

Spring 2015

COM Outlook

Nova Southeastern University College of Osteopathic Medicine

BUILDING

Transition at the Top

**Dr. Elaine M. Wallace
Succeeds**

**Dr. Anthony J. Silvagni
as NSU-COM Dean**

Dean's Message

By Elaine M. Wallace, D.O., M.S., M.S., M.S.

Commitment to Core Values a Key Aspect of Leadership Paradigm



This year marks an important transition for NSU-COM as I become the fifth dean of the college. The superior quality of my colleagues in administration, teaching, and practice of medicine has enabled me to gather a group of talented and committed staff and fac-

ulty members ready to take us into the future.

In developing my plan for growth and success, I designed a leadership team composed of people with positive attitudes, who are visionaries. The team was created by a process of balancing the talents of people that are detailed oriented with individuals who can see the big picture.

I chose young people who might offer innovative ideas that differ from the practices of the past and matched them with people who are more seasoned and have had experiences on which we could build. The blending of different views will help us to stimulate excitement and growth within the college.

My leadership team was devised by focusing on the core values of NSU's Vision 2020, which include academic excellence, student centered, scholarship/research, integrity, innovation, diversity, opportunity, and community. The team's attributes are best remembered by the vowels

- **A** for attitude
- **E** for educational acumen
- **I** for innovation and insight
- **O** for oversight of details
- **U** for understanding of big picture

The preparations and considerations I made hinge on the establishment of trust because building a team is about working together and sharing a comfortable reliance on one another. It is important to know that if one person falls, someone else is there to continue, to pick him or her up, while another team member is there to pick up the ball and run with it.

Having been a field hockey goalie puts the importance of the team in perspective for me. The goalie represents the last person there on the field—and it's my responsibility to get the job done. Winning teams share experience, inspiration, and trust. As dean, I am still that goalie, the one who communicates, motivates, and makes sure things get done throughout the process. With the good support of my team, we will all work together to get the job done.

My plan is to empower my leadership team and my college to embrace NSU-COM's mission to prepare high-quality, compassionate physicians with an emphasis on primary care disciplines throughout our diverse and demanding communities.

We pledge to you our best game.



STUDENT CENTERED
Dr. Wallace at the NSU
Celebration of Excellence event
with OMS-I Dona Rose (left) and
OMS-II Saamia Shaikh.

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President and Chief Executive Officer

HEALTH PROFESSIONS DIVISION

Frederick Lippman, R.Ph., Ed.D.

HPD Chancellor

COLLEGE OF OSTEOPATHIC MEDICINE

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NSU's College of Osteopathic Medicine was established
in 1979 and matriculated its first class in 1981.



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On February 1, a new chapter in the college's rich history was written when Dr. Elaine M. Wallace became the fifth dean of Nova Southeastern University's College of Osteopathic Medicine.

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To say that Dr. Marlow Hernandez was destined to become a distinguished alumnus is not an exaggeration when you consider how incredibly focused and prolific he was during his NSU-COM career.

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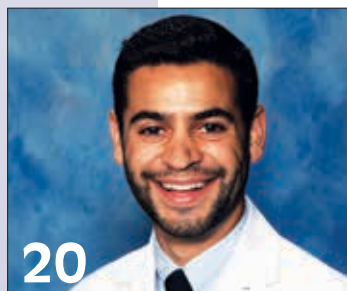
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HPD Chancellor's Communiqué

By Frederick Lippman, R.Ph., Ed.D.



Over the past several months, there have been numerous communications emanating from NSU President Dr. George Hanbury, the various deans, myself, and others in regard to NSU's Vision 2020 and

the bright future that lays ahead for our university.

For the past several years, we have been transitioning from an educational institution that provides quality education to one that is striving to provide nationally recognized and preeminent education. Similarly, there has been much talk about our emphasis on research, which is yielding some significant results.

All you have to do is drive into the university directly past the Health Professions Division to bear witness to the sophisticated and rapidly rising 225,000 square-foot Center for Collaborative Research that will help us meet our goals of becoming a highly productive and recognized research university. It isn't the bricks and mortar that count, however. It is what we intend the bricks and mortar to accomplish in regard to the educational goals set forth by Dr. Hanbury's Vision 2020 strategic plan.

On a similar note, the assemblage of knowledge we are presenting to the world, and the creation of new methods of care based upon the discovery of new knowledge that comes from research, indicate that we are on the cusp of achieving great things. This is why the bricks and mortar that will comprise the new research center are symbolic of what is about to happen here.

It's not that we haven't been involved in research for years, because we have. Consequently, I give a lot of credit to the many researchers that have been working at NSU for years with a significant amount of success, but not with all the tools that are necessary for them to have this broad spectrum of opportunity and presentation of information.

The progress, however, does not stop there. If you shift your view southward from the Health Professions Division to neighboring University Park Plaza, you will see the initial elements of a hospital complex being constructed. The first step in this process is an emerging emergency room/urgent care center that the Hospital Corporation of America (HCA) is establishing on the south parking lot of University Park Plaza, which is really the intent of HCA to place its footprint on this acreage for the purposes of transferring a 54-year-old hospital named Plantation General to our campus.

In December, many of you heard about the first big step in this process, which involved the approval by the Agency for Health Care Administration that Plantation General Hospital should be given the opportunity under state statute to relocate to the NSU campus, thus creating a new 200-bed hospital on this campus that will surround the emergency room that is currently under construction.

Thanks to these exciting developments, we are now looking at the elements of not only research, but also at the components of knowledge and compatibility of this knowledge with the new methods of caring for a person's health. From a health care perspective, this relates to the palliation of pain, the experience of elongating someone's life, and providing patients with a sense of better health, which in the long term means saving lives.

Ultimately, what are we really looking at now when we discuss Nova Southeastern University? First and foremost, we see the goals of becoming a preeminent institution based on the knowledge and capabilities our graduates possess. Of course, we want our faculty members and our academic infrastructure to be recognized as exceptional as well. The primary goal, however, is to seed this knowledge in the minds of our graduates who received their education at an institution that now has a very significant research component and a very significant research medical hospital looming on the horizon.

We have become an outstanding university that provides quality education, comprehensive health care, and cutting-edge research discoveries, which, when viewed in their totality, add up to a better humanity.

Dr. Elaine M. Wallace Named Dean of NSU's College of Osteopathic Medicine

On February 1, a new chapter in the college's rich history was written when **Elaine M. Wallace, D.O., M.S., M.S.**, became the fifth dean of NSU's College of Osteopathic Medicine. Dr. Wallace succeeds Anthony J. Silvagni, D.O., Pharm.D., M.Sc., FACOFP *dist.*, who had served as dean since July 1998.

"Dr. Wallace's record of distinguished service to Nova Southeastern University and its College of Osteopathic Medicine has prepared her to further NSU's recognition and acclaim as a premier institution for medical education, research and innovation, and community service," said George L. Hanbury II, Ph.D., NSU president and chief executive officer.

During the past 15 years, Dr. Wallace has served in various NSU-COM capacities, most recently as executive associate dean (2009-15), professor of osteopathic principles and practice (2000-15), clinical professor for family medicine (2000-15), and staff physician for NSU's Sanford L. Ziff Health Care Center (2000-15). In addition, she served as associate dean of academic administration (2008-09), chair of the Department of Osteopathic Principles and Practice and the Department of Sports Medicine (2000-08), liaison to international medicine (2000-08), and residency director for sports medicine and the sports medicine fellowship (2000-09).

In her new role as NSU-COM dean, Dr. Wallace's immediate plans are to "continue the high-quality programs and education initiated by Dr. Silvagni as well as evaluate needs of the physician of the future," she explained. "I also have a desire to reinvent medi-

cal students as renaissance men and women who distinguish themselves in fields related to medicine as well as in the traditional body of medical study."

Dr. Wallace is an active scholar and researcher with a distinguished publication record. She also has received numerous awards and recognition for her mentorship, teaching excellence, and student engagement, including NSU's Faculty Award for Community Service (2012) and the prestigious Leonard Tow Humanism in Medicine



Award (2013) that is awarded annually by the Arnold P. Gold Foundation to a select group of faculty members from the nation's medical schools.

Additionally, she is fully engaged in the professional community, serving in past and current leadership roles with the American Osteopathic Association, American Academy of Osteopathy, American Association of Osteopathic Directors and Medical Educators, and the National Board of Osteopathic Medical Examiners.

"I have had the distinct pleasure of working with Dr. Wallace during our mutual 15 years of service to NSU's College of Osteopathic Medicine," said Joseph S. De Gaetano, D.O., M.S.Ed, FAAFP, FACOFP, senior associate dean for osteopathic education. "She is a consummate clinician, superb physician executive, and preeminent medical educator whose nationally recognized skills and vision will lead the college to new heights of accomplishment. The students as well as the faculty and staff members will thrive under her leadership, and I look forward to working closely with her for years to come."

Dr. Wallace began her career in a private family medicine practice in Kansas City, Missouri, and subsequently assumed faculty and leadership positions at the University of Health Sciences College of Osteopathic Medicine in Kansas City.

She earned her Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine, Master of Science in Higher Education, and Master of Science in Leadership degrees from the University of Health Sciences College of Osteopathic Medicine. Dr. Wallace also received her Master of Science in Criminal Justice with a behavioral science specialization from NSU and is currently pursuing her Doctor of Organizational Leadership (Ed.D.).

Former NSU-COM Deans

Dr. Arnold Melnick (1980-89)

Dr. Joseph Namey (1989-91)

Dr. Matthew Terry (1991-97)

Dr. Anthony J. Silvagni (1998-2015)

Lynne Cawley Sets Sail into Retirement After 25 Years



Pictured (from left) are Paul and Lynne Cawley and Dr. Anthony J. Silvagni.

On November 10, the college's Pediatrics Club honored **Emily Schmitt Lavin, Ph.D.**, a professor and associate director of math, science, and technology at the NSU Farquhar College of Arts and Sciences, with the Arnold Melnick Child Advocacy Award. Her areas of academic focus include gene expression, genetics, and genealogy in the areas of research in biology and cellular molecular biology.

In her free time, Dr. Schmitt Lavin is a strong advocate for children with A-T (Ataxia Telangiectasia) and spends her weekends preparing for marathons to raise money for children afflicted with the disease. More specifically, she sponsors a girl afflicted with A-T and works diligently to arrange fund-raisers for all children with A-T.

Five years ago, Dr. Schmitt Lavin sparked a movement to incorporate more science in elementary schools by having Science Alive nights, which is a collaboration between elementary and NSU students that demonstrates simple and fun science experiments aimed at increasing the love of science. The project has expanded to include many schools and involved approximately 50 undergraduate and graduate students.

On December 11, the college coordinated a farewell reception for **Lynne Cawley, M.S.**, who served as director of alumni services for many productive years. Cawley came to NSU in March 1989 and was recently honored by NSU-COM for 25 years of service to the university—highlighted by her 15 years with the college. During her tenure, she worked in several NSU centers, sharing her talents with NSU-COM alumni as well as the NSU athletics department.

"After 25 years at NSU, it's very difficult to put into words what this place has meant to me," she stated. "I am so fortunate and grateful to have had all of the opportunities I've been given to make a difference. The last 15 years at NSU-COM have been the best professional years of my life. I have enjoyed watching so many students come through our doors, graduate, and become successful alumni and productive community leaders. I am blessed to be able to walk out the door after 25 years and say I loved my job."

Now that her NSU career has concluded, Cawley looks forward to "doing anything I want," which includes a focus on improving her health and continuing to work passionately in the osteopathic profession she loves.

Pediatrics Club Honors Dr. Emily Schmitt Lavin with Arnold Melnick Child Advocacy Award



Pictured (from left) are OMS-II Erin Thornley, OMS-II Patricia Camino, Dr. Schmitt Lavin, OMS-II Minnie Maass, OMS-II Nergess Taheri, and Edward Packer, D.O., FAAP, FACOP, the club's faculty adviser.

NSU-COM Employees Honored for Longevity



On December 9, the college coordinated an employee recognition luncheon to honor 19 individuals who celebrated significant employee milestones in 2014. **25 Years:** Lynne Cawley; **20 Years:** Linda Speiser; **15 Years:** Scott Colton, Dr. Joseph De Gaetano, Liane Hess, Dr. James Howell, Dr. Leonard Levy, and Dr. Gary Merlino; **10 Years:** Dr. Phyllis Filker, Dr. Jay Fleisher, Dr. Delia Celestine, Dr. Andrew Kusinski, Dr. Daniel Shaw, and Dr. Gabriel Suci; **5 Years:** Dr. Tye Barber, Carmen Hernandez, Dr. Raymond Ownby, Dr. Kenya Rivas, and Dr. Dianne Rechline.

Inaugural HPD Interprofessional Fall Fair a Success

On November 4, the **NSU-COM Center for Interprofessional Education and Practice** coordinated the inaugural Interprofessional Fall Fair, which focused on informing students about the roles and responsibilities of the many professions at NSU that work together as a comprehensive health care team. The fair featured a showcase of 13 different professions, including anesthesiologist assistant, audiology, clinical psychology, health law, medical sonography, nursing, occupational therapy, optometry, osteopathic medicine, physician assistant, physical therapy, public health, and speech-language pathology. The information booths were organized and operated by student representatives from each program.

All booths offered attendees an interactive activity that encouraged better understanding of the varied professions at

NSU. These activities addressed the roles/responsibilities competency domain of interprofessional collaborative practice. The specific competencies addressed by participating in this activity included communicating one's roles and responsibilities clearly, explaining the roles and responsibilities of other care providers and how the team works together to provide care, and communicating with team members to clarify each member's responsibility.



NSU-COM's Online M.P.H. Program Rated Among the Best Nationally



Public Health Online, a leading online resource for public health education and careers, recently published a list of the Best Online Master of Public Health (M.P.H.) Programs for 2014-15 that ranked **NSU-COM's online Public Health Program** as one of the top 20 programs in the nation, coming in at number 17.

In January, **35 NSU-COM students** and **8 students from NSU's College of Optometry** participated in an educational health fair for the Chinese population of South Florida that took place at the Chinese Baptist Church of Coral Springs.

Soling Li, D.O., M.P.H., a 2000 NSU-COM alumna, spearheaded the Third Annual Chinese Health Fair, which included screenings for HIV, hepatitis, hypertension, diabetes, dermatological issues, and visual acuity. In addition to providing health screenings, Dr. Li gave an informative talk about hepatitis B while other invited speakers discussed topics such as the importance of medications, dry eyes, and floaters.

