’s research over the course of the years — studying lower back pain, the relationship between core stability and knee injuries, and the effects of back support devices — has included studying the effects of back support devices.

“My closest collaboration will be with the Osteopathic National Center for Orthopedic Research (ONCOR) run by Dr. Lawrence Mysliwiec,” Cholewicki explained when asked about some of the partnerships he has formed. “One of my laboratories will be located within their center at Ingham Regional Medical Center. I’ll be part of a team looking into various orthopedic concerns, using my expertise in biomechanics and motor control.

“I spent 12 years at Yale University, and have seen a number of changes within research,” continued Cholewicki. “These days, one researcher can’t do it alone anymore. It requires putting together a team of people from different fields who can offer different perspectives on a problem. In my case, this has usually meant teaming up with physicists and engineers. Having a team with a variety of expertise creates a great synergy and quality research to show for it.”

Osteopathic Surgical Specialties
Serving the mid-Michigan Area

by Craig Reed

The Department of Osteopathic Surgical Specialties has become well known for its urologists serving the mid-Michigan area: Shirley Harding, D.O., David Wartinger, D.O., Donald Bartkowski, D.O., and Max Rizer, D.O. I sat down with them to find out more about this diverse and stellar team.

“I graduated from MSUCOM in ’85. Back then, it was unheard of for a woman to be interested in going into urology, but a mentor of mine in general surgery suggested that the specialty might be a good fit for me,” said Harding, who is chairperson of the department. “Urological problems were seen as affecting only men, and I was told that men would not be comfortable talking to a female doctor about incontinence. These days, it’s understood that women too can have urological problems and my male patients are quite comfortable talking with me. I think what drew me to the field was that I could work with my hands and with scopes and other technology. It’s fascinating for me to look through a scope and know I’m looking at my patient from the inside. I enjoy the challenge of making a surgery a success.”

“Originally, I wasn’t going to be an urologist,” explained Wartinger. “I was training in OB-GYN when my mentor suggested I explore urology. I was training in OB-GYN when my mentor suggested I explore urology. So I ended up becoming part of the urologic oncology subspecialty. I was recruited by Dr. Harding when I first completed my medical training, so this is the only job I’ve ever known. I’m also the only person on the team who decided to go to law school and complete my law degree. One thing that has really affected my experience in urology has been the nationwide shortage of urologists, which has created increased workloads for us.”

“I’ve been with the college for about eight years now,” said Bartkowski. “After my initial training, I spend four years in the Air Force at Andrews Air Force Base in Washington, D.C. When I completed my commitment, I went back to Detroit and accepted a pediatric urology fellowship. I’m a high-detail guy, and working in this subspecialty you deal more with reconstructive surgery, which requires a lot of high precision work and more than a little creativity as well. Each year, I travel to Guatemala with another doctor to volunteer my skills helping the children. Between the two of us, we can perform 30 to 50 surgeries during the week we are there. I’m also interested in starting some research with simulators that can give surgeons the ability to maintain and improve their skill sets.”

“I’m the newest member of the team,” Rizer said. “I graduated from MSUCOM in ’98, went into private practice in Ludington for two years, then decided to come back to MSUCOM so I could be closer to my family. I have three kids, so being a full-time dad is what I do when I’m not at the office. I’m currently training on the da Vinci robot, which is a new piece of technology that allows you to perform laparoscopic surgery. It helps that I’ve lived here (East Lansing) before. Returning to campus was like coming back home.”

Chairperson and alumna Shirley Harding, David Wartinger, alumnus Max Rizer, and Donald Bartkowski comprise the stellar urology team within OSS.
Nearly 600 people demonstrated their support of the osteopathic profession in Michigan by attending the 2007 Michigan Osteopathic College Foundation Ball – “Puttin’ on the Glitz” on Saturday, February 24, at the Ritz-Carlton, Dearborn. Elaborately adorned with red roses, the event included an opportunity for friends and colleagues to visit during the reception, an elegant dinner, a silent auction of beautiful jewelry, trips, and athletic tickets, dancing to the KGB band, and a raffle for a two-year lease on a 2007 Lexus SC430 hardtop convertible. Robert Gordon, D.O., MSUCOM Class of 1982 and clinical assistant professor of family and community medicine, possessed the lucky ticket that won the opportunity to drive this incredible car for the next two years!

