Volume 16 Number 2

THE • WVSOM MAGAZINE

A Publication of the West Virginia School of Osteopathic Medicine

THE LEGACY OF EXCELLENCE CONTINUES

ALSO IN THIS ISSUE:
NEW RURAL HEALTH WORLD RANKINGS
OUT OF AFRICA: A MEMOIR
A HIGHER CALLING
AND...

2008 GRADUATION CEREMONY AND SPRING AWARDS

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CONTENTS

WVSOM Newsmakers 2
Around Campus 6
Out There 10
In My Own Words 11
WVSOM Named One of Best Med Schools. . 12
Researcher Says WVSOM Has Right Formula 13
Out of Africa 14
Higher Calling 18
WVSOM 2008 Commencement 20
WVSOM Foundation: 5 For 5 Update 25

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ON THE COVER:
The Legacy of Excellence continues at WVSOM as the institution is named one of the best medical schools in America by U.S.News & World Report magazine for the tenth consecutive year.

FROM THE PRESIDENT

Hello and greetings from the West Virginia School of Osteopathic Medicine.

The legacy of excellence continues at our institution. We were recently honored to be named one of the best medical schools in America for the tenth consecutive year in the *U.S.News & World Report's* "Best Graduate Schools" guidebook.

Also in this issue of the magazine, we celebrate with our thirty-first commencement ceremony as the Class of 2008 receive their diplomas and now continue a tradition of quality osteopathic medical care that has been the hallmark of WVSOM physicians dating back to our first graduating class.

We also discuss our students involvement in a worthwhile community program called "Communities in Schools," visit with a graduate and his wife who have given up the comforts of home for full-time missionary work in Africa, and tell the story of a second-year student who leads a very interesting and inspirational double life.

I'm excited about the continued success of our "Five for Five" fundraising campaign. This has been a very popular endeavor and many names have been added to the Donor Tree located in the Tech Center. If you are looking for a unique and lasting way to contribute to the future of WVSOM, I would suggest you look into this worthwhile undertaking.

It's a dynamic time to be at WVSOM. I hope these articles and stories provide a small sampling of the enthusiasm that abounds on our campus.

Enjoy the magazine!

Olen E. Jones, Jr., PhD
President

Foster (right)

DR. FOSTER WINS RURAL HEALTH AWARD

Robert W. Foster, DO, Associate Dean for Predoctoral Clinical Education at the West Virginia School of Osteopathic Medicine, was recently honored with a West Virginia state Rural Health Award.

Dr. Foster received the "Judith C. Kandzari Award" from the statewide West Virginia Rural Health Education Partnership (WVRHEP) programs and Area Health Education Centers (AHECS). Foster was presented the award by Dr. Brian Noland, Chancellor for the West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission, during the Annual WVRHEP/AHEC Awards and Recognition Dinner on January 28 in Charleston, WV.

"This award is a tribute to WVSOM's commitment to and accomplishments in rural health," said Dr. Foster. "West Virginia patients are seeing the impact WVSOM graduates are having in the areas of the state with the greatest need."

"I believe this award should really go to all of our rural adjunct faculty, who are the heart and soul of our clinical training program, and one of the big keys to our school's success," Foster pointed out.

The award is dedicated to the life of Judith Kandzari, a WVU School of Nursing faculty member who was tragically killed in an automobile accident while returning from a rural site visit. Her passion and commitment to rural health were an example to many.

Previous award winners include retired WVSOM Personnel Director John Mooney, and Helen Baker, PhD, WVSOM Professor of Educational Development.

Jones

DR. JONES HONORED WITH STATE SENATE AWARD

The West Virginia State Senate paid tribute to WVSOM President Olen Jones, PhD, in March with a resolution to honor his efforts on behalf of the school.

"The school contributes more primary care physicians for rural areas of our state than anyone else," said Jesse Guills, R-Greenbrier, also pointing out that WVSOM makes a huge economic impact on the Greenbrier Valley.

"And without Dr. Jones, none of those would have been achieved. He has had a constant love and commitment to the betterment of health care in this state," added Sen. Guills.

Lawmakers used the school as the base of operations a few summers ago for interim meetings. "I can tell you if you went back today, you would see even more advancements, new buildings, new technology, something you would be proud of," Guills said.

Guills said Dr. Jones' replacement will have their work cut out for them. "Dr. Jones has done a beautiful job of interweaving into the community the staff and students of that fine institution."

Hinerman-Mulroy

SECOND-YEAR STUDENT GARNERS ATTENTION FOR WATER STUDY

Research by Ashley Hinerman-Mulroy, OMSII, found trace amounts of penicillin, tetracycline and vancomycin in the Ohio River — and her home tap water.

Years before a recent Associated Press investigation revealed trace amounts of prescription drugs found in the nation's water supply, Ashley Hinerman-Mulroy, OMSII, discovered the same thing.

Hinerman-Mulroy, then a 17-year-old from Moundsville, WV, set out to study what could be found in her home tap water and the Ohio River.

Her research turned into a high school project at the private Linsly School in Wheeling, which she attended at the time. Her research led to the discovery of three antibiotics — penicillin, tetracycline and vancomycin — and other chemical compounds in the local water supply.

Her work earned her the Stockholm Junior Water Prize in 2000, which is given annually for an outstanding water project by a young person. She collected her water samples from various points along the Ohio River, including sites near wastewater treatment plants and outlets.

She noted areas near farms provided the highest concentrations of antibiotics, which are often used to cut rates of infection in livestock. Much like humans, animals also excrete residual medicines not absorbed by the body.

Regarding the impact of her study, Mulroy said it prompted her to have a greater interest in her health and that of her family. She also pays more attention to the water she drinks and to the food she eats since completing her study.

Ward (right)

DR. WARD WINS ACOFP AWARD

Kelli M. Ward, DO, WVSOM Class of 1996, received an honor during the American College of Osteopathic Family Physicians (ACOFP) Annual Convention this past March in Denver, Colorado.

Dr. Ward was presented the ACOFP's 2008 "Michael Avallone, DO, Young Physician of the Year Award" for demonstrating outstanding leadership as a young physician in service to ACOFP and to the osteopathic family medicine profession. The award is dedicated to the memory of ACOFP past president Dr. Michael Avallone, a family physician from Pennsylvania.

Henderson

Fisher

SECOND-YEAR STUDENTS WIN SOMA RESEARCH FELLOWSHIP

Aaron Henderson and Jason Fisher (both OMSII) have been awarded a Student Osteopathic Medical Association Research Fellowship for their work investigating changes in salivary biomarkers after OMT.

Students from all U.S. osteopathic medical schools are eligible for this fellowship and their proposal was selected for funding from this pool. The award is sponsored by the SOMA and funding is provided by the Osteopathic Heritage Foundation and The Osteopathic Research Center.

Comeaux

DR. COMEAUX PUBLISHES BOOK ON HARMONIC HEALING

Zachary Comeaux, DO, Professor of OMM, is publishing a new book called "Harmonic Healing: A guide to facilitated oscillatory release and other rhythmic myofascial methods."

The book reviews the use of oscillation, vibration and percussion through historic and contemporary approaches to bodywork, including osteopathy in the U.S. and worldwide. It then develops a physiologic rationale for its effectiveness.

The book would be of interest as a postgraduate refinement of OMM, to scientists wanting to contribute to developing the future of OMM theory and understanding of mechanisms, as well as those interested in osteopathic history. It is being published through Random House and can be found online at www.randomhouse.com.

Dr. Comeaux also had his article "Even Though You're Choking on It, It's All in Your Mind: An osteopathic perspective on globus hystericus" published in the AAO Journal, Volume 18 Number 1, March 2008.

Lt. Col. Gum

LT. COL. ROBERT GUM SPEAKS ON TOPIC OF BIOLOGICAL WARFARE

Lt. Col. Robert Gum, DO, Chief of U.S. Army Medical Research Institute of Infectious Diseases at Fort Detrick, Maryland, spoke to the WVSOM community this past March.

