Digest of the Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine (Winter 2008)

Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine

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Women in Medicine
A Legacy of Achievement
Dear Alumni and Friends,

Historically, osteopathic medicine has been welcoming to women. Dr. Andrew Taylor Still admitted women into his first class at the American School of Osteopathy, and O.J. Snyder, DO, taught that, “There is a place for the fair sex in the practice of Osteopathy—a place as high and noble as that occupied by men.” Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine is proud of the generations of its female alumnae who have shaped a legacy of achievement—as leaders in academic medicine, advocates of women’s health and pioneers in physician workforce issues. The successes of these women impact and inspire the career choices of current and future PCOM students. In this issue of Digest, we salute their commitment to their vocations and their significant contributions.

In another tribute to our institution’s heritage, this issue marks PCOM’s annual observance of Founders’ Day. We honor those who have demonstrated outstanding leadership, loyalty and service to our College, the community and the osteopathic profession. Please join me in congratulating O.J. Snyder Memorial Medal recipient James H. Black, DO ’62, and Mason W. Pressly Memorial Medal recipient Sallee Ann Eckler, PhD, (DO ’08).

The article about PCOM students who are volunteer participants in the Philadelphia Rowing Program for the Disabled is also uplifting. These young men and women are committed to providing individuals with disabilities—ranging from blindness to multiple sclerosis and cerebral palsy—with an opportunity to experience the pleasures and freedoms that the exercise of rowing offers. Our students interact with those with disabilities on their own terms; they learn and practice a professional sanctity for human life and a respect for human dignity.

Finally, the article about Harm Reduction Therapy offers one model of substance abuse treatment based on the principles of collaboration, value and self-determination that often run counter to traditional addiction therapies. Frederick Rotgers, PsyD, associate professor, psychology, is a nationally-recognized researcher with a focus on moderation approaches to substance abuse treatment.

I thank you for your continued interest in and support of the College.

With warmest regards,

Matthew Schure, PhD
President and Chief Executive Officer
UPDATES AND KUDOS

White Coats Mark a New Beginning

Eighty-six first-year students don their white coats at GA–PCOM’s White Coat Ceremony.

In a rite of passage, first-year DO and PA students began their academic year with a White Coat Ceremony. The Pennsylvania Osteopathic Medical Association donated the white coats to the 269 Philadelphia first-year DO students. The 55 new PA students received their white coats courtesy of Sara Somers Rupert, RN ’33, and her daughter M. Kimberly Rupert, PhD. The event emphasizes the importance of both scientific excellence and compassionate care for the patient. Faculty cloak students and students cloak one another to highlight a sense of camaraderie.

Pat Coughlin, PhD, professor, anatomy, cloaks a member of the physician assistant class of 2009.

Students cloak one another at the PCOM DO White Coat Ceremony.

Community Health Fair

It was a beautiful September day for PCOM Healthcare Center - Cambria Division’s annual health fair. Physicians as well as student doctors were on hand to provide health screenings and information for both adults and children. Students from area schools received school physicals, and a mobile mammography van provided free mammograms. In addition to a petting zoo, entertainment included face painting and a magician. Free books were available to children through the Reach Out to Read program. The fair was a great opportunity for community members to learn about the Center and the health services available to them.

Free books for children and health screenings made the Cambria health fair a great day for the whole family.
Board Welcomes New Members

The PCOM Board of Trustees is pleased to welcome five new members to its ranks. The College will certainly benefit from the diverse skills and expertise brought to the board by these five.

Bernard J. Bernacki, DO ’81, is a board-certified family practitioner with additional certification in geriatrics. He has owned and practiced at Bernacki Family Practice and Wellness Center since 1987. In addition, he sees patients at University of Pittsburgh Medical Center Shadyside Hospital and at Shadyside Nursing and Rehab Center.

J. Steven Blake, DO ’89, is board certified by the American Osteopathic Board of Internal Medicine in internal medicine with the subspecialty of gastroenterology. He is also a diplomate of the National Osteopathic Board of Medical Examiners and a fellow of the American College of Osteopathic Interns. Dr. Blake owns Blake Gastroenterology Associates, LLC.