"These are people who need help," said OMS-II Jonathan Grossman, who enjoyed participating in the event because it served as an opportunity for NSU Health Professions Division students to hone their physical diagnosis skills and provide screenings and information to at-risk populations. "We need more of these community health informational events because I believe people do not seek these things out on their own."

According to Dr. Li, the risk of hepatitis B increases if patients have parents from Asia, Latin America, the Middle

"NSU is proud to be ranked among the best master of public health programs in the nation," said Cyril Blavo, D.O., M.S., M.P.H. and T.M., FACOP, who serves as professor and director of the college's M.P.H. Program. "A value deeply entrenched in our university is providing services to those who may not otherwise have access, and educating community leaders and health care providers in the tenets of public health is a proven way to achieve this goal."

To determine the rankings, *Public Health Online* analyzed data from hundreds of available online public health degree programs to find out which colleges truly excel at online learning at the master's level. Data analysts and higher education experts developed a proprietary scoring system for *Public Health Online* to rank master of public health programs using various cost, quality, and student-support metrics such as

- online tuition cost
- academic/career counseling service
- placement services for graduates
- Council on Education for Public Health accreditation
- only not-for-profit institutions
- must offer four-year programs and an online M.P.H.

Interprofessional Participation at Chinese Health Fair

East, and other parts of the world, which is why she encouraged the health fair attendees to be aware of hepatitis B testing and treatment. She also refuted the myth that there exists a *healthy carrier* stage of hepatitis B, explaining that the virus could start hurting a person's liver even though the individual is asymptomatic.



The NSU-COM Center for Interprofessional Education and Practice (CIPEP) hosted the inaugural **NSU Interprofessional Education (IPE) Day** on February 17. The event, which centered on the theme *Putting All the Pieces Together for Quality Patient Care*, brought together students from two or more NSU Health Professions Division (HPD) disciplines to share and learn together in order to create effective collaboration and improve health outcomes.

Frederick Lippman, R.Ph., Ed.D., HPD chancellor, offered a welcome message to the crowd of nearly 400 students, while Cecilia Rokusek Ed.D., R.D., assistant dean of research and innovation and CIPEP director, shared her enthusiasm at the opening of the concurrent sessions. Gordon Chen, M.D., senior vice president of ChenMed—a Florida-based national primary care delivery system committed to delivering high-value interprofessional care to seniors in underserved areas—was the keynote speaker.

All HPD students had the opportunity to participate in sessions that represented a blend of interprofessional simulation experiences, interprofessional theory, and interactive case-study reviews that highlighted the core competencies of interprofessional collaborative practice. These included values/ethics for interprofessional practice, roles/responsibilities, interprofessional communication, and teams and teamwork.

IPE Day Highlights Interprofessional Collaboration

IPE represents a major accreditation priority for many health profession programs, and IPE Day served as a great opportunity to integrate interprofessional education into the health professions curriculum. The CIPEP strives to develop NSU students as interprofessional leaders for the workforce and plans to host IPE Day twice a year. The initiative is a testament to NSU's commitment to increasing collaboration among its programs and improving health for all.



NSU-COM Students Assist the Homeless in Hollywood



On February 6, The OMS-I class Student Government Association (SGA) organized an event to benefit the **Homeless Voice Shelter in Hollywood, Florida**, and the homeless population living in the city. The humanitarian undertaking involved purchasing various items, making ham and cheese and peanut butter and jelly

sandwiches, and providing a bag of chips with each sandwich. The SGA provided most of the materials by going to a local wholesaler and purchasing the items required to make and bag the food items.

Through the efforts of NSU-COM students, upwards of 700 sandwiches were made and over \$2,000 worth of food, coffee, and laundry detergent were delivered to the Homeless Voice Shelter.

"When going to the deliver the items, it was heartbreaking to see the conditions that these folks were living in," said OMS-I Parth Gandhi. "The shelter's director was brought to tears, and strangers who were living on the street approached us to thank us wholeheartedly. It is our duty as citizens of this community to do what we can to help provide basic necessities such as food and coffee for the homeless population. It is the SGA's hope that this event will spark a movement and encourage all students to take part in similar events in the near future."

Project HOPE Assists Homeless Pets at Camillus House



Last November, **Project HOPE (Homelessness in Osteopathic Predoctoral Education)**, in concert with the college's Public Health Student Association, began sponsoring a

pet donation drive to benefit homeless pets. Camillus House, the largest provider of services assisting those experiencing homelessness in Miami-Dade County, houses the only kennel for homeless pets in South Florida. For those experiencing homelessness, one of the barriers often faced when accepting shelter is that man's best friend is not permitted within most homeless shelters and assistance centers. Consequently, many people will opt to remain on the streets rather than accept shelter.

The Camillus House kennel is supported by volunteer veterinarians and groomers, as well as by residents of the shelter. Through this initiative, Project HOPE fully realizes the tenets of osteopathic medicine, embracing health through an approach that understands the impact of animal companionship on the human spirit. The kennel runs solely on the generosity of donations and provides a range of services from food distribution and veterinary dermatology to deworming and basic checkups. For those interested in assisting this worthy cause, a box is located in the atrium in front of Steele Auditorium for the donation of toys, treats, and nonperishable food.

On February 20, the **Student Osteopathic Medical Association (SOMA)** held its Second Annual Cardio for Cupid event, which is a Valentine's Day-themed cardiovascular health awareness day that focuses on fitness and healthy eating. The event, which was coordinated by OMS-II Catalina Rodriguez (SOMA president), OMS-I Aadil Vora, and OMS-I Michelle Hojnicky, was established to create a tie-in with February's Heart Health Month as designated by the American Heart Association and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

The participants, who wore red in support of heart health, included OMS-II Marco Casanova, who opened the event by talking about his personal connection to cardiovascular health issues, and OMS-II Siddarth Goyal and OMS-I Nishant Patel, who played up-tempo music to energize the attendees. Activities included a 45-minute cardio workout session coordinated by OMS-I Daniel Leary on the Terry Building patio that was open to all HPD students as well as a last-one-standing squat competition won by OMS-I Jared Ham-Ying.

"I make it a priority to get an hour of cardio or strength training in every day after class," said OMS-I Jamie Buldoc. "I'll do a spinning class in the NSU RecPlex or lift weights—anything to get my heart pumping." According to Leary,

SOMA Coordinates Cardio for Cupid Event

By OMS-I Aadil Vora, SOMA National Officer

"Cardio is a positive stress to the body that builds it up," he stated. "I think cardio helps the body respond better to the stresses we face in medical school that are constantly threatening to break it down, such as sitting for long hours in class or staying up late to study."





In February, **NSU-COM's Art, Medicine, and Observation Program** was selected as the inaugural winner of the Council of Osteopathic Student Government Presidents (COSGP) Outstanding Advancement in Osteopathic Medical Education

Art, Medicine, and Observation Program Wins COSGP Osteopathic Medical Education Award

The Art, Medicine, and Observation Program, which educates osteopathic medical students to more effectively observe their patients through examining artwork, was developed by Dianna Silvagni, J.D. (*pictured left*), clinical assistant professor of medical education. The COSGP is the official national leadership council of the American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine and is the only organization that represents all osteopathic medical students.

Award. The accolade was established to allow students to recognize their osteopathic medical school for making a robust and durable change within their curriculum or for having instituted a novel and successful program in accordance with the osteopathic philosophy to advance their osteopathic medical education.

Natalie Booth Named Student D.O. of the Year

On December 16, **OMS-III Natalie Booth** was named NSU-COM Student D.O. of the Year. Booth was nominated by her peers and selected by the NSU-COM Local Selection Committee, whose members were determined by the Council of Osteopathic Student Government Presidents. As a result of her being named NSU-COM Student D.O. of the Year, Booth is automatically nominated for the National Student D.O. of the Year Award and the \$1,000 monetary prize that will be announced at the AACOM Annual Conference on April 24.



Booth was selected based on her impressive accomplishments, which included a range of community service activities such as participating in the annual REACH Fair and medical outreach trips to Ecuador and Vietnam. She also served as an anatomy fellow and an NSU student ambassador and is the current treasurer of the NSU-COM Student Government Association.



On November 26, **OMS-II Benjamin Rau** passed away at the age of 30 after bravely succumbing to an insidious brain tumor. According to his class of 2017 classmate and friend Ryan Gluth, "Ben was a compassionate, loving, and dedicated husband.

IN MEMORIAM: OMS-II Benjamin Rau

He loved his wife Rachelle with all of his heart and cherished every moment they spent together. Ben was always vibrant and had the ability to make you smile, which is why he was the type of guy you wanted to be around just because he made you a better person in doing so. Moving forward as a class, we can honor Ben by practicing medicine with the kindness, empathy, passion, and respect he would have treated all of his patients with."

NSU Earns National Recognition for Patient-Centered Care



More than ever, many patients feel their health care is fragmented and confusing. Now, one newer primary care model aims to help make the patient experience as seamless as possible, ultimately benefiting patients, their families, clinicians, and even the economy.

The Patient-Centered Medical Home (PCMH) is a model of primary care through which a patient's care is overseen by clinician-led teams that coordinate treatment across the health care system. This model helps foster ongoing partnerships between patients and their personal clinicians. Research shows that medical homes can lead to higher quality and lower costs and can improve patient- and provider-reported experiences of care.

NSU and its medical clinics, which have implemented the medical home model, were recently recognized by the National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA) as an accredited PCMH for using evidence-based, patient-centered approaches that focus on highly coordinated care and long-term, participative relationships. To earn this accreditation, which is valid for three years, NSU was required to demonstrate enhanced access and continuity, identify and manage patient populations, plan and manage care, provide self-care and community support, track and coordinate care, and measure and improve performance.

"The medical home was created to improve the fragmentation of health care by transforming how primary care is organized and delivered," said Robert S. Oller, D.O., NSU's chief medical adviser. "This model aims to establish a direct relationship between patients and their physicians so they feel comfortable and confident that they are attended to by a team of health care providers dedicated to addressing their personal health care needs."

NSU demonstrated the ability to meet the program's key elements, embodying characteristics of the medical home. Additionally, NCQA standards aligned with the joint principles of the PCMH established with the American College of Physicians, the American Academy of Family Physicians, the American Academy of Pediatrics, and the American Osteopathic Association.

News of Note

BestMedicalDegrees.com, an independent online publication dedicated to providing accurate and useful information for prospective students considering a career in medicine, compiled a list that ranks the top 25 schools offering a Master of Science in Health Informatics/Information in terms of cost, length of program, and curriculum. **NSU-COM's Biomedical Informatics Program** cracked the top 10, coming in at number 6.

OMS-III Kelly Thibert was named president elect of the American Medical Student Association (AMSA) for the 2015-16 year. The honor makes her part of an elite group of students that focuses on health care policy and the financial assets of the organization. Thibert will travel the country to represent the nation's medical students on topics such as medical student debt and pharmaceutical influence in medical education.

NSU-COM's Institute for Disaster and Emergency Preparedness and M.S. in Disaster and Emergency Preparedness program have become a corporate member of the Florida Emergency Preparedness Association, which is dedicated to protecting the people of Florida by enhancing emergency management planning and preparedness activities at the local, state, and federal level. In related news, **Kristi Messer, M.P.H., M.S.W.**, assistant professor of public health and disaster and emergency preparedness, has been appointed co-chair of the association's Higher Education Committee.

The **Institute for Neuro-Immune Medicine (INIM)** hosted its second Patient Conference that centered on the theme *Cellular Energy and its Impact on Health* on February 7 at NSU's Rose and Alfred Miniaci Center. The Webinar was shared in more than 100 cities in 10 countries, reaching patients, family members, NSU faculty members, and students. INIM speakers included **Gordon Broderick, Ph.D.**, director of the INIM Clinical Systems Biology Group and professor at the NSU Center for Psychological Studies and College of Pharmacy, and **Richard Deth, Ph.D.**, professor, NSU Department of Pharmaceutical Sciences.

During the 112th Annual Florida Osteopathic Medical Association (FOMA) Convention, held February 18-22 at the Bonaventure Resort and Spa in Weston, a number of NSU-COM-affiliated individuals were honored with awards for their various achievements.

Dr. Anthony Ottaviani Honored with Morton Morris Award



Anthony N. Ottaviani, D.O., M.P.H., MACOI, FCCP, clinical professor of internal medicine, regional dean at NSU-COM's West Coast Academic Center, director of medical education at Largo Medical Center, and president of

the American Osteopathic Foundation Board of Directors, was awarded the Florida Board of Osteopathic Medicine's Morton Morris Award. The accolade is presented annually to osteopathic physicians, non-osteopathic physicians, or entities that have demonstrated dedication, integrity, and commitment to improving health care for the citizens of Florida. Morton Morris, D.O., J.D., FAOAO, served as executive dean for professional affairs at NSU's Health Professions Division prior to his death in May 2008. *Pictured (from left) are Joel Rose, D.O., chairman of the Florida Board of Osteopathic Medicine, Marie Morris, and Dr. Ottaviani.*

Dr. Avinash Persad Garners Oliva Scholarship



Avinash Persad, D.O., a 2012 NSU-COM alumnus and chief resident of family medicine at Broward Health Medical Center, received a \$1,000 FOMA Marcelino Oliva, Jr., D.O., Student Scholarship Award, which honors students who advance and promote the practices and

principles of osteopathic medicine, showcase dedication to continuing Dr. Oliva's vision, and epitomize the qualities of commitment, passion, and involvement in the political and legislative process. *Pictured are Dr. Persad and Lora Lee Oliva (Dr. Oliva's widow).*

Dr. Joshua Lenchus Wins Physician of the Year Accolade



Joshua D. Lenchus, D.O., R.Ph., FACP, SFHM, a 2000 NSU-COM alumnus, received the FOMA Physician of the Year Award that honors an osteopathic physician who during the past year has made significant and considerable contributions not only to the osteopathic profession, but also to the community on both a local and statewide level. *Pictured (from left) are Dr. Lenchus and Jorge D. Luna, D.O., FACOFP, 2014-15 FOMA president.*