Thanks to the widespread support of both corporate sponsors and individuals, the event generated more than $175,000 in net proceeds. All proceeds will be transferred to the MOCF Endowment which supports student scholarships, educational programs, and community outreach at MSUCOM. Over the past two years, more than $300,000 has been added to the endowment fund as a result of this event.

We encourage you to mark your calendars now for the 2008 MOCF Ball, which will be held on Saturday, February 23, 2008, at the Ritz-Carlton, Dearborn. We look forwarding to having you join us!

by Colleen Kniffen

MOCF Vice President Max McKinney, D.O., Marilyn McKinney, Elena Oliven, and MOCF President Eugene Oliveri, D.O.

Janet Oliszewski, M.S.W., director, Michigan Department of Community Health, and Dennis Paradis, M.P.H., executive director, Michigan Osteopathic Association

MOCF President Eugene Oliveri, D.O. and Founding Dean of MSUCOM and Honorary Co-Chair Myron Magen, D.O.

Robert Gordon, D.O., MSUCOM Class of 1982 and clinical assistant professor of family and community medicine, was the lucky winner of a 2007 Lexus SC430 hardtop convertible!

Honorary Co-Chair Ruth Magen and Lee Stempel

2007 MOCF Ball Co-Chairpersons, Kimberly Betts and Colleen Kniffen, acknowledge the 54 corporate sponsors of the 2007 MOCF Ball.

Janet, James, Robert Gordon, and Marilyn McKinney

Robert Gordon, D.O., MSUCOM Class of 1982 and clinical assistant professor of family and community medicine, with the lucky winner of a 2007 Lexus SC430 hardtop convertible!

Honorary Co-Chairs Thomas and Nancy Angott

James, Robert Gordon, and Elena Oliven

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Garden City Hospital
Henry Ford Bi-County Hospital and Henry Ford Wyandotte Hospital
Huron Valley - Sinai Hospital
MSU Internal Medicine
MSU Psychiatry
National City
Ohio Southshore Medical Center
ProNational Insurance Company
St. Joseph Mercy-Oakland
St. Joseph’s Healthcare

Bronze Sponsors
Ingham Regional Medical Center
MSU Biochemistry and Molecular Biology
MSU Histology and Molecular Genetics
MSU Neurology and Ophthalmology
MSU Osteopathic Manipulative Medicine
MSU Osteopathic Surgical Specialties
MSU Pharmacology and Toxicology
MSU Physiology and Division of Human Pathology
MSUCOM Administrative Services
MSUCOM External and Alumni Programs
MSUCOM Student Services
POH Medical Center
Howard S. Rossman, D.O., Michigan Institute for Neurological Disorders, Multiple Sclerosis Center
The Rossman Group
Sparrow Health System

Patron Sponsors
Accident Fund Insurance Company of America
Thomas and Nancy Angott
Association Benefits Company - Michael G. Back
Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan
Ingham Osteopathic Association
MCCF
Mercy General Health Partners
Michigan Gastroenterology Institute
Michigan State University Federal Credit Union
Mid-Michigan Medical Center - Midland
MidMichigan MRI
MSF Family and Community Medicine
MSUCOM Statewide Campus System
Munder Capital Management - John Capuano
Physicians’ Organization of Western Michigan
Career Decisions: Educating Undergraduates about D.O.s

The decision to go to medical school is both exciting and stressful for potential applicants, and often the most challenging aspect is gathering enough information to decide whether to go to medical school and if so, which school they should attend. That’s where “So you want to be a D.Octor,” MSUCOM’s pre-medical student information seminar, comes into play. This one-day program, hosted by MSUCOM’s Office of Multicultural Programs, provides a snapshot of what students can expect when they join the college. “As a graduate assistant for the Office of Multicultural Programs, I was in direct contact with applicants who were asking things like ‘what do I need to become a more competitive applicant,’ ‘what classes should I be taking as an undergraduate,’ and ‘how do I get ready for an interview,’” said Tanisha Toaston, D.O., who helped to found the program while attending MSUCOM. “I wanted students to feel like they had a sincere chance of getting in regardless of their background.”