Dr. Gum, a 1984 WVSOM graduate, spoke on the history of chemical and biological warfare around the world. The Institute for Infectious Diseases conducts basic and applied research on biological threats resulting in medical solutions to protect military service members, and is the lead medical research laboratory for the U.S. Biological Defense Research Program.

The Institute plays a key role as the only laboratory in the Department of Defense equipped to safely study highly hazardous infectious agents requiring maximum containment at the highest bio safety level.

The event was sponsored by the Association of Military Osteopathic Physicians and Surgeons and the Pathology Club.

Wells

DR. WELLS RECEIVES HEPC MINI-GRANT

The West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission announced it has awarded eight mini-grants of up to $4,500 each to researchers at six different state universities. Jason E. Wells, PhD, Associate Professor in the Department of Structural Biology at the West Virginia School of Osteopathic Medicine, was among the award winners.

The mini-grants, which were awarded through a competitive application process, are intended to assist faculty members with the preparation of research or research equipment proposals for submission to external funding agencies or foundations.

According to Dr. Paul L. Hill, vice chancellor for science and research, the mini-grants help researchers develop stronger, more-competitive proposals for funding their work. "One of the commission's goals is to increase West Virginia's competitive research infrastructure," said Hill. "As we've seen through this program, a relatively modest investment of state funds can lead to large awards from federal or private sources," he said, adding the resulting proposals are often ultimately funded for hundreds of thousands of dollars.

For more information about the commission's science and research programs and services, visit www.wvresearch.org.

Steele

DR. STEELE HONORED AS FACULTY MERIT FOUNDATION FINALIST

Karen M. Steele, DO, FAAO, Associate Dean for Osteopathic Medical Education at the West Virginia School of Osteopathic Medicine, was recently honored as one of five finalists for the Faculty Merit Foundation of West Virginia's top teaching honor.

The Faculty Merit Foundation created the "Professor of the Year" award in 1984 to recognize the achievements of teachers at West Virginia's various higher education institutions. This year, the Foundation received 15 nominations from colleges and universities across the state. Interviews were held on January 17 and the finalists were recognized during the Foundation's annual banquet at the Cultural Center on March 4 in Charleston, WV.

"Putting together the nomination packet was a rewarding journey across the thirty years of my teaching career," explains Dr. Steele. "Being chosen as a finalist among this prestigious collection of West Virginia's finest educators will always be one of the high points of my professional life."

The Professor the of Year receives a $10,000 cash prize, while the runner-up receives a $1,000 cash prize. The remaining finalists receive a cash prize of $500. Past Faculty Merit

Foundation finalists from WVSOM include Dr. James Nemitz, Associate Dean for Preclinical Sciences, who took home the Foundation's top award in 2000.

"Within the last eight years, WVSOM has been honored to have two Faculty Merit Foundation finalists," said Dean Michael Adelman, DO, JD. "This validates the quality and reputation of our faculty."

Surber

DR. SURBER DISCUSSES MEDICAL RESEARCH

Joseph Surber, DO, WVSOM Class of 2001, spoke at WVSOM on April 21 on the importance of physician involvement in research as well as the national trends in medical research.

Dr. Surber also shared the different ways that physicians can benefit from conducting research in their practices. "Sharing our exciting research experience with others is a win-win," Dr. Surber said. "We show medical students the need for research in medicine and stress the importance of medical research to promoting the future of patient care."

Dr. Surber is currently Chief Medical Officer of Southeast Regional Research Group, a Georgia-based organization. He is board certified in Family Medicine and holds faculty positions with the Medical College of Georgia and Mercer University. He has been conducting medical research since 2005 in the following therapeutic areas: Cardiology, Dermatology, Gastroenterology, Gynecology, Infectious Disease, Nephrology, Neurology, Pulmonology, Rheumatology and Wound Care.

For additional information, visit the SERRG, Inc. home page at http://www.serrg.com.

Shoemaker

WVSOM GRADUATE RECEIVES HEALTH SCIENCE SCHOLARSHIP

Misty R. Shoemaker, DO, of Huntington, WV is a recipient of the 2007-2008 Health Sciences Scholarship which is awarded by the West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission.

The Health Science Scholarship program was authorized by the West Virginia Legislature in 1995. The program provides a scholarship incentive for students to complete their training in primary care and practice in underserved rural areas of the state.

The monetary value of the award is $20,000 and requires a two year commitment from the recipient to practice medicine in underserved rural areas of West Virginia upon graduation and completion of a four year post-graduate primary care residency program.

Shoemaker has been accepted into the Obstetrics and Gynecology residency program at Marshall University in Huntington.

WEST VIRGINIA SCHOOL OF OSTEOPATHIC MEDICINE

WVSOM
is currently seeking:

Internal Medicine
Geriatrician
Pathologist

WVSOM offers an excellent benefit package including the availability of fully paid malpractice insurance and loan repayment. Salary and faculty rank based on experience and training. Additional information about the position and WVSOM can be located on our website at www.wvsom.edu. WVSOM is an AA/EOE.

www.wvsom.edu/visitors

"The receipt of this grant demonstrates to the science community that WVSOM is serious about facilitating research," says NSF Grant recipient Jandy Hanna, PhD.

WVSOM Instructor Receives Prestigious NSF Grant

Jandy Hanna, PhD, Assistant Professor of Anatomy, has been awarded a prestigious National Science Foundation (NSF) grant to study primate locomotion.

The grant is for $76,400 spread over three years. "A very limited number of NSF grant applications are actually funded, so I consider this a great honor," says Dr. Hanna. "The grant allows me to continue my research and contribute to a better understanding of not only how our bodies work, but perhaps how we came to be this way."

The research will foster scientific research between multiple institutions and will be carried out at Duke University and WVSOM. Primates will be studied at the Duke Lemur Center in Durham, North Carolina and at the Michael E. Keeling Center for Cancer Research in Bastrop, Texas. Eight species of primates will be examined across a range of size, ecology, and morphology.

Dr. Hanna says the results of the study will provide quantitative data to help understand primate adaptations to climbing, and ultimately the evolution of specialized locomotion like bipedalism. The study also contributes to the development of scientific research in a geographically under-represented area of the country such as West Virginia, and will directly involve students from WVSOM and Duke.

"The receipt of this grant demonstrates to the science community that WVSOM is serious about facilitating research," she says.

With an annual budget of about $6 billion, the NSF is the funding source for approximately 20% of all federally supported basic research conducted by America's colleges and universities

All proposals are carefully reviewed by a scientist, engineer, or educator serving as an NSF Program Officer, and usually by a review panel consisting of experts in the particular field represented by the proposal. Dr. Hanna's grant fell under the jurisdiction of the Physical Anthropology program, which supports basic research in areas related to human evolution and contemporary human biological variation.

"We are very proud of Dr. Hanna's achievements. Her grant will also allow some of our medical students an opportunity to work on this research project with Dr. Hanna. This, in turn, helps to continually foster both an academic and a research culture at WVSOM," said Michael Adelman, DO, JD, Vice President for Academic Affairs and Dean at WVSOM.

WVSOM's Director of Professional Development and Research, Edward Bridges, PhD, sees a lot of positives coming out of the grant. "It's a very prestigious achievement. Dr. Hanna's grant is an example of one of the many exciting research projects occurring at WVSOM," he says.

Dr. Hanna's research article appeared in the journal *Science* (May 16 2008, Vol. 320, Issue 5878). *Science* is the academic journal of the American Association for the Advancement of Science and is considered one of the world's leading scientific journals. The peer-reviewed journal, first published in 1880, is circulated weekly and has an estimated readership of one million people.

ABCs and 1-2-3s

WVSOM recently hosted 78 kindergarten students from Lewisburg Elementary for a fun and educational field trip experience this past April.

The students and their teachers walked from LES to the WVSOM campus, accompanied by a group of WVSOM medical students. Upon arriving at WVSOM, the students were welcomed by their host for the day, Meg McKeon, EdD, WVSOM's Associate Dean for Student Affairs, who explained what doctors do. Students were then treated to a magic show and ventriloquism act by Dean Michael Adelman, DO, JD, Vice President for Academic Affairs.