Briana Mayhew Receives AFOMA Scholarship



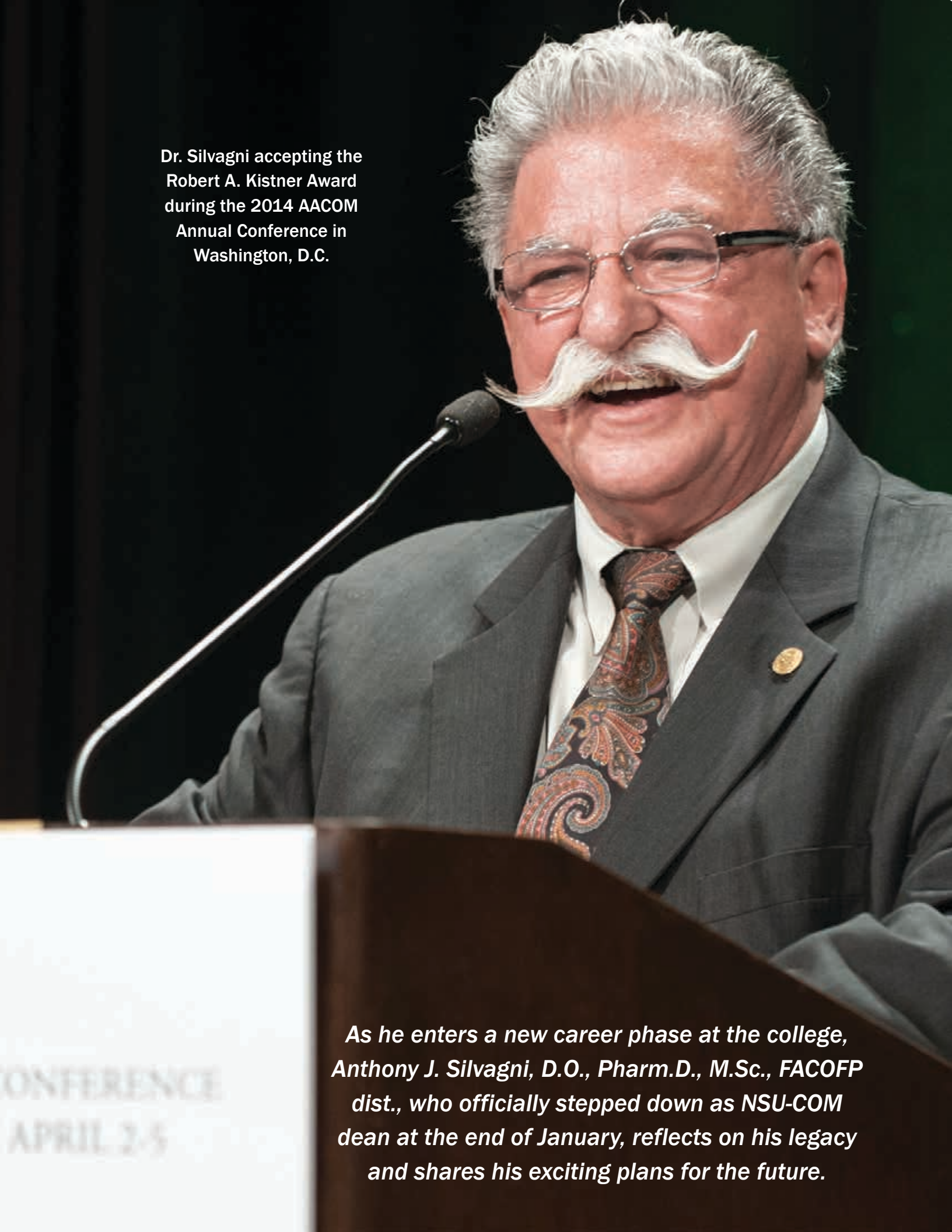
OMS-III Briana Mayhew was the winner of a \$500 AFOMA Believes in You Scholarship Award, which is presented by the Advocates of the Florida Osteopathic Medical Association (AFOMA). The award is partly based on a student's interest in osteopathic medicine, activities in the profession, and leadership abilities. *Pictured (from left) are Briana Mayhew with Dianna Silvagni, J.D., NSU-COM clinical assistant professor of medical education.*

Dr. Tamer Gozleveli Receives Presidential Achievement Award



Tamer Gozleveli, D.O., a 1994 NSU-COM alumnus, was posthumously presented with a Presidential Achievement Award in recognition of his numerous contributions to osteopathic medicine. *Accepting the award from Dr. Luna is Dr. Gozleveli's wife, Farideh.*

Dr. Silvagni accepting the
Robert A. Kistner Award
during the 2014 AACOM
Annual Conference in
Washington, D.C.



CONFERENCE
APRIL 2-5

As he enters a new career phase at the college, Anthony J. Silvagni, D.O., Pharm.D., M.Sc., FACOFD dist., who officially stepped down as NSU-COM dean at the end of January, reflects on his legacy and shares his exciting plans for the future.



DR. ANTHONY J. SILVAGNI

A Mustachioed Maestro Passes the Leadership Torch, Steps Down as Dean

*By Scott Colton, B.A., APR
COM/HPD Director of Medical Communications
and Public Relations*

Change is an inevitable fact of life for everyone, which explains why Dr. Silvagni wholeheartedly embraces the philosophy. “I think all institutions, whether academic or entrepreneurial, need change every so often,” said Dr. Silvagni of his decision to step down as dean of NSU’s College of Osteopathic Medicine after nearly 17 years at the leadership helm.

“I’ve been a dean for over 23 years consecutively, so it’s been a long tenure,” explained Dr. Silvagni, who became dean of NSU-COM in 1998 following his stint as dean of the Kansas City University of Medicine



A LIFETIME OF ACHIEVEMENT AND SERVICE: During the 2015 Florida Osteopathic Medical Association (FOMA) Convention in February, Dr. Silvagni was named an honorary lifetime member of the organization. Presenting Dr. Silvagni with his lifetime membership certificate are Stephen Winn, FOMA executive director (left), and Jorge D. Luna, D.O., FACOFP, 2014-15 FOMA president.

and Biosciences College of Osteopathic Medicine. “To serve as dean both here and in Kansas City, I have had to sacrifice participating in other aspects of academia I’ve always enjoyed such as patient care, research, and teaching.

“I chose to become a dean when the opportunity presented itself in 1992 because I knew my administrative skills were stronger than most other osteopathic physicians,” he added. “Although my other skills were quite good, I knew there were many other good, or better, academic physicians out there. So I chose to do what I excelled in so I could make a greater contribution, which I feel I have done in many different ways. But I believe I have reached a point in my life where it’s time to pursue new challenges, relearn some things I used to be proficient in, and get back to being part of the implementation of academic aspects rather than serving in a development and leadership role.”

During his fruitful stint as dean, Dr. Silvagni helped oversee

a sustained period of growth and achievement that even he couldn’t have foreseen when he first arrived on campus to become the college’s fourth dean. Perhaps that’s what inevitably motivated him to relinquish the leadership reigns at this juncture in his career—he’s already done so much. “I just came to the conclusion that it’s time for someone else to

take the tiller and for me to man the sails,” he explained.

Assessing Key Accomplishments

When Dr. Silvagni was asked to name some of the most noteworthy accomplishments that occurred during his NSU-COM deanship, one immediately jumped to the top of his list—the quality of the college’s education. “While we have always been a good school, I think that through the diversity we incorporated, the breadth of academic programming we established, and the unique faculty and staff members we hired, these factors have elevated us to an even higher level of academic excellence. We are now recognized as one of the top medical schools in the country, which is a fact that can be measured by the numerous opportunities that are being afforded our graduates and faculty members.”

Research is another growth area of which Dr. Silvagni is justifiably proud. “When I arrived here in 1998, there was only minimal research activity taking place,” he stated. “Through the efforts of our staff and faculty members, and thanks to the cooperation of the administra-



COLLEGIALITY AND COMEDY: Dr. Silvagni shares a jovial moment with Dr. Elaine Wallace at his appreciation reception held January 26 in the Chancellor’s Dining Room.



tion, we have been able to grow into a dynamic college of osteopathic medicine that has incorporated an increasingly strong research component. This is evidenced by the fact that in fiscal year 2014, NSU-COM submitted 31 grant proposals and received \$7.8 million in research funding and \$12.4 million in teaching/training support."

In a similar show of strength, Dr. Silvagni, who was accorded the distinguished title of dean emeritus by the NSU Board of Trustees in January, points to the growing esteem the college has engendered over the years. "We have earned respect not just nationally but internationally, which is epitomized by the various organizations that want to affiliate with us as well as those distinguished individuals who have chosen to join our faculty," he said. "It is exciting to know that we have been able to attract extremely successful people — from prestigious schools that possess longer traditions than NSU-COM — to become part of our team."

Another source of pride is the college's acclaimed international medical programs and affiliations, which weren't yet in existence when Dr. Silvagni came on board. Over the past 16 years, numerous international medical outreach trips and international selective clinical rotations have been coordinated that have allowed countless students to broaden their educational and cultural horizons. "What we have been able to do in regard to our global medicine efforts is astonishing," he admitted. "In fact, we have more students than any other M.D. or D.O. school that I know of participating in international opportunities. This is of major importance because in today's world, diseases and health care are global. Because of these international opportunities, our students are seeing diseases firsthand that are uncommon or just emerging in the United States that will help them become better — and more compassionate — physicians."

Other areas he touched on include the establishment of various

dual-degree programs, the continued national recognition received by the college's *COM Outlook* magazine, the uninterrupted 16-year publication of the *Medical Education Digest*, and the growing number of faculty members and students that are having their articles published in peer-reviewed journals. "No matter what measuring rod you want to use, there is not one area you can say we have not excelled in — and that's due to our students, alumni, and faculty and staff members, coupled with support from university administration," he proudly proclaimed.

Looking Forward, Reflecting Back

Now that he's stepped down as dean, Dr. Silvagni is looking forward to enjoying a well-deserved sabbatical before returning to the college as a full-time faculty member on August 1. "I don't know exactly what I'll be doing when I return because that will be the new dean's decision," joked Dr. Silvagni of his suc-





cessor and longtime colleague Elaine M. Wallace, D.O., M.S., M.S., M.S. — a dynamic duo that has worked together in both Kansas City and Fort Lauderdale. “My hope is to get back into teaching courses in applied therapeutics and clinical pharmacology and to also become significantly involved with our international medical programs and global affiliations, which is a love of mine that I started in Kansas City and then initiated at NSU-COM when I became dean.”

Because he’s worked closely with Dr. Wallace for 23 years, Dr. Silvagni

memories are related to the people — the many students, faculty and staff members, and administrators who have become very close and dear to me,” he said. “To be honest, there are many people here at the college that I feel as close to as family.

“I’ve been a faculty member at 8 medical schools and been involved with about 25 throughout my career, so I’ve seen every kind of culture,” he added. “That’s why when I first came here, one of the first things I wanted to do was make sure we were accepting students who were

experience, both personally and professionally,” he stated. “It has been a true love affair that is not ending, but will be continuing in a different way. I have learned so much from so many, with each professional encounter adding to my experience and expertise.

“We have made choices and taken challenging roads together, and thank goodness most of them have been very successful,” he concluded. “There’s no way you can thank people enough for the feeling of trust they provide you. When I come to

“Serving as dean of this great college has been a very rewarding experience, both personally and professionally. It has been a true love affair that is not ending, but will be continuing in a different way.”

has supreme confidence in her abilities to lead the college as it enters an exciting new phase of growth and enrichment. “She knows and understands all the aspects of what is necessary to be a dean, so it’s going to be exciting to watch her lead the school,” he explained. “I think she is going to do certain things very differently than me and some things that are quite similar. What I do know is that she will be a tremendous asset to the college and will, in her own way, achieve greatness for the school.”

As he transitions from dean to industrious faculty member in the coming months, Dr. Silvagni says he will forever embrace the enduring memories that have highlighted his years as dean of NSU-COM. “My fondest

compassionate team players. My goal was to make sure that as we grew, we treated them with the respect they deserved as future health professionals. And I think that philosophy has worked because our interview process now allows the applicants to spend a significant amount of time with our students and witness their quality and caring nature firsthand.”

Because he is an extremely astute administrator, Dr. Silvagni is aware that his productive tenure as dean did not occur in a vacuum and that many individuals played a vital role in crafting the successes the college achieved under his keen guidance. “Serving as dean of this great college has been a very rewarding

work, I never worry about who’s going to undermine what we do. I walk in here with the joy of seeing people I care about — who I know care about me. All I can really say to everyone is...thanks for the memories.”



A Brief Primer on the Concept of Prompt Pay Laws

By Fred Segal, Esq.



Fred Segal is a health law attorney in the Miami office of the law firm Broad and Cassel and a graduate of NSU's Shepard Broad Law Center.

While working on their medical education and beginning training, medical students and residents gradually begin to realize that being involved in the business of medicine requires more knowledge than the practice of medicine itself. Among the lines of business for which physicians and medical professionals must familiarize themselves with is the business of private health insurance.

The majority of medical professionals, in some manner, have relationships with third party payers, who will pay the physicians for medical services they perform on a patient that are subscribed to the payer. Many patients are subscribed to government payers—for example, the Medicare and Medicaid program. Most patients, however, receive health care insurance coverage from private payers (i.e., commercial health plans).

A physician's relationship with private payers can be complex; however, most have certain traits as illustrated below:

THE PAYER contracts with the physician or entity with whom he or she is affiliated to provide medical services to certain patients—or beneficiaries—that are contracted with a health insurance plan offered by the payer.

IF THE PHYSICIAN provides services to a beneficiary covered by the terms of the physician's contract with the plan, the physician will send a claim that must satisfy certain requirements to the payer.

THE PAYER will pay the physician an amount for the services performed based on the contract's fee schedule, deny payment of the claim, or pay a lesser amount than the physician believes he or she is entitled pursuant to the fee schedule (i.e., an underpayment).

Without any recourse available for the physicians for denials or underpayments, the above relationships put physicians at a tremendous disadvantage. A payer would have full discretion as to when and if it will pay a physician's claim. Payers can abuse this advantage by denying or ignoring claims.

A few decades ago, after widespread complaints kept filtering in from physicians regarding the frequency and manner in which they were paid claims, states began to enact prompt pay laws, which essentially require a payer to pay or deny a claim in a defined period. Most also require that if the claim is denied, the payer must be able to provide a valid reason upon request. Currently, almost all 50 states have enacted prompt pay laws.

Florida requires most private payers to adhere to the following guidelines:

At no point after 20 days from receiving an electronic claim or 40 days for a non-electronic claim, the private payer will reimburse the physician that made the claim the amount pursuant to the fee schedule contracted between the parties. Other options include paying the portion of the claim not in dispute, notifying the physician, in writing, why claim will not be paid, and allowing the physician to request information as to why it was not paid. A payer's failure to pay or deny a claim within 120 days for electronic claims and 140 days for non-electronic claims creates an uncontestable obligation for insurer to pay the claim to the provider, which means the payer will have no defense if it is proven it did not pay the claim within 120 or 140 days.