“We just finished our fifth year of the program,” said Tamera Cox, co-coordinator. “The seminar is open to applicants who are interested in osteopathic medicine. Our presenters cover topics such as admissions requirements, interviewing skills, and MCAT tips, while our current students volunteer some of their time to talk with the participants about their experiences and what will be expected of them. It’s been a popular program and successful at educating potential students about MSUCOM.”

Some of our current MSUCOM students and alumni were first introduced to the college and osteopathic medicine, and wished to share their insights about the program:

- Bethany Milton, Class of 2007

Integrating New Ideas into a CME Course

by Amanda Maas

Soft lighting, the relaxing sound of a trickle of water, and a receptionist desk free from the usual glass barrier describes the welcoming atmosphere of the office of physiatrist Marcy Schlinger, D.O., co-owner of the Center for Integrative Medicine in Okemos, Michigan. “I want it to be an environment where people can feel welcome and are able to have their needs met,” Schlinger said.

After graduating from MSUCOM, Schlinger returned to the college and spent seven years as a faculty member before entering private practice. “I enjoyed teaching at MSU very much, but I had an aspiration to run my own business,” Schlinger said.

In addition to her practice, Schlinger continues to teach at MSUCOM and is the chairperson for a new CME course. “Osteopathic Manual Medicine for Physicians,” is shorter than a typical CME course and lasts only two days. “There is a need in the community for D.O.s and M.D.s to have the opportunity to participate in OMM courses without being out of the office for an extended period of time,” Schlinger said. “Therefore, I have developed a course that has four parts, each focusing on a different anatomical region. The four two-day classes will take place over a period of two years.”

Schlinger also wanted to showcase the talented OMM faculty. “Not only did I want to make this course accessible, I wanted to involve the expert manual medicine practitioners at MSUCOM,” Schlinger said.

The course accessible, I wanted to involve the expert manual medicine practitioners at MSUCOM,” Schlinger said. The course that I am coordinating is an extension of MSUCOM’s well-established continuing medical educational offerings. “For more information on CME courses, contact Jan Falls at jan.falls@hc.msu.edu.

CME courses showcase the talents of OMM faculty.

BUNNY PATENGE
PMR’s Cornerstone

by Craig Reed

On the fourth floor of West Fee Hall in a room with a variety of mementos from Las Vegas and other distant places is the office of Bunny Patenge, secretary for the Department of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation (PMR). For 18 years, she has been one of the cornerstones for making the department what it is today.

“I love the people in this department,” said Bunny. “When I first started working here, the department was in its infancy. We had three doctors and had just started our clinical work over at the Clinical Center. Over the years, the department, the doctors and I have sort of grown up together. We behave very much like a family.”

As the department grew, one of Bunny’s favorite group of people started making regular visits to her office—residents. “The residents are a lot of fun. They come in on a regular basis so you get to know each of them personally. PMR also co-sponsors a fellowship, usually with sports medicine. I’ve enjoyed getting to know the fellows we have had over the years as well.”

“I think what’s most rewarding about my job is that people appreciate me and make it clear that I’m part of the team,” continued Bunny. “As the only person responsible for most of the day-to-day logistics of the department, I’m proud to be one of the faces of PMR, and I expect to be here, doing what I enjoy, for many years to come.”

Prospective student also had a chance to try their hand at OMM.
Alumni in Action
Committed to our Troops

by Craig Reed

A family physician’s practice can take on a variety of forms. For Trent Janda, D.O., a ’99 alumnus of MSUCOM, that has meant serving in the military, treating service members.