Following lunch, students were then broken up into groups and investigated several aspects of medicine, including plastic skeletons, stethoscopes, blood pressure cuffs, and opthalmascopes. The youngsters also got to visit the WVSOM robot lab, where various aspects of nutrition and summer safety were discussed.

The visit was the brain child of WVSOM husband and wife faculty Edward Bridges, PhD, and Kristie Bridges, PhD, who were approached by LES about the field trip. "One goal of the visit was to make the children feel more comfortable during that dreaded trip to the doctor's office," explained Dr. Edward Bridges, Associate Professor of Pharmacology. "Our student doctors and laboratory clinical instructors did a wonderful job of putting the children at ease, and showing that doctors aren't scary."

"Another goal was to illustrate that learning can be fun and that with hard work anyone can become a doctor," he said.

LES teacher Linda Smith said: "We are always looking for interesting educational field trips for the children. We also like to involve parents whenever possible in order to capitalize on their expertise. Many of the WVSOM faculty and students have children who attend LES. WVSOM is right next door, so it's a golden opportunity to visit the campus," Smith said.

"It helps to ease the fear of physicians, and also allows the children to see what doctors do. Perhaps they might want to be doctors themselves some day."

Kindergarten children from Lewisburg Elementary School learned about the human skeleton, heartbeat, blood pressure, and eye and ear tests during their visit to WVSOM. The youngsters also enjoyed an opportunity to visit the school's robotic patient lab.

WVSOM Announces Spring Awards Ceremony Winners

PHOTO: Dr. Jones is joined by President Emeritus Dr. Roland Sharp in presenting Brian Hugggins, OMSI, with his award.

It was a day to celebrate academic achievement and outstanding performance as WVSOM recognized students, faculty and staff at its annual Spring Awards Ceremony on May 7, 2008. The awards and winners are as follows:

- Dr. Roland P. Sharp President's Award and Foundation Award of Excellence for Student Achievement – Brian Huggins, first-year medical student from Wheeling, WV.
- Professor Emeritus Recognition – Dr. Marlene Wager.
- President's Outstanding Faculty Awards – Dr. Andrea Nazar, Clinical Sciences, and Dr. Peter Ward, Basic Sciences.
- President's Award of Excellence for Employee Achievement – Barbara Bragg, Jane Bryant, Stella Dodrill, Deborah Hughes, Elayne Brown, Tiffany Burns, Judy Galloway, Joyce Martin, William Alder, Nicholas Dean, and Charles Miller.
- Outstanding Researcher of the Year – Dr. Helen Baker.
- Atlas Club Golden Key Award – Dr. Jason Wells, and Dr. James Kribs.
- Fredric W. Smith Memorial Scholarship – Kristin Mack, first-year medical student from Charleston, WV.
- WVSOM Family Practice Scholarship – Kristin Mack.
- WVSOM Alumni Association Scholarship – Teah Bayless, a second-year student from Morgantown, WV, and James Lennon, a second-year student from Warm Springs, Georgia.
- James R. Stookey, DO, Manipulative Medicine Scholarship – Second-year medical student Kristin Mills of Arlington, VA.
- Paul Kleman, DO, Family Practice Student Award – Michelle Abe, second-year medical student from Morgantown.
- Family Medicine Osteopathic Case Study Award – Third-year medical student Lisa Kessler of Rainelle, WV.
- Russell C. McCaughan Scholarship – Alexandra Barr, first-year medical student from Alexandria, VA.
- MOSS Scholarship – First-year medical students Dillon Stein from North Huntingdon, Pennsylvania; Emily Hall from Spearfish, South Dakota; and Angela Kavenaugh from Duvall, Washington.
- Loretta Moore Memorial Award – Donald Tait, first-year medical student from Raleigh, North Carolina.
- Randy Dailey Memorial Award – Second-year medical student Teah Bayless and Elizabeth Waldman from Alderson, WV.
- Greenbrier Military School Alumni Association Scholarship – First-year students Matthew Cauchi from Mt. Sinai, New York and Ellie Coonrod from Grand Junction, Colorado.
- ER Club Scholarship – Amanda Overstreet, first-year medical student from Flower Mound, Texas.
- WVSOM Diversity Task Force Scholarship – Jessica Smith, first-year medical student from Indianapolis, Indiana.
- Fredric W. Smith Community Service Award – Second-year medical student Katie Holmes of Arlington, TX.
- Student DO of the Year Award – Matt Bullock, third-year medical student from Follansbee, WV.

WVSOM Establishes Award in Honor of Departing President

PHOTO: Dr. Jones (left) accepts a plaque commemorating the establishment of the Olen E. Jones Leadership Award from second-year medical student Michael Brackman.

WVSOM has established the "Olen E. Jones Leadership Award" in honor of its current president, who will be leaving the school in January 2009.

According to Meg McKeon, EdD, Associate Dean for Student Affairs at WVSOM, the award was created at the urging of second-year medical student Michael Brackman, the leader of the school's Student Government Association, to recognize Dr. Jones for his outstanding contributions to WVSOM and osteopathic medical education.

"The student body wanted to express their appreciation for the vision and leadership Dr. Jones has shown in his 20-plus years as President of our school. The students recognize, due to Dr. Jones' efforts, WVSOM is one of the best medical schools in the country and has achieved a level of excellence that will benefit our students for years to come," said Dr. McKeon.

At WVSOM's annual Spring Awards ceremony on May 7, Brackman announced the establishment of the award, saying: "For more than 20 years, Dr. Olen Jones has given himself unselfishly to WVSOM. He has had the courage to make tough decisions, create positive change, hire and promote the best faculty and staff, and to communicate and build support and acceptance for WVSOM and osteopathic medical education in West Virginia.

"Through his leadership Dr. Jones has transformed WVSOM into one of the best medical schools in the country, with state-of-the-art facilities and a faculty and staff second to none," Brackman noted.

Brackman then announced that the WVSOM Student Government Association would present the Olen E. Jones Leadership Award annually beginning in 2009 to a WVSOM student who demonstrates excellence in osteopathic medical education, commitment to service, and the development of the whole person.

Turning to face Dr. Jones, Brackman wrapped up his presentation by saying: "On behalf of the current student body and those who will benefit from your vision and leadership for years to come – thank you."

"Through his leadership Dr. Jones has transformed WVSOM into one of the best medical schools in the country, with state-of-the-art facilities and a faculty and staff second to none."

~ second-year medical student Michael Brackman

Above: Front row L to R: Stephanie Woodard, Amber Bishop, Melissa Wyatt, Jessica Puckett, Kristine Tofts, Natasha Warnick, Dora Gonzalez, Shaun Peters
Middle row L to R: Brent Woodard, Heidi Schmidt, Sarah Shaw, Heather Daniels, Mark Cabrera, Reyne Herold, Annie Culver, Maryann Allen, Dr. David Allen, Jane Rice, Richard Rice. Back row L to R: Dillon Stein, Brent Hufford, Dr. Kent Hufford, Karin Cook, Ben Chopski, Clarissa Renken, Ann Marie Treesh, Doyle Treesh, Tony George:

WVSOM Students Take Mission Trips to Dominican Republic, Honduras

Above: Amber Bishop, OMSII, and Annie Culver, OMSI, checking in a family of 4.

The PAX student organization at the West Virginia School of Osteopathic Medicine recently made a mission trip to the Dominican Republic.

Seventeen students, two physicians, a nurse practitioner and a translator made the trip during the student's Spring Break on March 15 – 22, 2008. During the group's four day stay in Neyba in the Dominican Republic, they treated over 1,200 patients for various ailments such as ear infections, respiratory infections, and various types of skin infections.

Students were housed in a modest missionary compound in the mountainous area just north of Neyba. Local volunteers from World Vision and the Community Service Alliance provided them with three meals per day, clean facilities and transportation during their stay. After four long days of hard work, the students took a day to relax in the sun on one of the local beaches outside of Santo Domingo before traveling back to the states.