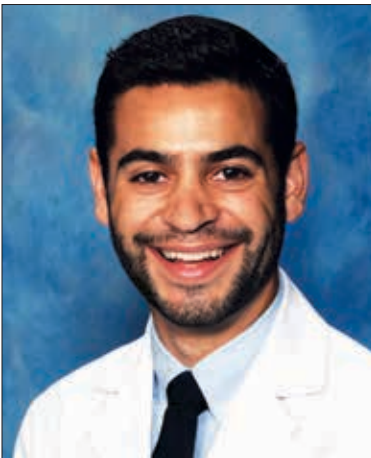
There are many other provisions of Florida's prompt pay laws that are not discussed above. It's also imperative to realize that prompt pay laws are more complex than as described. The purpose of this article is to give a brief overview of this type of statute so you can be aware it exists, and from the beginning, keep track of when you submit your claims and when they are due. You never know when a prompt pay law may come into play.

Portrait in Courage

Childhood Cancer Survivor Daniel Bral Targets Bright Future

By Scott Colton, B.A., APR

COM/HPD Director of Medical Communications and Public Relations



After enjoying a relaxing summer at home with his family at its Los Angeles, California, home, 11-year-old Daniel Bral enthusiastically embraced the challenge of beginning sixth grade and earning a spot on his school's basketball team. As he bounded down the court during his team tryouts early in the school year, however, Bral felt unusually winded while performing

drills he had done effortlessly countless times before.

"I couldn't catch my breath, and it felt as if I was wheezing," said Bral, a first-year NSU-COM student. "I didn't understand what was going on, but I chalked it up to being a couch potato during the summer and not being as active as normal. I didn't think much of it until the next day when I didn't feel better, so I decided to tell my mom about it. She said it was probably nothing, but she decided to take me to our pediatrician."



A large green highway sign with white text is the central focus. The sign is mounted on a metal structure with two white rectangular boxes. The background is a dramatic sky with dark, swirling clouds at the top and bright, orange-hued clouds at the bottom, suggesting a sunset or sunrise.

**SURVIVING
CANCER**



Initially, there didn't appear to be anything worrisome except for a bit of inflammation in Bral's throat and neck, which the physician said was probably a mild case of lymphocytosis. "My pediatrician said, 'You're probably catching something or getting over something, so don't worry about it. In a week's time it should be gone.'"

Unfortunately, when a week came and went, Bral was still feeling fatigued and having difficulty breathing. "I would get winded going up the stairs, so we knew there was clearly something going on," Bral explained. "We went back to see my pediatrician, who wasn't sure what exactly was going on and suggested some diagnostic tests and an appointment with a specialist."

After undergoing a series of tests, the pulmonologist he visited gave the concerned 11 year old an inhaler to see if it would help alleviate the symptoms. "I went back to school, but my mom and I noticed that the inhaler didn't really work because within a few minutes I would be wheezing again," said Bral, who has two younger siblings. "I was then sent to another specialist who said, 'This is definitely asthma-related. You just need something stronger.'"

So he gave me oral steroids and made me breathe with a nebulizer in the nurse's office, but it didn't help. To my mom's credit, she wasn't convinced the asthma diagnosis was correct. Call it mother's intuition, but she knew something was wrong."

Over the next several weeks, a similar scenario occurred with maddening predictability as Bral and his mother visited a range of specialists yet continued to hear the same diagnoses they had received for almost two months. "It was very frustrating because by this point I had undergone numerous blood tests, X-rays, and imaging exams, but no definitive

diagnosis was ever reached—and I wasn't feeling any better."

A Devastating Diagnosis

Call it divine intervention or simple childhood folly, but a painful interaction with a kitchen blender would soon prove to be a lifesaving injury. "I don't know why I did it, but one day I stuck my finger in a blender and cut off a piece of my finger," Bral explained. "Because it wouldn't stop bleeding, we had to go to Children's Hospital to get it cauterized."

During the emergency room visit, Bral's mother happened to share details with the ER physician of her son's medical issues, which had yet to be resolved. As a result, Bral was referred to another specialist within Children's Hospital, who recommended that Bral get a PET scan. "I had the three-hour-long PET scan at a nuclear imaging center, and when I was finished, I was told I could hang out in the lobby or go across the street to the bookstore while the medical team discussed the results with my mom. I love to read, so I chose to go to the bookstore."

Because he was so immersed in his reading, Bral failed to notice how much time had passed. "When I looked up, I noticed it was start-



ing to get dark out, so I walked back across the street to the imaging center," he said. "When I opened the door to the conference room, however, I saw my mom, the radiologist, my dad, my grandparents, and my aunt and uncle."

Although he was unaware of it at the time, the news was grim, requiring Bral to make an immediate trip to the nearby hospital. "My dad said we needed to go to the emergency room to make sure everything was okay, but that it would be a quick trip and I would soon be home," said Bral, whose idyllic childhood was about to undergo a dramatic transformation.

After he was placed in a room in the back of the emergency department and hooked up to a battery of monitoring devices, the ER doctor walked in with more surprising news. "He said, 'I just spoke with your parents. Unfortunately, we can't admit you to the hospital because we don't have any empty beds here. But we have a bed for you at UCLA's Mattel Children's Hospital.' Five minutes later, an ambulance team walked in and rushed me into a pediatric ambulance."



HOLISTIC HEALER: Based on the physical and emotional travails he has endured on the road to becoming a medical student, it's a pretty safe bet that Bral's future patients will be the exceedingly fortunate recipients of his empathetic nature and broad-based medical acumen.

According to Bral, the following sequence reminded him of a pulse-pounding medical TV drama as the ambulance raced through traffic complete with flashing lights and blaring sirens. "Once we got to UCLA, the doors of the ambulance flew open and an awaiting medical team rushed me into the hospital," he recalled. "That is basically the last memory I had for the next two weeks because I was immediately put on a high dose of steroids and other drugs during my two-week stay in the ICU."

The news he was soon to receive, however, would irretrievably alter all aspects of the life he once knew. "I was eventually transferred to the pediatric hematology-oncology ward, but I really didn't understand what was going on at this point," he explained. "One day my team of doctors sat down at the end of my bed and said, 'Daniel, we need to tell you what's going on. You have non-Hodgkin's lymphoma.'"

Not grasping the gravity of the words his doctors had just articulated, Bral responded by asking them what that meant. What followed were the three chilling words nobody wants to ever utter or hear: *You have cancer*. "I don't remember asking this, but my parents, who had been standing by the door, said my next question after that was, 'Am I going to die?' I can't even imagine what my parents were going through hearing those words come from their child's mouth."

As it turned out, having the PET scan saved Bral's life. The cancer, which had initiated on one side of his neck, had spread to the other, which explained the increased swelling and escalating breathing difficulties. To add insult to injury, the inhalers Bral was initially given to treat what was misdiagnosed as asthma weeks earlier actually served to nourish the tumor's vicious growth. "When I was hospitalized, the tumor was severely



FUTURE PHYSICIAN: "I have always wanted to be a doctor," Bral admitted. "There are pictures of me as a little kid in surgical scrubs because I loved playing doctor. As a child, I loved the idea of being a doctor because I wanted to be able to take care of and help people."

compressing my windpipe. That was what the doctors' saw in the PET scan. Basically, I would have died had it not been detected that day."

Chemotherapy, Isolation, and Depression

Once his physicians revealed the devastating diagnosis, Bral was immediately placed on a long-term chemotherapy regimen, which lasted two years and forced him to miss the remainder of sixth grade and some segments of seventh grade. "I really felt like I was on house arrest," said Bral of the debilitating treatments that left him weak, bald, bloated, and unable to leave his home for fear of infection. "I went through two years of nonstop and intense chemo. To put it in perspective, most non-Hodgkin's lymphoma patients receive a maximum of three to six months of treatment."

Although he was unable to attend school for a sustained period, Bral, who is fluent in Farsi, English, Spanish, and Hebrew, insisted he keep up with his assignments while he was homebound. "I was able to do a modified sixth grade at home, and



then I continued on to seventh grade, although I continued to miss some school due to my chemo treatments," he said.

Over the next several years, as his cancer faded into remission, Bral redoubled his academic efforts, earning acceptance to Yeshiva University in New York thanks to his participation in a unique early admissions program. "I attended a college preparatory school that allowed you to take a heavy course load, so I was able to complete many of the requirements you needed to be able to complete high school," he explained.

His efforts to shine academically may have been laudable, but they also served as way for Bral to avoid dealing with the mounting depression he had been experiencing ever since his initial cancer diagnosis. "I suffered with chronic depression for a very long time, but I was never re-

ally aware of it because of the defense mechanisms I developed," he explained. "I had learned how to completely numb myself and my emotions until they snowballed enough that I would experience what felt like a nervous breakdown. It would become so debilitating that I would have suicidal ideations. It sounds crazy, but it's actually a common occurrence among cancer survivors, which can sometimes be attributed to what is called survivor guilt."

Postponing the inevitable is rarely a wise decision, so when a confluence of factors forced Bral to his breaking point, he knew the time had come to confront his demons and embrace a new way of thinking—and living. "I didn't begin to process my feelings until I went to college in New York, which was the first time I had ever been away from home and on my own," he said. "I had been a

star student in high school, but when I got to college, all of a sudden I had a difficult time passing classes.

"Things just weren't making sense, and I couldn't process the information anymore, which was very frustrating for me. That got me even more depressed because I didn't know how to handle it, so I would seclude myself," said Bral of his dangerously oppressive emotional state. "I would just disappear and figuratively crawl under a rock. My friends started to point my behaviors out to me, which made me even more aware of them. That's when I began to realize I didn't enjoy feeling so miserable all the time."

That realization eventually led Bral to schedule regular visits with a specialized psychologist, who helped him power through his depression and work through years of pent-up emotions and issues. "She helped me to completely revolutionize my life in terms of tapping into the emotions I didn't allow myself to feel as a young teen dealing with cancer," he stated. "I don't know how it came up, but I told her it felt like I had been robbed of my childhood. Saying that was a big breakthrough for me. I really felt as if I had become a 65-year-old man at the age of 11 because I was dealing with things most people don't deal with until much later in life. I never got to be a normal adolescent or even young adult. I resented it, and I still sometimes resent that I didn't get to truly live that part of my life. But I've come to terms with it."

As a teen cancer survivor, Bral has been on a mission to assist other teens and young adults afflicted with the disease and provide them with the coping strategies—and a sympathetic ear—needed to help them move past their feelings of anger and anguish. Currently, he serves as chairman of Teen Cancer America's Young People's Advisory Committee

and is involved with several other cancer advocacy groups.

NSU...and Beyond

After graduating from Yeshiva University with a bachelor's degree in Sociology in 2011, Bral returned to Los Angeles for about three years. During this time, he worked at a hospital and took additional science courses to enhance his chances of getting into medical school. He then applied to graduate school and was accepted to Georgetown University's School of Medicine in Washington, D.C., earning a Master of Science in Physiology and Biophysics with a concentration in complementary and alternative medicine in 2014.

"As you can imagine, I utilized many different complementary medicine modalities during my cancer experience," he said. "As a result, I felt I could not really be the best physician and clinician for my future patients if I was unable to understand the intersection of con-

he visited NSU-COM and had an opportunity to interact with several of the college's current students. "Something just clicked within me during my time here," he explained. "I just knew that this was where I belonged. What is so amazing about the D.O. program here at NSU-COM is that I am learning a skillset I will have forever — and that I don't need anything more than a table and chair at times to be able to practice and diagnose."

Because he's a first-year student, it may be a bit too early for Bral to declare what area of medicine he'll pursue when he graduates in 2018, although his focus is indeed narrowing. "I think my decision is going to change a number of times, but at this point I am looking toward doing an anesthesiology residency track and then going into pain management."

Although the physical and emotional journey he has been on since being diagnosed with cancer has

he looks forward to the day when he can do the same for his patients. "Several years ago, I was matched up with a young man who had been diagnosed with something similar to what I had," he explained. "I visited him often, but he was very much keeping me at a distance because he was scared. One day, when it was just the two of us in his hospital room, I told him to let it all out. He just looked at me and said, 'What are you talking about?' I told him to let everything you have been thinking about, all of those emotions that I see on your face, the things you're afraid to say in front of your parents, your brother, or all of your friends...just let it all out, here and now."

"He sat in silence at first, but then one tear trickled down his face," added Bral, who returns to Los Angeles for annual follow-up visits to ensure his cancer remains in remission. "Then the dam opened and he was crying uncontrollably

"Because I have lived through and dealt with the emotions that many of my future patients will be feeling, I will be able to recognize them," he explained. "I don't think that is something many doctors can do—see and feel the emotions their patients are feeling and know exactly how to approach the situation."

ventional and complementary and alternative medicine."

Interestingly, Bral's desire to become a physician can be traced back to some of his earliest childhood memories. "I have always wanted to be a doctor," he admitted. "There are pictures of me as a little kid in surgical scrubs because I loved playing doctor. As a child, I loved the idea of being a doctor because I wanted to be able to take care of and help people."

In terms of determining whether to pursue a D.O. or M.D. medical school track, Bral admitted to being on the fence regarding the decision. But that all changed when

been an arduous one, Bral is aware that the experiences he's endured will only serve to make him a more compassionate and effective healer. "Because I have lived through and dealt with the emotions that many of my future patients will be feeling, I will be able to recognize them," he explained. "I don't think that is something many doctors can do—see and feel the emotions their patients are feeling and know exactly how to approach the situation."

In his role as a volunteer with various cancer organizations, Bral has been able to successfully put these skills to the test, which is why

as he unleashed all his frustrations and fears. He wasn't even aware it was occurring, just like his parents weren't aware of how he was feeling. I could see he needed somebody to talk to and that he wasn't going to be able to allow himself to let those emotions go unless someone gave him the space to do that."

Based on the numerous physical and emotional travails he has endured on the road to becoming a medical student, it's a pretty safe bet that Bral's future patients will be the exceedingly fortunate recipients of his empathetic nature and broad-based medical acumen.



INTERNATIONAL OUTREACH

Inaugural Odyssey to India Provides Interprofessional Health Care

By OMS-II Siddarth Goyal

During the holiday break last December, Anthony J. Silvagni, D.O., Pharm.D., M.Sc., FACPFP *dist.*, professor of family medicine and public health and dean emeritus, along with OMS-II Siddarth Goyal and Ashok Patel, D.M.D., organized an international medical outreach trip to Ahwa, India, that benefit-

ted the underprivileged tribal population of Dang, Gujarat, which is a severely underserved pocket of an otherwise affluent state.