John B. Bulger, DO ’95, the Board’s new legislative appointee, is a general internist and director of inpatient services at the Geisinger Health System in Danville, Pennsylvania. He is an adjunct faculty member in the department of internal medicine at PCOM and serves on the Board of Trustees of PCOM MedNet.

Ruth Thornton, PhD, chair and professor of PCOM’s biochemistry/molecular biology department, serves as the faculty representative to the Board. In 2003, Dr. Thornton was recognized for her excellence in teaching with the distinguished Lindback Award. She is the faculty advisor to the Student National Medical Association of PCOM and received this group’s mentoring award in 1996 and 1998.

Murray Zedeck, DO ’62, is a retired physician and the co-owner of Norwood Medical Clinic, P.A., in Miami, Florida. He served as chairman and vice president of marketing for Transflorida Bank in Boca Raton and as chairman of TransCapital Bank in Hallandale Beach. He is a fellow and charter member of the American Osteopathic College of Rheumatology.

Kudos

Jay Bhatt (DO ’08) received the 2007 Jay S. Drotman Memorial Award from the American Public Health Association (APHA). The Jay S. Drotman Memorial Award recognizes the career of promising young public health professionals or students. The APHA is the oldest, largest and most diverse organization of public health professionals in the world.

H. William Craver, DO ’87, chair, undergraduate clinical education, GA–PCOM, completed the certification program at the Costin Institute for Osteopathic Medical Educators at Midwestern University.

Arthur Freeman, EdD, clinical professor, clinical psychology, coedited the book Personality Disorders in Childhood and Adolescence. Several chapters of the book were authored or coauthored by PCOM faculty and students. Robert DiTomasso, PhD, professor and chair, psychology; James Hale, PhD, associate professor and associate director of clinical training, school psychology; and Stephen Timchack (PsyD) coauthored the chapter “The Behavioral Model of Personality Disorders.” George McCloskey, PhD, associate professor and director, school psychology research; Carrie Champ Morera (PsyD); Kathryn Gipe (PsyD); and Amy McLaughlin (PsyD) coauthored the chapter “Assessment of Personality Disorders in Childhood.” Yuma I. Tomes, PhD, assistant professor and director, MS in school psychology, coauthored the introduction with Dr. Freeman. And Dr. Freeman wrote “The Narcissistic Child: When a State Becomes a Trait” and coauthored “Negativistic Personality Disorder in Children and Adolescents” and “Development and Treatment of Personality Disorder: Summary.”
Kudos

Stephanie Felgoise, PhD, associate professor, vice-chair and director of the clinical PsyD program, presented “CBT for Medical Patients” at the Delaware Institute of Substance Abuse and Mental Health workshop at the University of Delaware. Her copresenters included Stacy Carpenter (PsyD) and Clint Stankiewicz (PsyD). Dr. Felgoise is also coauthor of the book Clinical Psychology: Integration of Science and Practice.

William Freiberg (DO '08) was elected by the medical staff at Lehigh Valley Hospital as medical student of the year.

Katherine Galluzzi, DO, professor and chair, geriatrics, moderated the lecture “Achieving Glycemic Control in Your Patients with Type 2 Diabetes: Optimizing Combination Therapy with Novel Agents” at the 2007 AOA Convention. She was a consultant for the Methylxtrazone SC Advisory Board meeting and presented a lecture, “Clinical Conversation: Neuropathic Pain-Diagnosis & Treatment,” at the Pri Med Update. Dr. Galluzzi also had her article “Opioid Receptors: The Basis of Pain Relief & Addiction” published in the journal Pain Reporter.

Monique Gary (DO '09) received the William Anderson Minority Scholarship Award from the American Osteopathic Foundation during the American Osteopathic Association Convention. She also received a scholarship from the Pennsylvania Medical Society Alliance.

Frederick J. Goldstein, PhD, professor, clinical pharmacology, neuroscience, physiology and pharmacology, and director, clinical master of science program, was invited by the JAOA to serve as coordinating editor for the 2007 four-part supplement series on pain management.

Governor Rendell Promotes Health Coverage Plan at PCOM

Pennsylvania Governor Ed Rendell held a press conference at PCOM on January 14 to discuss his health care coverage proposal, Cover All Pennsylvanians (CAP). The program, part of his Prescription for Pennsylvania, offers affordable basic health coverage to small businesses and the uninsured through the private insurance market. Governor Rendell said all uninsured Pennsylvanians, no matter the size of their employer, will be able to purchase affordable health insurance through CAP.