According to second-year medical student Christian Kegg, the group even had the opportunity to practice osteopathic manipulation and help many of the locals with back, knee problems and constipation. "This trip helped me to grow as a future physician and as a person. Every medical student and physician should take part in an experience like this at least once in their careers."

The trip was sponsored by Fritz's Pharmacy, Community Service Alliance, World Vision and various individual sponsors.

Also over Spring Break, the WVSOM Christian Medical and Dental Association (CMDA) made a mission trip to Tegucigalpa, Honduras on March 15-23.

Twenty students, five doctors, a nurse practitioner and a physician's assistant came together to give free healthcare to the people of Tegucigalpa. They treated a variety of diseases including strep throat, fungus, and scabies, and were able to perform osteopathic manipulation. Students also assisted in the removal of warts, and house calls were made for those people who were weren't physically able to attend the clinic.

Almost every patient was treated for parasites and was given multivitamins, which were donated by Fritz's Pharmacy along with several other medications. A total of 1,145 people were treated.

The group set up two clinics in two different villages in order to reach as many people as possible, since most traveled by foot or horse to get there. "I personally found this as an eye opening experience and plan to go on many more medical mission trips in the future," said second year medical student Amber Bishop. "We were able to travel to the city of Tegucigalpa to shop and sightsee, including visiting the sacred Jesus Statue that overlooks the city."

The trip was organized through Word of Life, an international evangelistic organization which provided housing, transportation, and food throughout the week. Bishop also thanked St. Catherine of Siena Catholic Church, St. Charles Catholic Church, and the faculty, staff, and students at WVSOM for all their generous donations.

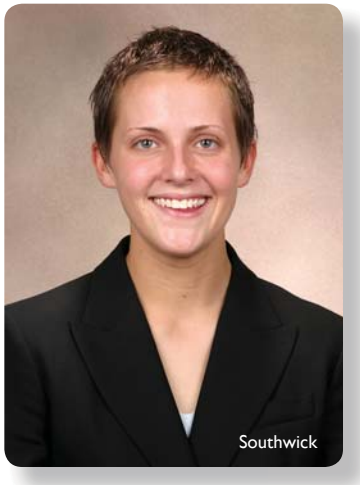
IN MY OWN WORDS...

By Frances Southwick, OMS II

HOW PATIENTS TEACH THEIR DOCTORS ABOUT HUMANISM IN MEDICINE

Humanism
(hyū′mu-nĭz-um) *n.*

Medicine. The concept that concern for human interests, values, and dignity is of the utmost importance (in caring for) the sick.


Southwick

I was an eager third-year medical student starting my third rotation, bright-eyed and full of curiosity. Months earlier, I had learned the ninth floor of General Hospital was home to my love: psychiatry. I had examined the commercial carpet, the plastic bumpers along the walls, the tall, thick, tightly-locked doors, and the beckoning entrance to the Inpatient Psychiatric Unit, complete with a pane of one-way glass and a buzzer. I could hardly wait to begin. The first morning, I arrived an hour and a half early and staved off my painful waiting by pacing around the outpatient half of the ninth floor, hoping to catch a glimpse of a therapist, doctor, or – what I most eagerly awaited – a real patient.

I was eventually buzzed in and met the friendly staff. I began stealing glances of the inpatient crowd. Morning report was the most exciting thing I could have imagined: everyone discussing details of each patient, bouncing ideas off one another, and determining diagnoses and plans for treatment.

We worked our way down the list of patients that were carefully printed on the whiteboard, when one caught my eye. We will call him Jim Starlee, a 72-year-old man hospitalized for suicidal thoughts. His family had committed him because he refused to eat or move, and they were at a loss. This was Jim's fifth hospitalization for major depression.

After a few days of unsuccessful pharmacologic treatment, the psychiatrist decided to treat Jim with electroconvulsive therapy the following morning. I was intrigued. Everyone knew I would jump at an opportunity to see ECT performed; I was interested in anything that had its roots planted in the ninth floor.

That afternoon, I walked into Jim's room with a spring in my step, ready to obtain a thorough history and talk with him about his thoughts regarding the procedure. I stepped into his room and found Jim lying motionless, paralyzed in his bed, eyes full, despondent.

"Hiya, Jim! My name is _____. I wanted to come ask you a few questions. Is that okay?"

He had been staring straight up at the ceiling, and now averted his eyes slowly and slightly away from me. I noted his sparse white hair, his gaunt face, the smell of many days gone by without bathing. We both were in uniforms – mine a white, crisp jacket with pockets brimming with information; Jim's a flimsy, stained, pale-blue gown with the neck hanging loosely below his clavicles. His eyes overflowed suddenly, his expression the same. His lips moved slightly.

"Maybe come another…maybe another time."

My chest began caving in.

"Oh, okay! Is there anything I can do for you, Jim?"

He lay motionless. I excused myself and walked to the elevator, my breath shallow.

The next morning, I arrived early again, ECT research articles filing through my mind. I was armed and ready to answer any question the doctor may ask. I suited up in the obligatory white bunny suit, surgical blue cap, booties and gloves. The one-size-fits-all leggings bunched up around my knees, reminiscent of a bleached-out Rainbow Brite costume.

I found Jim in the pre-op area, nurses (some hurried, some nonchalant and yawning) placing IVs, ripping tape, and outfitting Jim in similar garb to mine. As all the preparations were made for the procedure, I stood alongside his bed as closely as I could, my head racing with facts about the theories of ECT's mechanism of action. I suddenly was stricken by that same caving-in of my chest. As we wheeled Jim to the operating room, I walked along at head level with him, trying to understand everything I was experiencing.

Soon, we came to an abrupt stop in the operating room. Jim was still motionless, appearing paralyzed, eyes full of tears, a bit stiffer than he had been the day before. The doctor burst in discussing ECT and quizzing me about neurotransmitters and succinylcholine. I was firing back all my knowledge, relaying all the information I had gathered the night before. The room was a machine. I watched as every nurse, tech and physician worked like gears: reading the monitors, pumping fluids, checking levels. I turned back toward Jim's face, his tears beginning to fall. I willed his eyes toward mine, grabbed his hand, and asked, "Are you scared?" His eyes became those of a six-year-old boy, his lips quivered, and he slowly nodded, tears streaming into his ears. I held his hand with both of mine, a clear breech of the sterile attitude of the OR; but I didn't care about anything other than comforting Jim in that terrifying moment.

I believe this moment embarrassed the hospital staff and the physician. Everything became a bit quieter and gentler as I held Jim's hand and he drifted off into unconsciousness. I will always remember Jim, and I will always remember how his childlike fears reminded all of us in the operating room that day why we were there.

Jim.

WVSOM

RANKED IN *U.S.NEWS & WORLD REPORT* BEST GRADUATE SCHOOLS

The LEGACY OF EXCELLENCE continues at the West Virginia School of Osteopathic Medicine.

U.S.News & World Report magazine's graduate school rankings include WVSOM for the tenth consecutive year, marking a decade of excellence for the Lewisburg institution. WVSOM is ranked in two categories in the new 2009 listings: Primary Care and Family Medicine. Only one other osteopathic medical school is ranked in as many categories in the U.S. News report as WVSOM.

The string of consecutive rankings by U.S. News confirms WVSOM's reputation as one of the premier medical schools in the nation, according to WVSOM President Olen E. Jones, Jr., PhD.

"The school has now been ranked 10 years running – further evidence that the legacy of excellence continues at WVSOM," remarked Dr. Jones. "To be ranked among the top medical schools in the country time after time is a remarkable achievement, and certainly reflects the hard work of many dedicated people here at our institution."

"The teamwork and positive attitude shown by our faculty, staff, and students reflects the strength and quality of our medical education program," says Dr. Jones, pointing out that WVSOM has appeared in the prestigious rankings each year since 1998.

The rankings are based on expert opinion concerning program quality as well as statistical indicators that measure the quality of a school's faculty, research, and students. Opinions were gathered from deans, program directors, senior faculty members, and professionals in the medical field directly involved in hiring new physicians.