Although NSU-COM has coordinated many medical outreach trips to underserved countries over the past 15 years, this was the college's inaugural trip to India—and the first to include

significant participation from NSU's College of Dental Medicine. Thanks to the collaboration of the joint NSU-COM and College of Dental Medicine's Indian Physicians of South Florida (IFOF) chapter, 10 medical and 3 dental students participated in the medical outreach trip. They were Natasha Patel, Nimish Maniar, Radha Patel, Stephanie Tamayo, Anu Nair, Aroba Sadaf, Siddarth Goyal, Varun Goyal, Nishant Patel, Bansi Patel, Sunny Parekh, Christy Vadakkan, and Rohin Chand. Other participants included Dr. Silvagni, Dr. Patel, Dianna Silvagni, J.D., clinical assistant professor of medical education, Lalit Goyal, M.D., and Shivani Goyal.

During the medical outreach endeavor, which took place December 22-27, free medical and dental services were provided at the general hospital. Thanks to the assistance of the KJ Patel Charitable Trust, which is building a state-of-the-art health care facility in the area, vital local arrangements were coordinated prior to our arrival. We also received an overwhelming amount of support from the local community as both local authorities and government officials welcomed us warmly. In addition, we were assisted by hospital-appointed physicians, which included an ophthalmologist, a dental surgeon, and a gynecologist.

During our time in India, the students had an

opportunity to witness many cases that included assisting with a live birth, viewing cataract surgeries, and caring for a woman with breast cancer. Two student doctors served as language translators not only for the team but for our patients so they could understand the medical aspect of what we were doing. This added tremendous value as some villagers traveled up to three hours to come to the hospital, which was in desperate need of assistance since it didn't even have a permanent staff. Consequently, several doctors traveled from nearby cities in order to help.

Dr. Silvagni and Dr. Goyal, who is an emergency medicine physician, were excellent mentors and helped many patients. They also held lectures during lunch hour to integrate the cases being seen. Not surprisingly, the students agreed that both Dr. Silvagni and Dr. Goyal are the type of physicians we aspire to be like one day because they embody the humanistic aspect of medicine that NSU-COM strives for on a continuum. Mrs. Silvagni, who served in a crucial role as the hospital staff trainer and leader, brought great joy to the children by bringing them gifts. Similarly, Mrs. Goyal led in conducting important nutrition surveys with student doctor Anu Nair for all the patients being seen in order to provide continuous care and address the nutrition deficiencies that are prevalent in this area.

From the dental perspective, Natasha Patel led her college's side of the trip, with fellow dental students Nimish Maniar, who serves as IPOF's dental vice president, and Radha Patel providing excellent dental care to their patients. During their patient interactions, they witnessed tooth extractions, multiple precancerous lesions of leukoplakia and oral submucous fibrosis, and multiple buccal-space infections. They also saw many young children afflicted with rampant caries due to improper hygiene. Because oral hygiene education and prevention are sorely lacking, one of the primary goals was to teach the local community about proper brushing techniques and provide them oral hygiene education.

Vanbandhu Arogya Dham, a world-class health care facility being built by the KJ Patel Charitable Trust, will be extremely useful for future international health outreach trips and serve as a positive step forward. This ultramodern facility will likely become a model for the national mandate in India to uplift the tribal population, especially within the health care sector. Significant progress has been made in construction of the facility, which will also include a rainwater harvesting system to remedy the severe water shortage in this generally rainy region.

In addition to providing free medical and dental care to the region's 50,000 school-aged children – and

to adults at a subsidized cost – the facility will be used to train about 30 high school graduate tribal girls every year as medical and dental assistants/auxiliaries and find them employment opportunities among private practitioners. Vanbandhu Arogya Dham, which will be functional in a few months, will serve as the perfect opportunity for many medical and dental schools to join hands with local doctors in India to fight all the preventable diseases and motivate the rural/tribal population to take part in preventive measures.

Trips like this bring quite a bit of health awareness and a sense of relief to the local population. As a result, many future trips will be needed to bridge the gap between this particular area and other urban cities. We are hoping to continue the wonderful relationship that was developed with the staff at Ahwa's hospital and make this a biannual trip.

It was an overwhelming experience for everyone involved, and the patients were moved by the sheer professionalism, love, and care extended to them by all the team members. Without the guidance and experience of Dr. Silvagni, this trip would not have been possible. He will be conducting more trips in the future and growing the NSU-COM International Medical Outreach Program, which will offer our students more wonderful opportunities to work alongside him.





Residents James Pfeifer, D.O., Shannon Meador, D.O., and Michael Tonsor, D.O., listening to Dr. St. Anthony Amofah as he explains a patient's care in the Urgent Care Department.

CEME SPOTLIGHT

Community Health of South Florida, Inc.

By Scott Colton, B.A., APR

COM/HPD Director of Medical Communications and Public Relations

Community Health of South Florida, Inc. (CHI) is a nonprofit health care organization with nearly 45 years of experience providing health care to a rapidly growing and highly diverse population. The Brodes H. Hartley Jr. Teaching Health Center at CHI is the very first federally qualified health center to become a teaching health center in Florida as of June 2014.

"Our vision to become an educational institution of excellence is now realized," said Colonel Brodes H. Hartley, Jr., CHI president and CEO. "Community Health of South Florida is now contributing to the national effort to train primary care clinicians to meet the needs of the many newly insured from the Affordable Care Act. It also brings a higher level of quality to the organization."

CHI's graduate medical education program is fully accredited by the American Osteopathic Association, while its ambulatory, laboratory, and behavioral health services are accredited by The Joint Commission. In addition, CHI is designated as a Level 3 patient-centered medical home by the National Committee on Quality Assurance—the highest level attainable.

The first residency class began in June 2014 and includes 12 residents—three in family medicine, five in psychiatry and four in obstetrics and gynecology. While residents will graduate with CHI as their official training site, they also rotate through local hospitals and with local specialists. Larkin Community Hospital and Jackson South Community Hospital serve as affiliated hospitals, while NSU's College of Osteopathic Medicine serves as the academic sponsor.

"This will increase CHI's visibility in the health care community and improve our ability to recruit primary care clinicians over the next decade," said St. Anthony Amofah, M.D., who serves as CHI's chief medical officer and chief academic officer.

A residency at CHI is very valuable because it exposes the residents to culturally diverse populations and allows them to become advocates for underserved populations. "Because of the diverse population, we have a wide variety of clinical pathology that provides invaluable experience for physicians," said Susan Manella, D.O., director of medical education and the family practice program. "They are getting hands-on experience with diagnosing, treating, and maintaining the health care needs of patients who could otherwise not afford to do so."

Community Health of South Florida has 10 health centers and 42 school-based centers. It offers a comprehensive approach to care as many of its health centers provide a variety of services such as primary care, pediatrics, dental, obstetrics and gynecology, behavioral health, a 24-hour inpatient crisis intervention facility, urgent care, pharmacy, laboratory services, and transportation.

CHI's graduate medical education programs provide first-rate and advanced educational opportunities for emerging physicians. Unique components of the residency program curriculum include the integration of new and emerging topic areas that incorporate instruction in medical ethics, medical genomics, medical informatics, all-hazards preparedness, cultural sensitivity, and patient literacy. These programs also offer advanced education of the highest quality, combining teaching, clinical service, safe patient care, and research and facilitate the

residents' ethical, professional, and personal development.

Upon program completion, residents will be capable of providing comprehensive and compassionate patient-centered care in the context of family and community. According to the Health Resources and Services Administration, studies show that residents who graduate from community health centers tend to choose to practice in health centers and in other comparable settings that serve underserved minorities and high-risk populations.

"Our goal is to have well-rounded family physicians, psychiatrists, and obstetricians once they graduate from here," said Elizabeth Philippe, M.D., chief of family medicine and GME associate director. "We hope we'll have a good retention rate for residents to continue working at CHI."

The Brodes H. Hartley Jr. Teaching Health Center at CHI provides residents a community-based and real-life setting. Residents witness beneficial partnerships in the community such as HIV/AIDS and school-based

programs as well as have an opportunity to conduct public health-based research. This type of academic environment encourages evidence-based exemplary practice. The academic affiliation enhances the health center's image with the patient and encourages retention, which reinforces the provider-patient relationship.

Medical graduates practicing in a community health center will be exposed to a wide variety of patients as well as learn innovative models of patient-centered medical homes with interdisciplinary, team-based care. In addition, residents will learn the challenges of working with non-compliant patients, patients who seek treatment late, and the uninsured who need help finding funding for necessary surgeries or having providers act as advocates on their behalf for more specialized care.

At The Brodes H. Hartley Jr. Teaching Health Center, residents will be able to work hard and learn from an acclaimed group of faculty members while they work in a bustling environment.



DOCTORAL DISCUSSION: Conferring about a case are OB-GYN residents Raina Armbruster, D.O., Katherine Jones, D.O., Michael Tonsor, D.O., and Hilary Gerber, D.O. (chief resident).



Disaster Medicine Club

Preparing Students for an Unpredictable World

*By Kelley Davis, Ph.D., Director of the M.S. in
Disaster and Emergency Preparedness Program*

*Angela Garcia, Pharm.D., M.P.H.
Assistant Professor of Public Health*

*Kristi Messer, M.P.H., M.S.W., Assistant Professor of
Public Health and Disaster and Emergency Preparedness*

Over the last decade, the United States was among the top five countries affected by natural disasters. Events such as the recent Ebola outbreak and cases making their way to the United States, hurricanes Katrina and Sandy, and the attacks on September 11, 2001, indicate a lack of preparedness in the U.S. health care system that is widespread. This fact has not been lost on NSU-COM students, who took it upon themselves to start a new club—the Disaster Medicine Club—in January 2014.

Since disasters affect individuals from all walks of life and have a significant impact on the health professions, the Disaster Medicine Club set out to be different from other NSU-COM clubs. Its goal is to involve students from all NSU Health Professions Division (HPD) programs in an effort to create an interprofessional group, much like what is found in the workplace environment when preparing for and responding to disasters and emergencies. This approach aligns with the vision of Craig Fugate, administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency, which encompasses engaging the “whole community,” involving professionals from many diverse sectors alongside members and organizations from the community.

The Disaster Medicine Club is making a concentrated effort to recruit all HPD students as well as graduate and

undergraduate students from across the NSU campus interested in this important area of disaster preparedness and community response. In addition to NSU-COM students, the club currently has members from the College of Dental Medicine and College of Nursing as well as undergraduate students in the Farquhar College of Arts and Sciences' Pre-Medical Society and those pursuing a major in exercise and sport science.

The Disaster Medicine Club, which is more than just a social organization that invites speakers to participate in lunch meetings, requires all members to be trained as a volunteer for either the local Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) or the Medical Reserve Corps. Davie Fire and Rescue—NSU's CERT partner—has already graduated three groups of students and faculty members that have successfully completed a 20-hour CERT training. This training includes psychological first aid, light search and rescue, field triage, fire safety, and basic first aid, including CPR and the use of an automated external defibrillator.

Using the training learned in the classroom and during exercises,



CERT members can assist individuals in their community, workplace, or on campus following an event when professional responders are not immediately available to help. Many club members have also opted to become members of the Medical Reserve Corps.

Club members have the opportunity to participate in a variety of volunteer activities both on campus and in the community. To date, members have participated in the following events:

NSU COMMUNITYFEST (where children negotiated an obstacle course and learned about CPR)

A DAY FOR CHILDREN (where children participated in a scavenger hunt for items commonly found in a grab-and-go kit)

NSU-COM PREPAREDNESS ICE CREAM SOCIAL (providing information to participants on a variety of topics related to preparedness)

ACTIVE SHOOTER EXERCISE on the NSU campus, Special Olympics 5K run on the NSU campus, and a full-scale disaster exercise at the Fort Lauderdale-Hollywood International Airport

In addition, NSU's Disaster Medicine Club is the first student group to be formally associated with the American Academy of Disaster Medi-

cine (AADM). Currently, the club's officers and faculty advisers are working with the AADM to develop strategies to enhance student involvement with the academy and at national conferences—and to pave the way for other universities across the country to develop sustainable student organizations with high-stakes community engagement in disaster and emergency preparedness.

Disaster medicine is a necessary and growing discipline, and in the not-too-distant future, medical schools, organizations, hospitals, and associations that do not offer education or credentials in disaster medicine may very well be compared to hotels that do not provide in-room Internet. The study of disaster medicine will develop physicians and other health care leaders that not only provide medical care to victims of tragedy, but also are involved in the preparation, planning, response, and recovery efforts related to disasters—and taking a leadership role in these efforts. The NSU-COM Disaster Medicine Club is certainly a step in this direction, and we are proud to be the faculty advisers of this new and innovative club.



THE ART OF MEDICINE

HPD Students Showcase Their Creativity

By OMS-II Ariel Lee

"...we want the student to carry a living picture of all or any part of the body in his mind, as an artist carries the mental picture of the face, scenery, beast, or anything that he wishes to represent by his brush."

A.T. Still, M.D., D.O. – *The Philosophy and Mechanical Principles of Osteopathy.*



The founding father of osteopathic medicine himself clearly encouraged the importance of art along with a sound knowledge of science, but until recently this principle was an unfilled vacancy among the extracurricular opportunities offered to our student body here at NSU's Health Professions Division (HPD).

To remedy this situation, the new Fine Arts and Cultural Club recently emerged, forging ahead with remarkable passion and fortitude. Our academic curriculum praises the philosophy of humanities, and with the creation of this club, we now have a means to actually practice the avocation. As a result, the Fine Arts and Cultural Club recently expanded from being an NSU-COM alliance to one encompassing all HPD members. The club actively encourages student participation in visual art, music, dance, literature, crafting, and theatre and offers something to every student regardless of his or her creative nature.

The Fine Arts and Cultural Club began with a vision from OMS-II Britney Gibby as she sat upstairs in the student lounge gazing down at the second-year medical students who were filled with embarrassment and excitement as they took their clinical exams. It struck Gibby that the perfect antidote to the constant stress students faced was an outlet for creativity, which is why she teamed up with fellow OMS-II Angie Alegria

to establish what would become the Fine Arts and Cultural Club.

The duo began the grueling task of drawing up the constitution, preparing the paperwork, and presenting its idea to the college's Student Government Association to prove it deserved a spot in the big leagues alongside the more established clubs. The club was granted probation status, and thanks to unflagging student support, it will finally have a place in NSU's official club roster in the next academic year.

The mission statement is a positive reflection of the art involved in healing professions, articulating the following: "We will work as a team to improve observation, diagnostic, and modality skills within the students who desire to have a career in medicine through their creative efforts. We have a vision to enhance the comprehensive and balanced nature of the osteopathic approach within community-based medicine."