“I completed my family practice residency at Tripler Army Medical Center in Hawaii, then went to the flight surgeon’s course at Fort Rucker, Alabama,” said Janda. “From there my family and I moved to Germany and then in March 2003, I went to Iraq during ‘Operation Iraqi Freedom.’”

Janda spent most of his time in Iraq at a former Iraqi Air Force Base in Balad. “The post had been heavily damaged during the first Iraq war and looted by the locals, so nothing worked,” he said. Janda had to set up his own clinic, where he cared for the 1,500 soldiers assigned to his Task Force, sleeping in the back of the clinic on a cot in case his services were needed during the night. “Taking care of the people in your unit is like being a small town doctor in a way,” he said.

When Janda was not treating patients, he kept very busy with the chaplain, improving their unit’s standard of living—from installing plumbing and electrical wiring to building a clinic and a chapel. “We found it much easier to pass the time by keeping busy, whether it be treating and counseling soldiers or making home improvements.”

Upon returning from Iraq, Janda continued to serve soldiers. In May 2004, he was selected to be the health clinic commander on the Giebelstadt Army Airfield. “I had four doctors, three nurses, a pharmacist and support staff working for me, caring for approximately 2,500 people. One of our biggest missions was to support the soldiers deploying and re-deploying to Iraq and Afghanistan, conducting over 8,000 deployment related medical encounters.”

Upon closure of the Giebelstadt Army Airfield in July 2006, Janda became the assistant deputy commander for clinical services and medical director for the nearby Wuerzburg MEDDAC. There he supports eight clinics providing care for 62,000 beneficiaries over a 60,000-square-mile area of Germany. “I think one of the biggest challenges in my job is coordinating efforts and activities among a network of clinics that are up to three hours from each other,” said Janda.

Today, Janda is preparing for yet another chapter in his career. In May 2004, he was selected to be the health clinic commander on the Giebelstadt Army Airfield. “I had four doctors, three nurses, a pharmacist and support staff working for me, caring for approximately 2,500 people. One of our biggest missions was to support the soldiers deploying and re-deploying to Iraq and Afghanistan, conducting over 8,000 deployment related medical encounters.”

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Today, Janda is preparing for yet another chapter in his career. He has been approved for an inter-service transfer to the U.S. Public Health Service with assignment to the Coast Guard. Janda will be moving with his wife, Lynn, and their four children to Kodiak, Alaska, to serve as a flight surgeon and family physician. “I am grateful for all the experience and opportunities that the Army has provided me, while at the same time I am very excited about supporting our Coast Guard service members and their families,” he stated.

During his service in the U.S. Army, Major Janda has received three Army Commendation Medals, the Bronze Star in Operation Iraqi Freedom, and the Meritorious Service Medal in Germany.
Three Alumni Honored with President Positions

The Tri-County Osteopathic Association’s presidential inauguration was held on January 20 at the Roostertail in Detroit. MSUCOM is proud of its three alumni who were honored as the incoming presidents of their component societies:

- Macomb County
  Carl M. Pesta, Jr., D.O., Class of 1996
- Oakland County
  Gary L. Wilyerd, D.O., Class of 1978
- Wayne County

Alumni Network

The ties which bring MSUCOM alumni and students together become more evident when you consider how alumni take the time to mentor the next generation of D.O.s in the hope that these students will too one day mentor the generation following them. These mentoring opportunities can take several forms. Many alumni accept clinical faculty positions, giving students a glimpse of the day-to-day activities of a physician’s office or hospital. Some team up with them, establishing free or low cost clinics to serve the needs of those who have no health insurance to fall back on when illness strikes, and still others, either through the alumni association or directly on their own, offer financial support to student endeavors which get them out and involved in the community. It’s a natural extension of an osteopathic physician’s commitment to holistic treatment to spend some of their precious time and energy offering their expertise to people who each day are faced with seemingly insurmountable challenges – including access to adequate health care. Seeing so many faces affiliated with MSUCOM packing their bags to help orphans in India, opening free clinics for the uninsured, collecting hats, gloves and shoes for those who need them or encouraging young people to follow their dreams of one day being called “doctor,” reminds me that while we care for individual patients who walk into our office, both our patients and ourselves are one segment of a much larger community that needs our attention.