The rankings for "America's Best Graduate Schools 2009" are available in the U.S.News' "Best Graduate Schools" guidebook, and in the April 7 edition of the *U.S.News & World Report* magazine. You can also access the rankings on-line at the U.S. News website http://www.usnews.com.

Leading Rural Health Researcher Says WVSOM Has Right Formula

by Jeff Cobb

Robert Bowman, MD, is a man with a mission.

One of the country's leading researchers in physician distribution patterns, Dr. Bowman thinks the nation needs to see dramatic increases in the number of family doctors practicing in rural America. By studying trends over a number of years, he is able to see which specialties are gaining in number, which are declining, and where the highest concentrations of doctors are located in different areas across the country.

In his opinion, there are not nearly enough primary care physicians, especially ones practicing in the sparsely populated areas that need them the most. And medical schools aren't focusing their attention or resources on addressing those shortages.

But according to Bowman, there is one school in America that is getting it right.

"When I first began compiling my statistics nearly 10 years ago, I noticed that one school in particular consistently came out on top in terms of rural underserved practice," Dr. Bowman recalls. It was then he first came in contact with the West Virginia School of Osteopathic Medicine.

It was obvious from the numbers that WVSOM was on the right track. "With very little fanfare, they have managed to produce some extraordinary results," he noted. His studies indicated that WVSOM had the highest percentage of rural physicians in the world, with 38% of graduates in rural locations. "WVSOM graduates make up only 0.34% of the total United States physician population, yet account for1.32% of the all U.S. rural physicians—that's outstanding."

Statistics also reveal that 28% of WVSOM's Family Medicine graduates practice in a medically underserved areas. "This means that many WVSOM physicians practice in areas that suffer the worse shortages of health care specialists. The national average for medical schools nationwide in this category is only 3.7%, so WVSOM is nearly eight times the national average," Bowman states.

He found WVSOM graduates shy away from urban locations and instead tend to gravitate to rural underserved locations at much higher rates than other colleges. "This is a prescription that treats West Virginia's most pressing health access problems," he says.

"In my opinion, the magnitude of impact on society by medical schools like WVSOM is more dramatic than the results achieved by some researchers who have won Nobel prizes with less dramatic outcomes," Bowman theorized.

Medical schools waste tremendous resources on primary care by not picking the right students during the admissions process. "This is one area WVSOM has excelled in. School administrators recognized early on what sort of student they needed to fulfill their mission, and then set about admitting them."

Once the right students are admitted, the focus then shifts to providing an education that increases the likelihood they will choose rural practice upon graduation. According to Bowman, such an education emphasizes opportunities to experience rural practice, information about rural career decisions, peer support for students' rural interests, advice from rural physicians, and rural-oriented financial incentives.

WVSOM addresses those kinds of concerns in a clinical training program for third and fourth year students that emphasize exposure to medical practice within the state's borders. WVSOM's curricular emphasis on rural family practice and its statewide network of dedicated preceptors instill in its students an appreciation of the unique benefits of West Virginia culture and rural healthcare.

The next step is getting those students choosing rural practice to do so within the state. "West Virginia faces great difficulties retaining physicians in-state for a number of reasons," Bowman points out. "It shares multiple state borders. Many of the states have greater economic power and can steal West Virginia graduates. Nearby states such as North Carolina invest millions a year in recruitment efforts," he says. But despite these obstacles, WVSOM has demonstrated that favorable retention levels can be achieved.

L to R: Lorenzo Pence, DO, Director of Graduate Medical Education; Bowman; Bill Shires, Assistant Director of Graduate Medical Education; Elaine Soper, PhD, Director of Educational Development.

Child development and education on the secondary level is also important to increasing long range rural physician distribution, according to Bowman. Failure to address local and state needs can result in poorer results. "There is nurturer, care-giver mentality about those who practice medicine in rural areas. And you have to foster that and recognize that in medical school candidates. If you don't actively recruit those kinds of folks –folks who are givers—you will never impact your retention rates," Bowman predicts.

Bowman advises that medical school admissions are a reflection of changes in America at all levels – from birth to admission. "In the past decade, admissions of students with well-to-do parents have increased 80%, while lower and middle income admissions have declined by 25-40%. So the greatest increases involve the richest and the greatest decreases involve the poorest," he notes. "That's something that we have to turn around if we want to impact rural physician distribution on any meaningful level."

Bowman runs the World of Rural Medical Education and Physician Workforce Studies websites, (http://www.unmc.edu/Community/ruralmeded) which offers findings from his research as well as tools, links and other information related to better distribution of physicians in the United States.

OUT OF AFRICA

story by TOM ASHER, DO and KAREN ASHER, DO

On March 18, 2008, we left Toledo early in the morning for Chicago. Two of our good friends and supporters, Bonnie and Theresa, drove us from Michigan to Chicago so that we could take 70 pounds in each suitcase instead of 50 lbs. And 70 lbs we took, in all six suitcases. We had the medical supplies from our office and many donations from generous supporters. There were all kinds of shelf stable foods like mac & cheese, canned hamburger, and pouches of chicken.

When we arrived in Chicago we had been warned that we may be refused the three bags each as they were cutting back on the special treatment that missionaries usually get. We had no problems, however, we had weighed the suitcases and they accepted all six without question. They also arrived in Sierra Leone without a problem.

Steve Ullom, our traveling companion from Global Partners, was not so fortunate. He missed his Indianapolis flight and had to fly to NY instead, then nearly missed his connection to London and finally made it to join us on the flight to Sierra Leone with only 10 minutes to spare. Needless to say Tom and I were getting a bit nervous as we didn't know where we were going or if someone was going to meet us when we arrived.

Editor's Note: Thomas Asher, DO, WVSOM Class of 1987, has been in private practice with his wife Karen Asher, DO, a 1987 graduate of Ohio University College of Osteopathic Medicine, for the last 14 years in Toledo, OH. Recently, the Ashers made a major life changing decision. They decided to close their family practice office in Toledo and devote themselves to full time mission work in the town of Kamakwie in Sierra Leone, Africa. In Kamakwie, they will serve as directors of Kamakwie Wesleyan Hospital. The following is a first-person account of the Ashers experience.

Drs. Tom and Karen Asher (shown above with their four children and at right) recently made a major life-changing decision when they decided to close their family practice office in Ohio and devote themselves to full-time mission work at Kamakwie Wesleyan Hospital in Sierra Leone, Africa.

We were met at the airport in Lungi by Pastor Usman. He saw to it that getting through customs went well. Then he took us to the ferry in the nick of time to run on with our bags. Unfortunately our auto didn't make it and had to be brought over the next day. He arranged for us to be picked up and taken to Freetown where we stayed in a lovely hotel. It had electricity (sometimes) and running water (often) and Internet (most of the time).

We spent the rest of the week visiting the churches in Freetown. We were introduced and Tom and I were humbled as each congregation clapped and cheered when they heard that we were the doctors coming to serve in Kamakwie. We have quite a few Muslims in our area but they seem to live peacefully with the Christians.

Finally it came time to leave for the hospital. We were accompanied by our nurse, Brimah Samura. We drove three hours on paved roads and five hours on roads that would better be described as ATV trails. Brimah is an excellent driver and attempted to answer all our questions while he maneuvered around pot holes that were large enough to swallow our pick-up truck. He was very gracious and we loved him immediately.

Brimah spoke with such respect of the doctors and the employees of the hospital and the work they do there. He explained with pride how, since the civil war ended, the country was improving with immunization programs and clinics and education programs. He is away from his family more days than not, traveling to the areas served by the medical facilities of the Wesleyan Church.

We were so happy to finally see our new home and the hospital were we would be working. Many of the people of Freetown travel all the way to Kamakwie Wesleyan Hospital for their medical care because they trust the care there. Our hosts were very gracious; they housed not only us but also a work team from World Hope Canada. The compound has room for about 12 people. The work team from Canada was building a traditional birthing unit in a nearby village. They worked so hard in that 120 degree heat. (No, that is not a misprint. It was 120 in the afternoons with 95% humidity!)