Despite its fledgling status, the Fine Arts and Cultural Club has branched out and thrived. From creating holiday cards for veterans and singing Christmas carols to hospitalized children to crafting butterflies to post on hospice-room doors, students have been invited to exercise their talents while getting to know the local community around them in a more personal way.

The club's latest endeavor involved a collective art show that revolved around the theme *Health Care Professional and Patient Relationships*. Student artists from the HPD's various colleges provided myriad paintings, prints, and photographs that showcased their own personal vision of what their future occupation means to them. The free art exhibit, which was hosted by the HPD Library beginning on April 6, serves a dual purpose because it brings us together through art and stimulates creative thought during study breaks for those using the library.

Any HPD student interested in joining the Fine Arts and Cultural Club can do so for a membership fee of \$20. Please contact hpdfineartsclub@gmail.com for additional information.

**Blavo****Bruno, Jr.****Gabay****McCarthy****Sandhouse****Snyder**

Cyril Blavo, D.O., M.S., M.P.H. and **T.M., FACOP**, director of the college's Master of Public Health Program, was reappointed in September to the Broward Regional Health Planning Council Board of Directors by the Broward County Commissioners as well as to the Advisory Council on Genetics and Newborn Screening of the Florida Department of Health. In addition, Dr. Blavo was named as one of the Top Black Educational Leaders in South Florida for 2014 in the October issue of *Legacy South Florida*, which is a special supplement that appears in the *Sun Sentinel*.

William E. Bruno, Jr., M.D., FAAP, was honored on November 15 at the Trump Doral Miami Hotel with the Monarch Award for his outstanding commitment to an organization called A Safe Haven for Newborns that is sponsored by the Gloria M. Silverio Foundation.

Mark Gabay, D.O., FAAP, FACOP, assistant professor of pediatrics, was appointed as secretary/treasurer of the American Osteopathic Board of Pediatrics last fall and was selected by the National Board of Osteopathic Medical Examiners as the 2014 Item Writer of the Year for COMLEX-USA Level 2.

Heather C. McCarthy, D.O., assistant professor of medical education and osteopathic principles and practice and executive director of the Clinical Skills Training Center, was recently selected to the National Board of Osteopathic Medical Examiners Case Development Committee for the COMLEX-USA Level 2-PE.

Mark Sandhouse, D.O., M.S., assistant dean of administration and chair of the OPP department, was named as faculty chairman of the National Board of Osteopathic Medical Examiners OPP/NMM Department.

Samuel Snyder, D.O., FACP, FACOI, FASN, professor and chair of the Department of Internal Medicine, was appointed to the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education's Internal Medicine Review Committee.

Leadership Team Changes Announced

On February 12, Elaine M. Wallace, D.O., M.S., M.S., M.S., NSU-COM dean, held a reception to introduce staff and faculty members to her reconfigured leadership team, which is listed below.

STUDENT AND ALUMNI AFFAIRS

Howard Neer, D.O.

Associate Dean of Alumni and Student Affairs

Kathy Sadler, Director of Intramural Affairs

Delfina Wilson, Ph.D., M.A.

Assistant Dean of Alumni and Student Affairs

TBA – Assistant Director of Student Affairs

FACULTY AFFAIRS

Kenneth Johnson, D.O., Assistant Dean of Faculty

(All NSU-COM faculty members will report to Dr. Johnson through their chairs.)

COMMUNITY AFFAIRS

Steven Zucker, D.M.D., M.Ed., Associate Dean for Community Affairs and AHEC Program Director

James Howell, M.D., M.P.H., Assistant Dean of Professional Relations and Chair of the Department of Rural and Urban Underserved Medicine

RESEARCH AND INNOVATION

Leonard Levy, D.P.M., M.P.H.

Associate Dean of Research and Innovation

Cecilia Rokusek, Ed.D., R.D.

Assistant Dean of Research and Innovation

CLINICAL AFFAIRS

Edward Packer, D.O., Assistant Dean of Clinical Affairs

OSTEOPATHIC EDUCATION

Joseph De Gaetano, D.O., M.S.Ed., Senior Associate Dean of Osteopathic Medical Education

Direct Reports to Dr. De Gaetano

Margaret Wilkinson, Ph.D., M.A.

Associate Dean of Preclinical Education

Hilda DeGaetano, D.O.

Assistant Dean of Preclinical Education

Doris Newman, D.O., Executive Director of Clinical Education

Delia Celestine-Harper, Ed.D., M.P.H.

Executive Director of Postgraduate Education

Marti Echols, Ph.D., M.Ed.

Assistant Dean of Medical Education

Heather McCarthy, D.O., Executive Director of the Clinical Skills Training Center

GRADUATE AND COMMUNITY EDUCATION

Phyllis Filker, D.M.D., M.P.H., Assistant Dean of Graduate and Community Education

Direct Reports to Dr. Filker

Cyril Blavo, D.O., M.S., M.P.H. and T.M.
Public Health (M.P.H.)

Jennie Lou, M.D., M.Sc., Biomedical Informatics (M.S. BI)

Marti Echols, Ph.D., M.Ed., Medical Education (M.S.)

Kelly Davis, Ph.D., Disaster and Emergency Preparedness (M.S. DEP)

Cecilia Rokusek, Ed.D., R.D., M.S. in Nutrition

TBA – Emergency Medical Services

Lynn Lafferty, Pharm.D., M.B.A., and **Janet Roseman, Ph.D., M.S., R-DMT**, Integrative Medicine

Anthony J. Silvagni, D.O., Pharm.D., M.Sc.
International Medicine and Interprofessional Affairs

ADMINISTRATION/OPERATIONS

Mark Sandhouse, D.O., M.S.

Assistant Dean of Administration

Direct Reports to Dr. Sandhouse

Stephanie Petrosky, M.H.A., R.D.
Director of Administrative Services and Special Projects (change initiatives)

Human Resources Reviews

ADVANCEMENT

TBA – Director

**Champion-Lippmann****Cook****Corbitt****Gemayel****Grammenos****Gunther**

OMS-III Carisa Champion-Lippmann was elected national chair of the Council of Osteopathic Student Government Presidents (COSGP), which is a council of the American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine. She also was appointed to serve on the American Osteopathic Association (AOA) Brand Awareness Campaign Task Force, which is a multi-million dollar project aimed at raising awareness nationally of osteopathic medicine. In addition, Champion-Lippmann was appointed vice chair of the AOA Council on Student Affairs and vice chair of the Mentor of the Year Selection Committee. On the scholarly front, she coauthored an article entitled "The Era of Big Data" with 1988 NSU-COM alumnus **Tyler Cymet, D.O., FACP, FACFP**, that was published in the volume 15, issue 3 edition of the *Maryland Medical Journal*.

OMS-I Kristina T. Gemayel presented a poster entitled "Genomic Sequencing as a Novel Mechanism for the

Comprehensive Analysis of Polymorphisms in Disease" at the 112th Annual Florida Osteopathic Medical Association Convention and at the University of Miami Miller School of Medicine's Eastern-Atlantic Student Research Forum.

OMS-II Alexandra Grammenos and **OMS-II Kelly Corbitt** presented a clinical research project entitled "Detecting Water Content in Male Arms Via Tissue Dielectric Constant (TDC) Measurements: Baseline for Potential Use in Detecting Lymphedema in Male Breast Cancer" at the 112th Annual Florida Osteopathic Medical Association Convention and at the University of Miami Miller School of Medicine's Eastern-Atlantic Student Research Forum.

OMS-IIs William Gunther, Karin Hwang, and Terry Parsons were awarded ACOFP Auxiliary scholarships during the 52nd Annual American College of Osteopathic Family Physicians (ACOFPP) National Con-

vention held March 12-15 in Las Vegas, Nevada. Gunther and Hwang won two of the 20 Osteopathic Family Medicine Student Scholarships, which recognize medical students who have an interest in family medicine and the ACOFP. Each awardee receives \$1,000 each to help defray medical school and/or personal expenses. Parsons, who was a recent president of the college's ACOFP student chapter and is parliamentarian of the ACOFP's National Student Executive Board, won an Emerging Osteopathic Leader Scholarship, which is awarded to emerging osteopathic student leaders involved in family medicine and the ACOFP. This coveted award is given to two osteopathic student leaders in order to affirm the recipients' interest in the association leadership and provides \$2,500 in helping defray medical school costs and personal expenses.

Janet Hamstra, Ed.D., director of preclinical education and associate professor of

internal medicine, presented a workshop entitled "Walk the Walk: Getting to the Heart of Leadership" at the 2015 Health Professions Educational Research Symposium held January 24 at Nova Southeastern University's main campus.

T. Lucas Hollar, Ph.D., assistant professor of public health, presented a paper entitled "Public Health and an Existential Model of Administration: Relevance, Meaning, and Decision Making Within Public Health Administrative Action" at the 142nd American Public Health Association Annual Meeting and Exposition held November 16-19 in New Orleans, Louisiana. Dr. Hollar also served as a coauthor on five other oral and poster presentations at the conference. In addition, he coauthored an article with **Nicole Cook, Ph.D., M.P.A., OMS-IV Summer Chavez, and David Quinn, M.P.H.**, a 2013 M.P.H. graduate, entitled "Support for Smoke-Free Multi-Unit Housing Policies Among Racially and Ethnically Diverse,

**Hamstra****Hollar****Hwang****Jacobs****Law****Levy**



Newman



Pandya



Parsons



Ray



Rokusek



Roseman

Low-Income Seniors in South Florida" in the *Journal of Cross-Cultural Gerontology*.

Robin J. Jacobs, Ph.D., M.S.W., M.S., associate professor of biomedical informatics, psychiatry and behavioral medicine, and public health and director of international medicine, presented "Training Osteopathic Students to Be Physician-Scientists Through Meaningful Student Involvement" at the Health Professions Educational Research Symposium held January 24 at NSU. Dr. Jacobs also coauthored an article entitled "Identification of Musculoskeletal Disorders in Medically Underserved Regions of South America and Vietnam" in the January issue of the *Journal of the American Osteopathic Association* with **Arif M. Rana, Ph.D., Ed.S., M.S.**, and **Elaine M. Wallace, D.O., M.S., M.S., M.S.** In addition, she coauthored an article with **Raymond Ownby, M.D., Ph.D., M.B.A.**, entitled "Development of a Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate Computer-Based Health Literacy Intervention for Spanish-Dominant Hispanics Living with HIV" that appeared in the November 2014 issue of *BMC Medical Informatics and Decision Making*.

OMS-II Adrienne Law coauthored an article entitled "A Survey of Anesthesiologists' Role, Trust in Anesthesiolo-

gists, and Knowledge and Fears About Anesthesia Among Predominantly Hispanic Patients from an Inner-City Preoperative Clinic" that was published in the February issue of the *Journal of Clinical Anesthesia*.

Leonard Levy, D.P.M., M.P.H., associate dean of research and innovation, was invited by the Council for International Exchange of Scholars to continue as a reviewer for the 2014-15 Fulbright Specialist Program Public/Global Health Peer Review Committee.

Doris Newman, D.O., FAAO, associate professor of osteopathic principles and practice and executive director of clinical education, was inducted as president of the American Academy of Osteopathy at the annual convocation banquet held March 14 in Louisville, Kentucky. In addition, she attended the Comprehensive Osteopathic Medical Achievement Test item-writing workshop held February 19-20 in Chicago, Illinois. Dr. Newman also presented a lecture and led a workshop entitled "OMT in the Child and Adolescent Psychiatry Patient: Homeostasis and Cytokine Response to OMT" at the 112th Annual Florida Osteopathic Medical Association Convention.

Naushira Pandya, M.D., CMD, FACP, professor and

chair of the Department of Geriatrics and project director of the Florida Coastal Geriatric Resources, Education, and Training Center, was invited to make a presentation on long-term care and participate on a panel at the inaugural Regional Forum for the White House Conference on Aging in Tampa, Florida, on February 19. Dr. Pandya was also elected president of the AMDA—the Society for Post-Acute and Long-Term Care Medicine Board of Directors.

OMS-II Kristi Ray was awarded a Student Osteopathic Medical Association Foundation International Medical Relief/Medical Mission Scholarship to assist with transportation, room, board, and essential expenses related to her trip to the Dominican Republic this summer, where she will teach emergency preparedness and help to set up health clinics.

Cecilia Rokusek, Ed.D., R.D., assistant dean of research and innovation and executive director of the GREAT GEC, was the keynote speaker at the Second Annual Interprofessional Geriatric Conference sponsored by the Hungarian Ministry of Health held December 8-12 in Budapest, Hungary. She was also one of five U.S. representatives of the Gerontological Society of America that discussed

the impact of global aging at the inaugural Hong Kong Symposium held January 3-6. In addition, Dr. Rokusek presented two posters at the 41st Annual Meeting of the Association for Gerontology in Higher Education held February 26-29 in Nashville, Tennessee. The titles of her presentations were "Professional Education for Alzheimer's Resources and Leadership (Project PEARL): A Model Program of Professional and Care Partner Education" and "Integration of Geriatric Education Throughout Health Profession Education Curriculum Through Emphasis on Interprofessional Education: A Global Initiative."

Janet Roseman, Ph.D., M.S., R-DMT, assistant professor of medical education, was invited to write a chapter for the book entitled *Soulful and Spiritual Research in Dance Studies: Bodily Inscription, Self-Narrative, and Auto-Ethnography* by Intellect Publishing. In March, Dr. Roseman's book entitled *If Joan of Arc Had Cancer: Finding Courage, Faith, and Healing from History's Most Inspirational Woman Warrior* was published by New World Library. She also edited a special spring issue of the *Journal of Alternative and Complementary Therapies* that centered on the theme of sacred space: spirituality in the medical encounter.



Sprague



Tabor



Villacorta



Vora



Wallace



Young

Peter Sprague, D.P.T., PT, OSC, assistant professor of osteopathic principles and practice in the Department of Sports Medicine, authored a case report entitled "Functional Movement Pattern Training Improves Mechanics in a Female Runner with External Snapping Hip Syndrome," which was published in the January issue of the *International Journal of Athletic Therapies and Training*.

Melissa Tabor, D.O., assistant professor of sports medicine and NSU team physician, was featured on the American Osteopathic Association's Web site in October in a news release entitled "Ski Bunnies and Hikers Beware." The press information highlighted the lecture she presented on altitude-related illness for the American College of Osteopathic Family Physicians at the 119th Annual Osteopathic Medical Conference and Exposition held October 25-29 in Seattle, Washington. During the symposium, Dr. Tabor also presented a lecture on environmental illness for the American Osteopathic Academy of Sports Medicine.