Joining the Governor were representatives from the Pennsylvania Osteopathic Medical Association, the Pennsylvania Orthopaedic Society, State Senators Vince Fumo and Vincent Hughes and State Representative Kathy Manderino.

PCOM in the News

PCOM people and programs have received a good deal of media attention in the past few months. The school psychology program was a featured segment on the local NBC television show “10!” Catherine McCoubrey (EdS ’08) and Amy Stern (EdS ’09) were highlighted as they discussed PCOM’s partnership with the Russell Byers Charter School in Philadelphia.

Fred Rogers, PsyD, associate professor and associate director, clinical training, clinical psychology, was interviewed on the subject of Harm Reduction Therapy in association with the Second National Harm Reduction Therapy Conference that was held at PCOM in November. The interview aired on the local ABC affiliate, WPVI, Channel Six.

Yuma Tomes, PhD, assistant professor and director, MS in school psychology, and Elizabeth Gosch, PhD, associate professor and director, MS in counseling and clinical health psychology, were featured on a special report on school bullying. The special aired on WPVI Channel Six.

Matthew Schure, PhD, president and CEO, was interviewed on the radio show “Executive Leaders.” The show highlights executives from the Philadelphia region as they discuss their backgrounds and how they became leaders in their field. The show is aired on WWDB-AM.

You can see and hear segments from PCOM in the News at the College’s Web site, www.pcom.edu. Click on “PCOM News” on the home page.

Yuma Tomes, PhD, and Elizabeth Gosch, PhD, on WPVI Channel Six.
Physician Assistant Week

PCOM’s Department of Physician Assistant Studies kicked off National Physician Assistant Week, October 6-12, with a panel discussion featuring five PA graduates. This year marks 40 years for the profession. The first three physician assistants graduated from Duke University on October 6, 1967. The profession was founded by Eugene Stead, MD, in response to a shortage of primary care physicians. Today, approximately 64,000 PAs are providing essential medical and surgical services to people throughout the United States and internationally. PCOM graduated its first class of physician assistants in 2000. To date, approximately 350 PAs have graduated from PCOM.

Renowned Stem Cell Researcher Speaks at GA–PCOM

GA–PCOM was pleased to host Steven Stice, PhD, professor and director of the Regenerative Bioscience Center at the University of Georgia, as a guest lecturer.

Dr. Stice, a Georgia Research Alliance Eminent Scholar, was named one of the 100 Most Influential Georgians by Georgia Trend magazine. He produced the first cloned rabbit in 1987, and the first cloned transgenic calves in 1998. In 1997, his group produced the first genetically modified embryonic stem cell derived from pigs and cattle. In 2005, his stem cell group published the first work on deriving motor neurons from stem cells.

The topic of Dr. Stice’s presentation was “Perspectives of How Human Embryonic Stem Cells Will Be Used in Medicine.” The lecture was shared with the Philadelphia campus via video conference.

Kudos

James Hale, PhD, associate professor and associate director of clinical training, school psychology, participated in an invited panel presentation titled “Using the Cognitive Hypothesis Testing Model in Neuropsychological Assessment” at the Second National Neuropsychology Conference. He also presented “The State-of-the-Art in Applying Neuropsychology to Educational Practice” at the conference. Dr. Hale presented “Problem-Solving for Children Who Do Not Respond to Typical Interventions: The Cognitive Hypothesis Testing Model” at the Maryland School Psychologists Association. He was a symposium presenter at the Annual Convention of the American Psychological Association with his talk, “Integrating RTI and Cognitive Assessment for SLD Identification and Services.” He also presented a poster with Kristen Wenrich (PsyD) at the APA Convention on “WISC-IV Predictors of Reading Competency: Are Children with SLD Different?” Dr. Hale coauthored “Interpreting Intelligence Test Results for Children with Disabilities: Is Global Intelligence Relevant?” and was lead author of “Is the Demise of Global IQ Justified? A Response to Special Issue Authors,” both of which were published in a special issue of Applied Neuropsychology. In addition, he published the chapter “Inattentiveness” in the Clinical Handbook of Childhood Behavior Problems: Case Formulations and Step-by-Step Treatment Programs.