We experienced so many things that were different and exciting and sometimes uncomfortable. We saw medical problems that we only read about in medical school. We experienced the loss of patients in a culture that expresses their grief very differently than we do. We struggled with the English that is very different from our English. We worshiped with the people from the community. We were inspired and encouraged by the worship with the hospital employees in morning chapel.

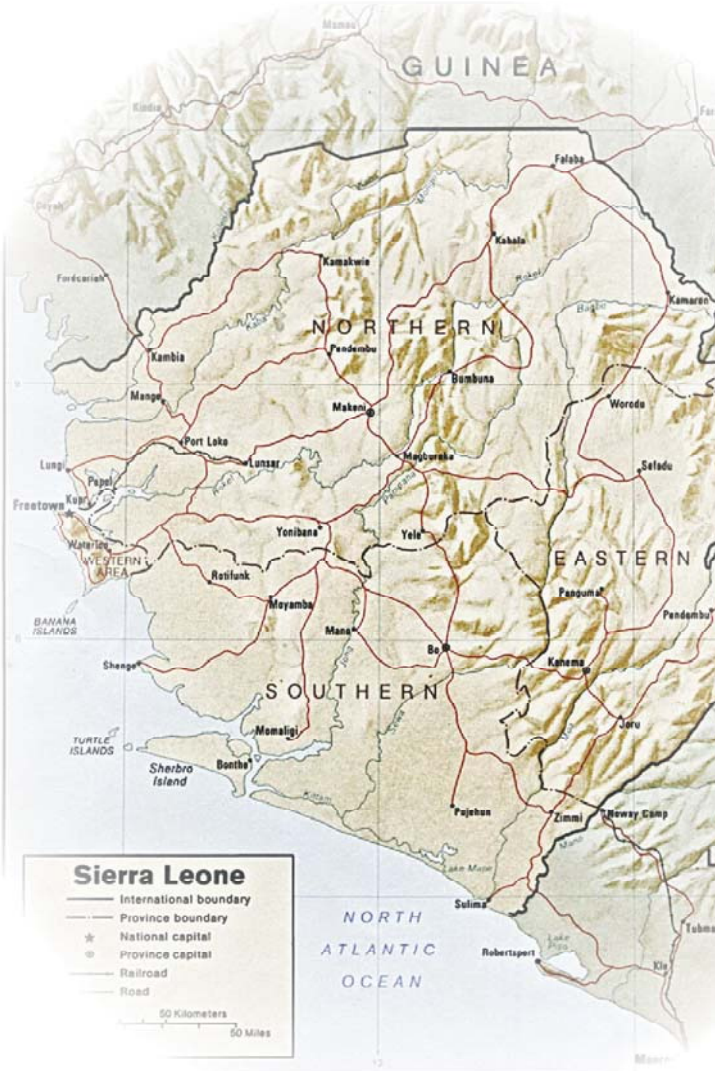
We saw so many things that needed repair and replacement. We also saw the way instruments and equipment were treated with such care and respect because they had been given by their friends from across the ocean. There are so many needs and yet they don't ask. They work so hard every day. They get far less in salary than they could get if they moved to a neighboring African country. And yet they continue to sacrifice, day after day.

While in Africa we hope to be able to introduce some U.S. medical students to tropical medicine. This is a great way to exchange information. The student gets a chance to see things that usually they only read about in text books, and the doctors and nurses get exposed to the current standards of medicine here in the U.S. through the student. We will also be training some medical students from Sierra Leone.

So far, the thing that stood out to us the most about our time in Africa is the hopeful spirit of the people. Life is hard in Sierra Leone. They have gone through a terrible civil war. But they refuse to be bitter. We have so much to be thankful for here in the U.S., yet these people have a sense of joy that we Americans would envy.

"We saw so many things that needed repair and replacement. We also saw the way instruments and equipment were treated with such care and respect because they had been given by their friends from across the ocean."

Tom Asher, DO, and Karen Asher, DO on their life in Sierra Leone, where they now serve as directors of Kamakwie Wesleyan Hospital.



higher calling

by RON LEMASTER, OMSII

I've been interested in medicine ever since I joined the Ceredo Fire Department and started running ambulance calls. I realized early on that one of my gifts is helping others, especially people in crisis. After a year of Paramedic school at Marshall University, I was working as a Paramedic for Cabell County EMS and then Kanawha County, where I spent most of my career.

It was 1997 that I felt a call to ministry. I was given the opportunity to fill in for my Pastor at Westmoreland United Methodist Church, the Sunday after Christmas 1997. It was an amazing experience to stand before a congregation and tell them about God's love. Still to this day, it's an amazing experience to get to share God with others.

Once I accepted the call to ministry, I believed that my path was settled. I would go to seminary and work towards a Master in Divinity while serving the United Methodist church as an Ordained Elder for the rest of my life. But God apparently had other plans for me.

I was appointed by the West Virginia Annual Conference to serve as a Chaplain at Cabell-Huntington Hospital. The Clinical Pastoral Education program trains clergy to serve the diverse community found at the hospital. We learn how to be a resource to both patients and staff in our assigned units. It was a great experience. I learned more than scripture. I learned how to listen to the needs of others and serve them without burning out. At Cabell, I was assigned to serve the ER, Cardiac Step down, Pediatric ICU, and ICU. I was there to console when a family received heart-breaking news from a solemn faced doctor, and I was there to celebrate when the news was good.

It was while serving as Chaplain that I felt my ministry was going to be different. I knew that I needed to at least attempt to go to medical school. I felt that God was calling me to serve him through preaching His word and also through the healing art of medicine. I was entering unchartered territory for clergy.

So after much prayer, deliberation, and long talks with my wife, I announced to my district superintendent that I wanted to go back to school and finish my undergraduate work and apply to medical school. Much to my surprise, he was very supportive. The only problem was that he didn't have a church to place me in while in school so that I could support myself and family.

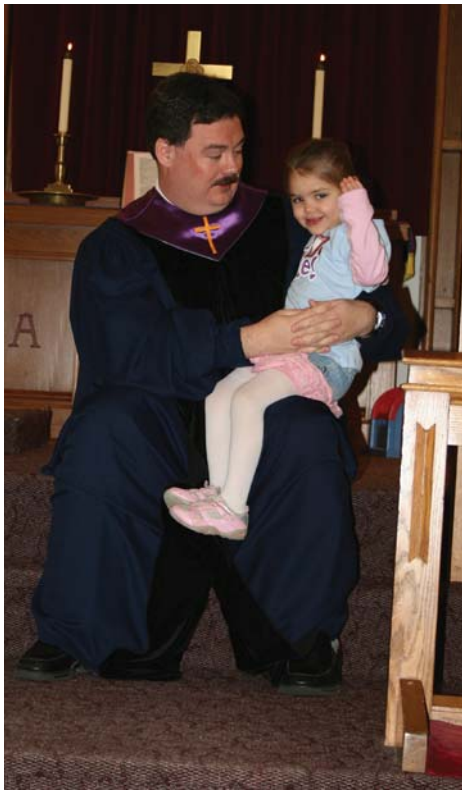
The closest available church was at least an hour from Huntington and Marshall University.

However, through a series of remarkable events, a church (Ceredo United Methodist Church) became available in my hometown just a couple of days before my last day in the Chaplain program. So, I became the student local Pastor at Ceredo and began taking the pre-requisites for medical school.

My wife and I made a trip to WVSOM in 2001 and quickly fell in love with the place. Even though we showed up alone on rather short notice, we still got the Grand Tour. Sarah Lively took the time to give the two of us the same tour that they give groups during open house. We knew that this friendly, supportive community was the place for me. After visiting and interviewing at several schools, I found no other school so warm and inviting.

The demands of serving a church and going to school have been difficult at times. I've had to miss classes occasionally to attend to emergencies in my flock, or miss events at church to ensure that I passed an upcoming exam. I've tried to find a balance. I have to say that the congregation of Ceredo UMC has been very supportive through my studies. While in undergrad, I was considered full-time. So I had responsibility to prepare for three services a week, two worship services and a bible study on Wednesday. Ceredo UMC has been served by student pastors for many years so the congregation understood and worked with me to ensure that I had time to complete my studies.