OMS-IV Miguel Villacorta was awarded a Health Professions Division research grant for his Master of Public Health project entitled

"Understanding Skin Cancer Screening Behaviors, Tanning Attitudes, and Sun Protective Measures in a General Sample Population Using Standardized Skin Survey Items."

OMS-I Aadil Vora was the recipient of a \$500 New Member Scholarship from the Student Osteopathic Medical Association (SOMA) Foundation. Vora, who was one of five students selected nationwide to receive the award, earned the scholarship based on an essay he was required to write on the topic "Vision of Osteopathic Medicine."

Elaine M. Wallace, D.O., M.S., M.S., M.S., NSU-COM dean, who currently has a 4.0 average in her Ed.D. in Organizational Leadership degree program, is a member of the Golden Key International Honour Society—the world's premier collegiate honor society that recognizes those in the top 15 percent of their class who are diligent and committed to excellence and scholastic achievement.

OMS-IV Michael Young served as the first author of a coauthored manuscript on "The Role of Adjuvant Radiotherapy Following Gross Total Resection of Atypical Meningiomas" that is being published in an upcoming issue of *World Neurosurgery*.

Faculty Members' Research Efforts Recognized at NSU External Funding Reception



Dr. Ralph Rogers (left) presents Dr. Lucas Hollar with his plaque.

More than 120 NSU faculty members were honored at the NSU External Funding Recognition Reception at Grand Oaks Golf Club on October 21, which was hosted by Ralph V. Rogers, Jr., Ph.D., NSU's executive vice president for academic affairs and provost, and

Gary S. Margules, Sc.D., NSU vice president for research and technology transfer. The event recognizes the extraordinary efforts of NSU faculty members who received external grant funding during the previous fiscal year, which totaled over \$68 million.

Thanks to the efforts of the following 30 NSU-COM-affiliated individuals, ample amounts of external funding have been received to sustain, enhance, or create various programs and projects:

Cyril Blavo, D.O., M.S., M.P.H. and T.M., Gordon Broderick, Ph.D., Nicole Cook, Ph.D., Kelley L. Davis, Ph.D., Joseph De Gaetano, D.O., M.S.Ed, Michelle Doldren, Ed.D., Marti Echols, Ph.D., M. Isabel Fernandez, Ph.D., Mary Ann Fletcher, Ph.D., Stephen G. Grant, Ph.D., T. Lucas Hollar, Ph.D., Kenneth Johnson, D.O., Nancy G. Klimas, M.D., Leonard Levy, D.P.M., M.P.H., Jennie Q. Lou, M.D., M.Sc., Linda Maurice, M.A., Mariana Morris, Ph.D., Deborah Mulligan, M.D., Raymond Ownby M.D., Ph.D., M.B.A., Naushira Pandya, M.D., CMD, Arif M. Rana, Ph.D., Ed.S., Cecilia Rokusek, Ed.D., R.D., Janet Roseman, Ph.D., Irina Rozenfeld, M.S.N., Gustavo Saldias, M.P.H., Daniel Shaw, Ph.D., Elliot M. Sklar, Ph.D., Jacqueline Thomas, D.O., Kamilah B. Thomas-Purcell, Ph.D., Steven Zucker, D.M.D.



OMS-III Jacob Triplet

was selected as the inaugural winner of the Council of Osteopathic Student Government Presidents (COSGP) Student Researcher of the Year Award. The award was established to recognize an osteopathic medical student researcher who demonstrates a high degree of quality in the realm of basic

science, translational, or clinical research.

Between his second and third year at NSU-COM, Triplet was accepted into the college's one-year Predoctoral Research Fellowship Program, which allowed him to work at the Holy Cross Orthopaedic Research Institute with the shoulder and elbow team. As a result of this experience, he was able to excel in his research

Jacob Triplet Wins COSGP Student Researcher of the Year Award

endeavors and currently has five first-author publications and an additional two as coauthor that have been published in high-impact journals such as the *Journal of Shoulder and Elbow Surgery*.

Over 40 highly qualified students submitted applications; however, the selection committee unanimously agreed that Triplet was the most deserving. "This award is a tremendous honor and reflects upon the level of commitment and support NSU-COM provides to help students achieve excellence," said Eric Glaser, who served as chair of the COSGP Student Researcher of the Year Selection Committee.

Dr. Lubov Nathanson Receives NIH Research Grant

Lubov Nathanson, Ph.D., M.Sc., assistant professor in the college's Institute for Neuro-Immune Medicine (INIM), recently applied for a \$318,864 grant from the National Institutes of Health and received notification of an impending award to fund her research study entitled "Genomic Approach to Find Novel Biomarkers and Mechanisms of Chronic Fatigue Syndrome/Myalgic Encephalomyelitis (CFS/ME)."

Current management of CFS/ME relies solely on symptom management to improve quality of life but does not address the underlying mechanisms, the onset, or the progression of the disease. In an effort to provide insight into the key biological targets involved in CFS/ME presentation, the main



objectives of Dr. Nathanson's research are to identify novel biomarkers and therapeutic targets of CFS/ME and provide insight into disease onset and progression. Her research, which will be conducted over a three-year timespan, aims to use peripheral blood mononuclear cells from patients recruited for the institute's recent research study funded

by the National Institutes of Health.

"We aim to expand our research efforts by using modern genomic technologies, such as RNA sequencing, copy-number variation, and genomic DNA methylation, which lead to a better-targeted therapeutic intervention," Dr. Nathanson said.



On February 19, **Robert S. Juhasz, D.O., FACOI, FACP**, the 118th president of the American Osteopathic Association (AOA), visited NSU-COM to interact with students and faculty members and discuss the unique contribution and impact the osteopathic profession offers to the practice of health care.

AOA President Dr. Robert Juhasz Visits NSU-COM

As AOA president, Dr. Juhasz plans to facilitate more osteopathic medical research, which he said would provide D.O.s fact-based research when communicating their distinctiveness to their patients, their colleagues, and the world.

Pictured (from left) are Elaine M. Wallace, D.O., M.S., M.S., NSU-COM dean, Dr. Robert Juhasz, and Howard Neer, D.O., FACOFP, associate dean of alumni and student affairs and HPD executive associate dean for professional affairs.

ulty members and discuss the unique contribution and impact the osteopathic profession offers to the practice of health care.

CEME Coordinates Ultra-Successful Research Poster Competition

On November 14, the NSU-COM Residency Fair was held in conjunction with the Consortium for Excellence in Medical Education's (CEME) Sixth Annual Scientific Research Poster Competition. A record number of individuals from various CEME affiliates located throughout Florida and the southeastern United States, as well as NSU-COM students, submitted posters. The competition's growth was evident in the increase from 28 entries in 2012 to a 106 in 2014.

All posters were judged based on the format and completeness of abstract, the overall poster appearance, and the entrant's oral presentation. Additionally, case presentations were judged on the originality, clinical relevance, and uniqueness of the case; the background, differential diagnosis, and clinical discussion of the case; whether the conclusions were supported by clinical rationale; and the value and clinical relevance of the case as stated by the entrant. Experimental research pre-

sentations were judged on the originality, clinical relevance, and uniqueness of the research topic; whether the objectives, hypothesis, data analysis, and results were clear; whether the methods were clear and reproducible; and whether the conclusions were in accordance with the results.

Cash prizes of \$500, \$250, and \$100 were awarded to the first-, second-, and third-place winners in each category. Listed below are the CEME poster competition winners:



Pictured (front row from left) are Alexandra Grammenos, Hajir Zohourian, D.O., Radhika Shukla, D.O., Andrea M. Palestro, Jacob J. Triplet, and Kelly Corbitt. Pictured (back row from left) are Mark Wheeler, Maddie Goldstein, Simona Bartos, Hilda DeGaetano, D.O. (judge), Guy Nehrenz, Ed.D., RRT (judge and NSU College of Health Care Sciences executive associate dean), Janet Hamstra, Ed.D., M.S. (head judge), Anjali Bhasin, M.D. (judge), James Howell, M.D., M.P.H. (judge), Traci-Lyn Eisenberg, D.O. (judge), Jesse Singer, D.O., M.P.H. (judge), and Marie Florent-Carre, D.O., M.P.H. (judge).

EXPERIMENTAL RESEARCH

First Place

"Obesity - The Incidence of Vitamin D Deficiency in the Obese - A Retrospective Chart Review"

Deepu Daniel, D.O. (resident), **Patrick Hardigan, Ph.D.** (NSU Health Professions Division), **Dennis Penzell, D.O.** (NSU-COM faculty), and **Christina Savu, D.O.** (NSU-COM faculty)

Broward Health Medical Center Internal Medicine Residency

Second Place

"Tissue Dielectric Constant (TDC) Values for Use to Detect Water Content in Male Arms as a Baseline for Potential Use in Early Detection of Lymphedema in Male Breast Cancer Assessed in Two Age Groups"

Kelly Corbitt (student), **Alexandra Grammenos** (student), **Simona Bartos** (student), and **Harvey Mayrovitz, Ph.D.** (College of Medical Sciences)

Nova Southeastern University College of Osteopathic Medicine

Third Place

"Cerebral Desaturation Events in the Beach Chair Position: Correlation of Noninvasive Blood Pressure and Estimated Temporal Mean Arterial Pressure"

Jacob J. Triplet (student)

Christopher M. Lonetta, CRNA (Holy Cross Orthopedic Institute)

Jonathan C. Levy, M.D. (Holy Cross Orthopedic Institute physician)

Nathan G. Everding, M.D. (Holy Cross Orthopedic Institute physician)

Molly A. Moor, M.P.H. (Holy Cross Orthopedic Institute)

Nova Southeastern University College of Osteopathic Medicine

CASE STUDIES

First Place

"Isolated Common Iliac Artery Aneurysm Due to Non-Typhoid Salmonella in a Patient with HIV"

Hajir Zohourian, D.O. (resident)

Mark Wheeler (student)

Maddie Goldstein (student)

Broward Health Medical Center Internal Medicine Residency

Second Place

"Complete Recovery from Fatal Complications of Thyroid Storm"

Radhika Shukla, D.O. (resident)

Leah DeLumpa, D.O. (resident)

Sonia Daryanani, D.O. (Broward Health Medical Center physician)

Broward Health Medical Center Internal Medicine Residency

Third Place

"Twist and Shout: A Case of Recurrent Pediatric Midgut Volvulus Following a Ladd Procedure"

Andrea M. Palestro (student)

Tara J. Loux, M.D. (Miami Children's Hospital fellow)

Nova Southeastern University College of Osteopathic Medicine

NSU-COM Well Represented at FOMA Poster Competition

During the 112th Annual Florida Osteopathic Medical Association Convention, which was held February 18-22 at the Bonaventure Resort and Spa in Weston, Florida, NSU-COM and its affiliated postgraduate programs were well represented at the association's Fifth Annual Student/Intern/Resident/Fellow Research Poster Competition.

Janet Hamstra, Ed.D., M.S., NSU-COM's associate professor of internal medicine and director of preclinical education, served as the competition's

head judge. Four other NSU College of Osteopathic Medicine faculty members also judged the event along with two representatives from the Lake Erie College of Osteopathic Medicine-Bradenton. The NSU-COM judges were Cyril Blavo, D.O., M.S., M.P.H. and T.M., FACOP, director of the college's Master of Public Health Program, Kira Fenton, D.O., assistant professor of internal medicine, Victor Jaffe, D.O., assistant professor of family medicine, and Marie Florent-Carre, D.O., assistant professor of family medicine.

Entrants submitted abstracts, produced posters, and made poster presentations, all of which were included in the judging process. Prizes were awarded in two categories: Intern/Resident/Fellow Case Study and Experimental Research Medical Student Case Study and Experimental Research.

Six winners were selected, with first-, second-, and third-place winners receiving \$750, \$250, and \$100, respectively. Following are the NSU-COM-affiliated poster winners in their respective categories. First authors/presenters are listed in **bold**.



Pictured at FOMA's Research Poster Competition (from left) are Dr. Janet Hamstra, Angela Kim, Hajir Zohourian, Maddie Goldstein, and Andrea M. Palestro.

RESIDENT RESEARCH

First Place

"Isolated Common Iliac Artery Aneurysm Due to Non-Typhoid in a Patient with HIV"

Hajir Zohourian, D.O. (PGY-1), OMS-III Mark Wheeler, OMS-III Maddie Goldstein, and OMS-III Danielle Klima from the Broward Health Medical Center Internal Medicine Residency

STUDENT RESEARCH

First Place

"Rocky Mountain Spotless Fever: A Case of South Florida RMSF with Atypical Rash"

OMS-IV Andrea M. Palestro and Veronica Klammer, D.O. (PGY-I)

Second Place

"Squamous Cell Carcinoma Arising in the Healing Surgical Wound of a Recently Excised Basal Cell Carcinoma"

OMS-II Angela Y. Kim

OMS-IV Elyse Julian, Jacqueline A. Thomas, D.O., and David L. Thomas, M.D., J.D., Ed.D.

Third Place

"Disseminated Kaposi Sarcoma—Not a Thing of the Past"

OMS-III Maddie Goldstein

OMS-III Ajith Susai, Leah Delumpa, D.O. (PGY-III) Kim Pham, D.O. (PGY-III)



Aquino



Cymet



Dana



Gorodinsky



Ingram



Keel

Theodore L. Aquino, D.O., M.B.A. ('09) published a paper in the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report* that describes an influenza outbreak he managed while serving as medical department head of U.S. Navy minesweeper ships. He presented the findings at a North Atlantic Treaty Organization international medical conference in Marseille, France, and is scheduled to speak about the case at the American Occupational Health Conference in Baltimore, Maryland, in May.

Tyler Cymet, D.O., FACP, FACFP ('88) appeared in the December 26 episode of *Untold Stories of the ER* entitled "Over-Juiced" about an iodine-induced thyroid disorder. This marked the fourth time Dr. Cymet has been featured on an episode of the program, which is broadcast by Discovery Life and The Learning Channel.

Gaston Dana, D.O., FACP, FACCWS, FAAEP, FAAMA ('92) co-authored the manual entitled

Ultrasound Physics and its Applications in Medicine that is being used as an instructional tool in the Franklin College biophysics course.

Lilia Gorodinsky, D.O. ('03) appeared on several high-profile TV programs in December as a topic expert. She was featured in a segment entitled "Joint Injections Heal Baby Boomer Arthritis" on *ABC World News Tonight* that centered on the use of platelet-rich plasma and gave a demonstration on the benefits of utilizing osteopathic manipulative treatment on an episode of *The Dr. Oz Show* that focused on "Pain Solutions Without Taking a Pill."