Michael Weiss, D.O., President
MSUCOM Alumni Association Board of Directors

ACOFP

Alumni and students attending the American College of Osteopathic Family Physicians conference in March par took in the MSUCOM reception which was held on March 15. Over 30 alumni and six students enjoyed the opportunity to socialize and mingle with their fellow MSUCOM brethren.

Topics in the Tropics

Alumni, faculty, and friends participated in CME’s Topics in the Tropics Seminar which was held in February. Participants enjoyed the scenery of the Dominican Republic while taking a CME course.

Beyond the Office Door

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Michael Weiss, D.O., President
MSUCOM Alumni Association Board of Directors

John Everett, D.O., Committed To Service: His Actions Speak Even Louder Than His Words

by Dennis M. Paradis, M.P.H.
MOA Executive Director

During my tenure as executive director of the Michigan Osteopathic Association, I have come into contact with many exceptional D.O.s who are giving their time and talents. An excellent example is MOA’s 2003-04 past president, John Everett, D.O. Dr. Everett, who is a 1987 graduate of the Michigan State University College of Osteopathic Medicine, exemplifies the highest standards of the profession. He not only serves patients with compassion and commitment but also makes a concerted effort to “give back” and use his medical training whenever and wherever he can. Whether participating in community health screenings and patient education in his northern Michigan town of Indian River or traveling to Guatemala to provide care to residents of its remote villages, Dr. Everett is a man who lives his convictions.

In 2005, he stepped up to provide medical care to Hurricane Katrina victims. Upon hearing of the devastation caused by the hurricane, Dr. Everett immediately began to look for opportunities to volunteer his medical services wherever they might be needed. His desire to help led him to Vidalia, Louisiana, where many evacuees had taken up residence and health care providers were overwhelmed. With a medical team he assembled and brought with him, he saw more than 600 patients during a two-week stay.

Even in his role as a leader of the MOA, Dr. Everett continued to bring issues of volunteerism to the forefront of the membership. As an outgoing board member, Dr. Everett united with fellow outgoing board members John Floreno, D.O., and Lewin Wyatt, Jr., D.O., to establish the MOA Medical Mission Fund. The reason? Everett, Floreno and Wyatt had all experienced the positive impact medical missions have on the lives of patients and the personal difference it had made in their own lives. They wanted to provide support for medical students and other D.O.s to share that learning experience.

At the request of 2006-07 MOA President John Bodell, D.O., Dr. Everett leads up the MOA Emergency Preparedness Task Force. With a charge to better prepare osteopathic physicians for volunteer service in the case of medical emergencies, this task force was a natural match for Dr. Everett’s experience and personal interest.

As this issue of Communiqué looks to highlight the work and generosity of D.O.s reaching out to serve, I offer Dr. John Everett as a role model.

Dennis M. Paradis
Reaching out to the next generation of D.O.s in Macomb County

by Craig Reed

The osteopathic profession regularly demonstrates a sincere commitment to helping those in need, whether that is in a far-off place or a few blocks down the street from our homes or offices. As the cost of a quality medical education steadily increases, students are finding themselves needing an increasing amount of financial support – support our alumni and other affiliates of the profession willingly offer to these D.O.s in training.

One such physician is Stephen M. Swetech, D.O., F.A.C.O.F.P., an ‘86 alumnus who has stepped up to offer assistance. “One of the things I remember best about going to MSUCOM was the sense of family and close-knit ties we had with each other as students,” said Swetech. “You don’t get that at most other colleges and it was something that was especially important to me during my medical training, and it still is as an alumnus.”