Soon after I was accepted to WVSOM, I told the church that I was going to have to step aside to attend medical school. They asked if I would be able to stay if my duties were reduced. It was an answer to prayer! My daughter was going into her last year of high school and it seemed rather unfair to uproot her and move her across the state. My wife had a very good job in one of the best hospitals in the state. My son had many friends that he didn't want to lose. So the church and I negotiated a contract that allowed me to live in Lewisburg through the week and serve my church family on the weekends. My family was able to stay in the parsonage. My daughter could finish her last year of high school with her friends. My wife could keep her job.



So for the last two years that has been what I have been doing. I must say that there are some advantages of this arrangement for me. When I am at school, I am at school; family distractions are limited because they are 169 miles west on I-64. My wife and I talk every night at 10 pm on the phone. She does a wonderful job of keeping me up to date without distracting me from my studies. I'm close enough that I can be home in the event of an emergency relatively quickly. I am available to any of my kids through the phone. We talk frequently. I work very hard all week at my studies so that I have time for my family and my church on the weekends.

My congregation has been good about not calling unless it is an emergency. Many will call my wife through the week and ask her to have me call them when I get back in town or they will send me an e-mail. Meetings are scheduled so that I can attend. Ceredo UMC has been wonderful about working with me to help me accomplish what I need for my ministry. That is what church is about, each one helping the other to get the training and help that they need to become the ministers that we are all called to be. I believe that we are all called to minister. Ministry can be anything from teaching a class, counseling a friend, or cleaning the church. We are all called to be of benefit to one another and this church has exemplified that belief in their support of me in my pursuit of becoming an osteopathic physician.

Let me say a word about my family…I am married to a wonderful woman named Debby. She works as an X-ray technician at Cabell-Huntington Hospital. We have one biological son, Ian. I have two step-daughters, Heather and Jennifer, from a previous marriage. I also have a step-son, Casey, and a step-daughter, Tina, from my current marriage. When we go out together, we look like the Brady Bunch!

I get asked fairly frequently how I do what I do. I wish I had a good answer. When I look back, I can see where God opened doors as I tried to walk the path for my life. From my appointment as a Chaplain, to my appointment to Ceredo UMC, to Ceredo's willingness to make it possible for my family to stay there while I studied here, God has made possible what I thought was impossible. All that was required of me was to do my best to have the faith to walk the path that He had set out before me.

I have had long nights were I wondered if it was all worth it. But God also gave me a wonderful, supportive wife and friends to help me through those times. I believe that when we step out in faith, God will help us and sustain us. If nothing else, I have the testimony of all that He has done for me so far and that is amazing.

WVSOM CELEBRATES COMMENCEMENT CEREMONY

Ninety-two students graduated from the West Virginia School of Osteopathic Medicine, receiving their Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine degrees during WVSOM's thirty-first annual commencement exercises on May 31, 2008 at the State Fair Event Center in Fairlea, WV.

WVSOM President Olen E. Jones, Ph.D., and Michael Adelman, D.O., J.D., Vice President for Academic Affairs and Dean, presided over the ceremonies. Brian Noland, PhD, Chancellor of the West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission, delivered the keynote address.

Dr. Noland pointed out that only 16 of 100 West Virginia high school students go on to earn a college degree, and reminded graduates to take the responsibility of mentorship seriously.

"Graduates, I challenge each of you to help change the future of those in the rural communities that you will serve and share the dream of education. Reach out to a neighbor, friend, or patient who is sitting on the fence, undecided about their future, and push them; encourage them to go to college," Dr. Noland implored. "If we are to change the future of our great state, we will only do so if you take this torch and pass it on."

Noland also urged graduates to be ambassadors for their school and state. "Some of you will stay in the rolling hills of West Virginia, and some of you will journey beyond these mountains. Regardless of where you will be, I encourage you to advance this great state," he said. "My hope is that you take up the challenges that we face as a state and make them your own.

The WVSOM Class of 2008 includes 49 West Virginians and others from as far away as Oregon, Montana, Oklahoma, Arizona, Washington, California, New Mexico, Alabama, Arkansas, and Hawaii. They will now report to internship programs at hospitals across the state, region, and nation to begin their respective careers. As a group, they will specialize in a wide variety of medical disciplines, with the majority selecting primary care specialties such as family medicine, pediatrics, internal medicine, and emergency medicine.

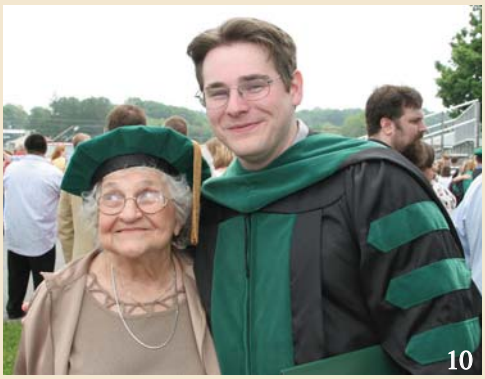
1 & 2: Before and After. WVSOM 2008 grads begin commencement week with a group photo and wrap it up with the hat toss.

3. Chancellor Brian Noland, Ph.D., addressed the graduates and their families in the keynote address.

4. President Olen Jones marches in to his final Commencement Ceremony. At his side is Sharon Rowe, Chair of the WVSOM Board of Governors.

"Some of you will stay in the rolling hills of West Virginia, and some of you will journey beyond these mountains. Regardless of where you will be, I encourage you to advance this great state."

Brian Noland, Ph.D., Chancellor
West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission



1. President Jones presents the hard-earned diploma to Phuong Le, DO.
2. WVSOM alumnus Tony Flaim, DO, hooded his son, Nathan Flaim, DO, keeping it all in the family.
3. Class President, Mike Matos, DO, imparts his final advice and encouragement to fellow classmates during the ceremony.
4. Faculty Marshal, John Schrieffer, PhD, leads the graduates in through a line-up of applauding faculty.
5. David Belcher, DO, appreciated the honor of being hooded by WVSOM's first president, Roland P. Sharp, DO.
6. Its thumbs up as Dwan Perry, DO, marches into the profession.
7. Giggling grads, Kristalyn Gallagher, DO, and Sarah Gore, DO.
8. Vishal Thakral, DO, Troy Tada, DO, and Ajay Patil, DO, have a tropical feeling, even here in the mountains!
9. Emily Griffith, DO, clowns with a future osteopathic student, Lily Sutton.
10. Justin Jeffries, DO, has his grandmother considering a new career.

1. Dr. Jones shares some time with Andy Battaglia, DO, and his wife, Alecia.

2. Enjoying the beautiful lawns on the WVSOM campus, a family romps during the grad picnic.

3. Overwhelmed by her two sons, Arthur and James, is Rachel Lagos, DO.

4. A noteworthy group, (l to r) Ajay Patil, DO, Vishal Thakral, DO, Ariz Anklesaria, DO, Manita Sawhney, DO and side-kick.

5. Lorenzo Pence, DO, and wife, Tina, mirror each other in both color and smiles.

6. Chris Wood, DO, wife Jennifer, and Dr. Jones swap laughs at the picnic on the alumni center patio.

7. Golfing around are Manita Sawhney, DO, several guests and Maanasi Puranik, DO.

8. The Berry Burgler, aka Alumni President "Jeep" Naum, DO, snatches a chocolate covered strawberry from registrar Sharon Howard.

2008 SENIOR AWARDS

THE DONALD NEWELL SR. MEMORIAL AWARD FOR THE OUTSTANDING GRADUATING SENIOR

Presented annually to the graduating senior student who best exemplifies the qualities of scholarship, osteopathic professional interest, leadership and citizenship. The recipient is chosen by his classmates.

Miguel Matos, DO.