David R. Heller, D.O., FACEP ('85) was recently appointed as medical director of the Portsmouth Regional Hospital Emergency Department located in Portsmouth, New Hampshire.

Jeremy Ingram, D.O. ('07) accepted a full-time position with Lee Physician Group Emergency Medicine Physicians in Fort Myers, Florida.

In this role, he works for the Lee Memorial Health System at Healthpark Medical Center and Lee Memorial Hospital. Dr. Ingram also works as a part-time clinical faculty member at the University of Florida College of Medicine in Jacksonville.

Smith Joseph, D.O. ('98), who is a family medicine practitioner, was elected mayor of North Miami, Florida.

Christopher E. Keel, D.O. ('09) recently joined Academic Urologists at Erlanger Hospital and University of Tennessee in Chattanooga as clinical assistant professor of urology.

Katarina Lindley, D.O. ('04) recently accepted a position as medical director for the Community Care Clinic associated with Palo Pinto Hospital in Mineral Wells, Texas. She also was profiled in *Mineral Wells Index.com* in an article entitled "Croatian-Born Doctor Planting Local Roots."

Daniel McBath, D.O., FACOF ('90) passed away

suddenly on February 23 at the age of 53. His devotion to his alma mater was evidenced in 1995 when Dr. McBath became the inaugural president of the NSU-COM Alumni Association. He also served as president of the Florida Society of the American College of Osteopathic Family Physicians in 1999-2000 and was a past president of the Pasco County Osteopathic Medical Association.

Richard John Presutti, D.O. ('93) was named chief executive officer of the Mayo Clinic Health System in Waycross, Georgia. Dr. Presutti, who has been affiliated with the Mayo Clinic since 1997, previously served as chair of the Division of Regional Medicine in the Department of Family Medicine at Mayo Clinic's Jacksonville, Florida, campus.

Brett Scotch, D.O., FAOCO ('99) was named as a director at large on the Florida Osteopathic Medical Association 2015-16 Executive Committee at the association's annual meeting, which took place February 18-22.



Lindley



McBath



Presutti



Scotch



Stringer



Teplitz



William H. Stager, D.O., M.S., M.P.H., FAAFP, FAAMA, FAAO, FACOFF ('89) was

elected president of the Florida Osteopathic Medical Association (FOMA) during the organization's 112th Annual Convention held February 18-22. During his illustrious career, Dr. Stager has served as

president of the Florida Society of the American College of Os-

Dr. William Stager Elected FOMA President

teopathic Family Physicians (2008-09) and the Florida Academy of Osteopathy (2006-2008 and 2008-2010). His many accolades include the 2007 FOMA Presidential Achievement Award, the 2010 FSACOFF Physician of the Year Award, the 2011 FAO Distinguished Service Award, the 2013 AOA Unsung Heroes Award, and the 2013 AOA Guardians of the Profession Award.

During his induction ceremony, Dr. Elaine M. Wallace, NSU-COM dean, presented Dr. Stager with a Distinguished Alumni Award from the College of Osteopathic Medicine.

Dr. Michael Gervasi Honored With NSU Distinguished Alumni Award

On November 13, NSU-COM alumnus **Michael F. Gervasi, D.O., FAIHQ**, was one of 17 outstanding graduates saluted at the NSU Distinguished Alumni Achievement Awards reception held at the Grande Oaks Golf Club in Davie.

The Distinguished Alumni Achievement Award, which is the highest and most prestigious honor NSU bestows upon its graduates, recognizes alumni who are changing lives and changing the world by demonstrating a record of distinguished service and extraordinary achievement in a particular profession, discipline, organization, or community cause. The award also pays tribute to alumni who have great pride for their alma mater and are committed to advancing NSU's values and goals.

Dr. Gervasi, who serves as an NSU-COM clinical associate professor of family medicine, graduated from Southeastern College of Osteopathic Medicine (now NSU-COM) in 1987 and pursued his postgraduate training at Universal Medical Center in Broward County. After 10 years in private practice, he joined Florida Community Health Centers, Inc. in West Palm Beach, where he is currently president and chief executive officer.



He has served as an integral member of the Florida Society of the American College of Osteopathic Family Physicians Executive Committee and received the Samuel L. Salaman, D.O. Award for general practice. In addition, Dr. Gervasi has acted as chair as well as served on numerous local, state, and national committees, including the eight-state Southeastern Healthcare Consortium and the Clinician's Network of the Florida Association of Community Health Centers.

Pictured (from left) are Jennifer O'Flannery Anderson, Ph.D., NSU vice president for advancement and community relations, Dr. Gervasi, and Howard Neer, D.O., FACOFF, associate dean of alumni and student affairs and HPD executive associate dean for professional affairs.

Matthew T. Stringer, D.O. ('10) presented a lecture on the topic "Team-STEPPS Improves Operating Room Efficiency" at the 62nd Annual James C. Kimbrough Urological Seminar hosted by the Society of Government Service Urologists in San Diego, California, in January. He also won third place for his research in the seminar's resident research poster competition.

Donald H. Teplitz, D.O., CHCQM ('85) was named senior vice president of administration and associate chief medical officer at Good Samaritan Hospital Medical Center in West Islip, New York.



Dr. Hernandez's son, Adrian, stands next to his father's Cano Health poster.

D.O. on the Rise

Dr. Marlow Hernandez Maximizes His NSU Education

*By Scott Colton, B.A., APR
COM/HPD Director of Medical
Communications and Public Relations*

To say that Marlow Hernandez, D.O., M.P.H., M.B.A., was destined to quickly become a distinguished alumnus is not an exaggeration when you consider how incredibly focused and prolific he was during his NSU-COM career.

In a feat that would induce a nervous breakdown in most medical students, Dr. Hernandez chose to concurrently pursue three degrees while attending NSU-COM from 2007 through 2011 – Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine, Master of Public Health, and Master of Business Administration. As a result of this relentless educational enthusiasm, Dr. Hernandez was equally as popular with his fellow students as he was with the faculty and administration, winning the student-voted Matthew A. Terry, D.O., Memorial Award as well as the prestigious D.O. Research Award during the college's 2011 Senior Awards Ceremony.

Since graduating from NSU-COM, Dr. Hernandez has put his multifaceted education to good use in his role as CEO and director of internal medicine of Cano Health in Pembroke Pines, Florida – a company dedicated to improving the lives of individuals, families, and communities

Looking Back...Dr. Hernandez Shares Fond Memories



Cuba 1985...with his father, Jose



Cuba 1993...with his brother, David



South Florida 1996...family photo



2004 family photo...with sister Stephanie



2009...celebrating his wedding day



2010...grand opening of Cano Health

through the provision of high-quality health care. Not surprisingly, he credits the triple-pronged academic approach he pursued at NSU for making him the well-rounded professional he is today.

"The graduate degrees I pursued allowed me to better comprehend the socioeconomic, legal, and political forces that affect the medical profession," said Dr. Hernandez, who is starring in the medical reality show *Medicina Moderna*, which is set to air later this spring. "I realized early on that in order for me to provide high-quality health care to a community, I needed to understand public health and be able to run an efficient business. Thankfully, my education has allowed me to do that."

Dr. Hernandez, who was born in Cienfuegos, Cuba, to a loving family that possessed a long tradition of studying medicine, had little interest in becoming a physician as a child.

Instead, he harbored a desire to become a world-class baseball player. "Although my mother was a dentist and my father was an architect, they both encouraged me to become a physician," Dr. Hernandez explained. "Yet, like most Cuban boys, I dreamt of becoming a professional baseball player. After immigrating to the United States in October 1993, I applied myself to essentially two activities—academics and baseball. I played baseball competitively until college, but in 2004 I suffered a career-ending injury that turned out to be a major turning point in my life. During my recovery, I found that my true passion was public service, and that my calling was medicine."

When it came time to begin applying to various medical schools, Dr. Hernandez had never heard the term osteopathic medicine. A convergence of circumstances, however, would soon lead him to NSU-COM—and a

medical career replete with infinite possibilities. "Without knowing it, I had been treated by NSU-COM physicians a few years prior to applying there, and the experience had been fantastic," he said. "Although I considered other schools, NSU-COM offered me some unique opportunities: I would be able to study conventional and holistic medicine; I would be able to train in world-class institutions; and I would do so at home in South Florida. The clincher was an open house lecture that Dr. Cyril Blavo, the college's director of the M.P.H. Program, gave where he discussed the college and spoke about the opportunity to study public health along with the medical curriculum. As a result, NSU-COM was the obvious choice for me."

During his medical school odyssey, Dr. Hernandez, who earned his Bachelor of Science degree in Neuroscience from the University



THE NEXT GENERATION: Dr. Stephanie M. Hernandez, sons Nicolas and Adrian, and Dr. Hernandez.

of Miami, enjoyed many memorable moments, including participating in a medical outreach trip to Guatemala and presenting his award-winning research at various national conferences. "But perhaps most importantly, I was blessed to have many faculty and staff mentors who took a special interest in me," he said.

After graduating from NSU-COM, Dr. Hernandez completed his internal medicine residency training at the Cleveland Clinic in Weston, Florida, before becoming the CEO and director of internal medicine at Cano Health, which was established by his mother, Lourdes Cano, D.M.D., who is a 2001 NSU College of Dental Medicine graduate. The company is planning on building two more health care centers within the next year and is working closely with Cano Life—a 501c(3) nonprofit corporation—to provide free health care to individuals who demonstrate financial need.

Cano Health is a true family affair because in addition to being affiliated with the company his mother created, his wife, Stephanie M. Hernandez, D.M.D., and his brother,

David Hernandez, D.M.D., both of whom earned their graduate degrees from NSU's College of Dental Medicine, are on the staff as well. "I'm very proud of Cano Health, which is a one-stop shop health center dedicated to quality primary care," said Dr. Hernandez, who is the proud father of sons Adrian and Nicolas. "Since opening in 2010, we created programs that could serve patients with limited financial means at very little cost to them. As of today, we have served over 25,000 patients, many of which did not have health insurance. Last month, we opened a satellite office and increased our efforts to bolster our charitable foundation, Cano Life, in order to be able to serve even more patients."

Because he possesses an entrepreneurial spirit, Dr. Hernandez has added another aspect to his career by starring in a medical reality show entitled *Medicina Moderna* that is set to air later this spring on the VME Spanish television network as well as other local TV outlets. "The show brings modern medicine to the forefront by educating—and entertaining—the public with regard to the

clinical and administrative requirements of a modern health center," he explained. "Essentially, *Medicina Moderna* allows me to bring state-of-the-art medical and public health practice into the viewer's home. The show complements the office because while the clinic is able to help an individual or a family, the show can reach entire communities."

Dr. Hernandez, who credits his family for helping him accomplish so much in his relatively young life, plans to pay it forward and help others who have been less fortunate. "My passion lies in public service. Therefore, my professional focus will be on building institutions that make a difference in our communities," he concluded. "I enjoy what I do because it is a *calling* rather than a *job*."



A BRIGHT FUTURE BECKONS: Dr. Hernandez in his NSU-COM graduation attire.

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

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(in memory of Dr. Rosebud Foster)

\$8.5 Million Grant...Judy and Dr. Barry Silverman Honor...Cybersecurity Kudos...

NSU Designated a National Center of Academic Excellence in Information Assurance and Cybersecurity



Nova Southeastern University has been designated as a National Center of Academic Excellence in Information Assurance/Cyber Defense (CAE IA/CD) by the National Security Agency and the U.S. Department of Homeland Security. The designation will cover academic years 2014 through 2021. NSU is Florida's first four-year institution to receive the CAE IA/CD designation.

NSU Oceanographic Researchers Receive Nearly \$8.5 Million for Oil-Spill Research

NSU's Oceanographic Center is home to some of the world's top marine biology and ocean ecosystem researchers and experts. Now, those research efforts are being given a boost thanks to a financial award from the Gulf of Mexico Research Initiative. NSU is one of just 12 organizations selected to receive a portion of the \$140 million allocated for continued research in the area of oil spills and how we respond to them.



The NSU-led research consortium, titled Deep-Pelagic Nekton Dynamics of the Gulf of Mexico (DEEPEND), will focus on the pelagic (open ocean) realm, from the surface to depths of over one mile, which is by far the largest ecosystem component of the Gulf of Mexico. The consortium will examine the biological communities of the deep Gulf with respect to space and time, using a variety of techniques, and relate these findings to disturbances both natural and human-made in order to understand the short- and long-term consequences of such events on the health of the Gulf.

Research Vice President Appointed Judge for Patents for Humanity Award Program



Gary S. Margules, Sc.D., NSU vice president for research and technology transfer, was selected by the U.S. Commerce Department's Patent and Trademark Office as a judge for the prestigious Patents for Humanity program. The program advances President Barack Obama's global development agenda by rewarding companies that bring lifesaving technologies to underserved

people of the world while showing how patents are an integral part of tackling the world's challenges.

NSU OVERVIEW

Judy and Dr. Barry Silverman Honored with NSU President's Award for Excellence in Community Service



On January 31, **Judy and Barry Silverman, M.D.**, received the NSU President's Award for Excellence in Community Service at the annual Celebration of Excellence event. Established in 1997, the President's Excellence in Community Service Award recognizes extraordinary professional and philanthropic engagement activities by members of the South Florida community. The award encourages the ongoing pursuit of service and exemplifies NSU's community core value.

Dr. Frederick Lippman Appointed to Florida TaxWatch's Advisory Board

Bob Martinez, a former Florida governor who currently chairs the Florida TaxWatch's Center for Florida Citizenship (CFC), appointed **Frederick Lippman, R.Ph., Ed.D.**, chancellor of NSU's Health Professions Division, to the organization's advisory board. Dr. Lippman also serves as a board member of Florida TaxWatch. The CFC Advisory Board is comprised of business and community leaders that possess the



knowledge and experience to provide Florida TaxWatch's staff members with ideas and guidance in doing CFC research and policy formulation. Members are selected on the basis of the significant leadership role they have achieved in the areas of business, politics, community service, and charitable organizations.

U.S. News & World Report Ranks NSU's Criminal Justice Graduate Program as one of America's Best

NSU's criminal justice graduation program ranked in the top 25 of *U.S. News & World Report's* inaugural review of online graduate criminal justice programs in its annual survey of the top educational programs in America, coming in at number 22.

According to the report, around 5.4 million students took at least one distance-education course during the fall of 2012. While online education is a fast-growing option for schools around the country, at NSU it has been a component of the university's core mission for many years.

NSU's criminal justice graduate program is offered entirely online, which is a format that allows students to participate in courses from anywhere in the world and provides flexibility in completing a master's degree while providing time for students to continue their current careers.





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