Thanks to Swetech’s generosity, seed money for a scholarship assisting MSUCOM students hailing from Macomb County has put Macomb on track to becoming the second county-specific scholarship within the state. “I try to be as active as I can as a supporter of the college and the osteopathic profession,” explained Swetech. “It’s important to me to devote some of my time and energy into keeping the profession strong, whether that means being involved politically through organizations like the Michigan Osteopathic Association or providing the start to a new scholarship for the students.”

“The college has really done a great job into making itself a premier college to get your medical education. I’ve had the honor of knowing all four deans,” continued Swetech. “My family and I love the college, and the direction that Dean Strampel and his people are taking the college. We enjoy showing our support.”

As more physicians from Macomb County add to the funds provided by Swetech, the eventual endowed scholarship will become available for students in financial need – a testament to the alumni’s commitment to reach out to others who wish one day to join the osteopathic profession.

Endowed Scholarships

What do endowments provide?

- The keys to creating a faculty of the highest distinction, an exceptional student body, outstanding programs, and cutting edge research
- Scholarships to enable MSUCOM to recruit and retain the most talented students and to make it possible for them to graduate without overwhelming debt
- Help to create the margin for excellence
- Help to loosen the constraints of restrictive operating budgets and to create flexibility to pursue initiatives that define MSUCOM

How do endowments work?

- Endowed fund dollars are invested by MSU
- The principal, usually the original gift of the donor, is never spent
- Part of the investment income from the principal is used each year to support a program in MSUCOM
- Remaining investment income is retained as a hedge against inflation

For a complete listing of MSUCOM events check out our Web calendar: www.com.msu.edu/calendar

Calendar of Events

MAY

- MSUCOM Hooding and Commencement - 11:00 a.m. - Wharton Center, MSU campus, East Lansing, MI
- Michigan Osteopathic Association Convention (MOA) - Hyatt Regency, Dearborn, MI. Alumni reception on the 10th from 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.
- CME: “Advanced Muscle Energy with Clinical Correlation” - East Fee Hall, MSU campus, East Lansing, MI. 36 hours of Category IA credit; Early Bird Tuition is $1000; Full Tuition is $1250. Chairperson is Carl Steele, D.O., M.S., P.T.

JUNE

- CME: “Indirect, Functional Approach to Manual Medicine” - East Fee Hall, MSU campus, East Lansing, MI. 24 hours of Category IA credit; Early Bird Tuition is $500; Full Tuition is $750. Chairpersons are Harriet Shaw, D.O., and Marcy Schlinger, D.O.
- MSUCOM Convocation and White Coat Ceremony - 1:00 p.m. - Wharton Center, MSU campus, East Lansing, MI

JULY

- Osteopathic Medical Student Research Conference - Kellogg Center, MSU Campus, East Lansing, MI - For more information call 517-353-7785.
- Michigan Association of Osteopathic Family Physicians conference - Boyne Mountain, Boyne Falls, MI. MSUCOM welcome barbeque on Thursday evening.

SEPTEMBER

- Silverfest Weekend Events – celebrating the silver anniversary of the Class of 1982 and honoring the Classes of ’77, ’87, ’92 – includes a reception, continuing medical education, tailgate and the Pittsburgh/MSU football game on Saturday: East Lansing, MI
- Osteopathic Open Golf Tournament to benefit MSUCOM students’ loan funds, educational improvements and Alumni Association: Eagle Eye Golf Course, Bath, MI
- American Osteopathic Association Conference (AOA). Alumni luncheon and evening reception on October 1, San Diego, CA
JOIN US
in celebrating
the classes of
'77, '82, '87, '92, '97

SILVERFEST 2007
September 14-15
MSU vs. Pittsburgh

OSTEOPATHIC OPEN 2007
September 21
Eagle Eye Golf Course

For more information please visit
our web site at:
www.com.msu.edu

SAVE THE DATE
Silverfest & Osteopathic Open

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