HONOR GRADUATES:

Top 10% of the Graduating Class

Jeremy Benger, DO
Carrie Crigger, DO
Jarrod Curry, DO
Tyler Evans, DO
Kim Fairley, DO
Emily Griffith, DO
Rachel Lagos, DO
Porsche Lao, DO
Anthony Marshall, DO
Brandon Robinson, DO
Justin Weppner, DO

PSI SIGMA ALPHA:

National Osteopathic Scholastic Honor Society
Membership is open to those students in the top 15% of their class at the end of their pre-clinical training

Steven Anthony, DO
Sarah Bailes, DO
Jeremy Benger, DO
Carrie Crigger, DO
Tyler Evans, DO
Kim Fairley, DO
Emily Griffith, DO
Rachel Lagos, DO
Porsche Lao, DO
Anthony Marshall, DO
Brandon Robinson, DO
Justin Weppner, DO

SIGMA SIGMA PHI:

National Honorary Osteopathic Service Fraternity
Membership is open to all students and is based upon scholarship and service

Sarah Bailes, DO
Jeremy Benger, DO
Carrie Crigger, DO
Jarrod Curry, DO
Matthew Erck, DO
Tyler Evans, DO
Kimberly Fairley, DO
DeanAnn Farris, DO
Kelly Klocek, DO
Rachel Lagos, DO
Porsche Lao, DO
Mary Jane Liebling, DO
Anthony Marshall, DO
Ajay Patil, DO
James Paugh, DO
Kimberly Price, DO
Brandon Robinson, DO
Troy Tada, DO
Vishal Thakral, DO
Emily Thomas, DO
Christopher Wood, DO

AMERICAN MEDICAL WOMEN ASSOCIATION-GLASGOW-RUBIN ACHIEVEMENT CITATIONS

Sarah Bailes, DO
Rachel Lagos, DO
Kim Fairley, DO

OLEN E. JONES ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

Rachel Lagos, DO

OPAL PRICE SHARP MEMORIAL AWARD

Nathan Flaim, DO

DR. JOHN D. LATORELLA & MARIE L. MAZZIO MEMORIAL AWARD

Matthew Erck, DO
Brittany Laughlin, DO

DR. WILLIAM R. HOLMES SCHOLARSHIP

Justin Weppner, DO

GWEN CLINGMAN MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP

Mary Jane Liebling, DO

FAMILY MEDICINE III OMM CASE STUDY AWARD

Misty Shoemaker, DO

RAMS HEAD OP&P GTA AWARD

Emily Griffith, DO
Renee Schroeder, DO

MILITARY RECOGNTION

David Belcher, DO
Erin Brack, DO
Mark Crosby, DO
Elizabeth Crowell, DO
Matthew Crowell, DO
Cordell Davis, DO
Richard Fogle, DO
Ben Palmer, DO
Dawn Ruminski, DO
Justin Weppner, DO

DONNA JONES MORITSUGU AWARD

Scott Shoemaker

Above: Honor graduates attending the awards dinner include: Tyler Evans, DO, Jeremy Benger, DO, Jarrod Curry, DO, Rachel Lagos, DO, Emily Griffith, DO, Emily Thomas, DO, Carrie Crigger, DO, and Justin Weppner, DO. Not pictured are Kim Fairley, DO, Porsche Lao, DO, Anthony Marshall, DO, and Brandon Robinson, DO.

Right: Rachel Lagos, DO, accepts the first Olen E. Jones Achievement Award , presented by Philip McLaughlin, President of the WVSOM Foundation, Inc., Board of Directors.

WVSOM Students Help Change Lives in Communities in Schools

Emily Haas (second from left) accepts a $250 check from UAAO representative Abby Franks. Also pictured, Dr. Comeaux (far left), and Kristin Debord, (far right).

This past May, WVSOM representatives of the Undergraduate American Academy of Osteopathy presented a $250 check to Emily Haas, director of Communities In Schools of Greenbrier County. But that's not all they gave.

Two years ago, a group of WVSOM students approached Haas about her program in Greenbrier County. Communities In Schools is an organization that introduces community resources within schools in an effort to provide a "safety net" to catch students who might otherwise fall to academic risk.

Youth in the program are first referred through the principal or guidance counselor using a very detailed, specific referral process. Once the parents complete all of the pertinent consent forms, the student is individually matched up with one of over 50 volunteers throughout the community. A respectful portion of those volunteers come from the student body at WVSOM.

"The fact that the students of WVSOM initiated their mentorships on their own was very impressive to us," says Haas. "The amazing thing is that after they have done all of that work at WVSOM, they find the time to come into the middle schools and high schools and help these other students out.

Haas says that the WVSOM students, up to 15 of them on some days, start trickling in around four o'clock on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Their main focus is to help the younger students develop math and science skills, but Haas notes that the most important thing is establishing a relationship with the student that is consistent, as well as providing help for any academic need a student might have.

"The neat thing about WVSOM students being involved with the program is that they themselves are students too" says Haas. "You'll find them working problems out on the board for the CIS students - being very interactive and innovative in the way they tutor and mentor.

Recently, at the 2008 annual Spring Awards ceremony, a group of 96 compassionate first and second year WVSOM students were recognized for completing a cumulative 7,676 hours of community service throughout the year during the 2007-2008 school year.

5 for 5 Foundation Campaign

Shirley Runyon, State Farm Insurance Are Latest Contributors

Shirley Runyon and Sandy Epling have become the latest area businesses to become a "Community Leader" in the 5 for 5 Campaign, a WVSOM initiative which asks donors to pledge at least $500 per year over a five-year period, totaling $2,500 – or to pay the entire amount as a single gift."

Shirley Runyon made the donation in memory of her late husband, Don Runyon, who passed away in July 2004. "The way the school has grown and flourished under WVSOM President Olen Jones is just unbelievable. Don and I moved here in 1980, and we watched the school grow from its humble beginnings in just one building to the amazing place it is today," Mrs. Runyon said.

Mrs. Runyon believes the community "depends on WVSOM very much" in terms of the local economy. "All those medical students and their families living and working here have a tremendous impact on our town," she stressed.

Sandy Epling made a donation on behalf of her State Farm Insurance office in Fairlea, WV. Mrs. Epling supports the 5 for 5 campaign because she believes WVSOM makes a positive economic impact in the area. "I am proud to support the school because I feel WVSOM is valuable to our economy here in the Greenbrier Valley, building on our already strong economic base," said Epling.

"The school makes our community a more desirable place to live and to relocate," Epling noted.

The goal of the 5 for 5 Campaign is to raise funds to provide additional resources for cutting-edge technology at WVSOM, such as human subject robots, continuing medical education programs, academic achievement awards, research grants, guest lecturers, scholarships, faculty development, and other educational purposes.

"The 5 for 5 Campaign is a visionary approach to raising funds to meet these goals," says Sally Cooper, Executive Director of the WVSOM Foundation. "We are grateful to Mrs. Runyon and Mrs. Epling for their commitment to our 'Community Leader' program."

Campaign donors receive an engraved leaf on the "Donor Tree" when their commitment to the 5 for 5 Campaign is complete. Mrs. Runyon chose to make her donation in one lump sum. Her Donor Tree leaf is engraved in memory of her husband.

The Donor Tree is located in the new Center for Rural Medicine & Technology building. The tree, which is seen by the students every day as they attend class, recognizes donors with engraved leaves, acorns, or the foundation rock, each with its own respective donor level.

Top: Sandy Epling of State Farm Insurance becomes a "Community Leader" in the 5 For 5 Campaign. Bottom: WVSOM Foundation Director Sally Cooper (left), Shirley Runyon (middle), and WVSOM Dean Mike Adelman pose in front of the donor tree.

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***Acorn Completed
** Leaf Completed
****Rock Completed

+Friends & Family who have passed away

WVSOM Alumni Weekend 2008

September 5-6

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FRIDAY
8:30am–4:30pm
Seven Category 1–A AOA CME Credits
6:00pm
Family Fun Barbecue

SATURDAY
10:00am
White Coat Ceremony & Convocation followed by Reception
1:00pm
Free Time with Family and Friends
6:30pm
Reunion Celebration Dinner

ALL ALUMNI WELCOME!

This is a special year for the members of the Classes of 1978, 1983, 1988, 1993, and 1998.

A special tribute to the Classes of 1978 and 1983!

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