Michael Lowney (DO ’08) won fourth place in the Undergraduate American Academy of Osteopathy’s A. Hollis Wolf Competition. Mr. Lowney delivered a case presentation dealing with osteopathic manipulative medicine in disease management.
**Kudos**

**Terry Molony (PsyD)** won a scholarship to attend the Second National School Neuropsychology Conference.

**Fred Rotgers, PsyD**, associate professor and associate director of clinical training, clinical psychology, was conference coordinator of the Second National Harm Reduction Therapy Conference, which was held at PCOM in November.

**Karen Shemanski (DO ’10)** was invited to attend the Paul Ambrose Health Promotion Student Leadership Symposium. Paul Ambrose scholars are health care students dedicated to creating new visions, models and experiences for health professions education.

**John Simelaro, DO ’71**, chair, internal medicine, was named Teacher of the Year by the American College of Osteopathic Internists. He also received the AOA Mentor Hall of Fame Award from the American Osteopathic Association.

**Dianzheng Zhang, PhD**, assistant professor, biochemistry/molecular biology, was coauthor of the paper “A Critical Role for the Co-repressor N-CoR in Erythroid Differentiation and Heme Synthesis” published in the journal *Cell Research*. In addition, he has accepted a guest professor position at Central South University in the People’s Republic of China, which will foster international collaboration in both medical teaching and research.

**Two New Offerings from Psychology**

Beginning in fall 2008, PCOM will offer two new post-doctoral certificates—one in clinical health psychology and another in clinical neuropsychology.

Each program provides one year of specialty training to doctoral-level psychologists or current PCOM clinical PsyD students. Graduates of the programs will be equipped to provide psychological care in medical settings and to medical patients. In addition, the training may lead to licensure in psychology or to board certification by the American Board of Professional Psychology.

**PCOM Makes Big Showing at AOA Convention**

PCOM played a large role at this year’s AOA Convention in San Diego. Brian J. Balin, PhD, professor, pathology, microbiology, immunology and forensic medicine, and director, basic science research, Center for Chronic Disorders of Aging; and Michael L. Kuchera, DO, professor, OMM, and clinical director, Center for Chronic Disorders of Aging, were program co-chairs of the three-day research conference, “Chronic Disorders of Aging in the 21st Century: New Insights and Approaches at the Annual AOA Convention.”

Katherine Galluzzi, DO, professor and chair, geriatrics, received a grant from Eisai, Inc. to develop, moderate and present “The Think Tank on Dementia,” a two-hour interactive CME seminar. Dr. Galluzzi opened the session with an interactive talk titled “Physician Screen Thyself: What’s in Your Cranium?” As part of the seminar Denah Appelt, PhD, professor, neuroscience, physiology and pharmacology, presented “Brain Death: Neuronal Cell Death in Alzheimer’s Disease,” and Dr. Balin presented “Current Hypotheses of Alzheimer’s Disease: Should We Be Looking Outside the Box?” Dr. Galluzzi is currently adapting the program for an ACOFP Webcast.

In addition, PCOM faculty and staff presented a record number of 17 posters at the conference.
Million Dollar Club Extends Another Year

Due to the extraordinary response to the establishment of the Million Dollar Club, the Million Dollar Club program has been extended into FY08. Club recognition will be given to donors whose cumulative giving over the past four years reaches $5,000. Club members receive a special Million Dollar Club pin and are included in special listings in PCOM publications.

One-hundred and forty-three charter members participated in the club last year; this fiscal year, from July 1 through December 31, a total of 132 new members have joined the club. Among the new members are husband and wife Fred Schwaibold, DO ’84, and Faith Scholnick, DO ’84. Their gift of $10,000 brings them into the President’s Leadership Circle at the Fellows level as well as the Million Dollar Club. Drs. Schwaibold and Scholnick live in Atlanta, Georgia. Dr. Scholnick participates in admissions interviews at GA–PCOM; Dr. Schwaibold is a radiation oncologist at Piedmont Hospital.

Leadership Gifts Committee Begins Second Year of Work

The Leadership Gifts Committee met in November, and spent little time basking in the success of its past efforts to help PCOM reach its Million Dollar Goal. While thanking the group for its work, President and CEO Matthew Schure, PhD, reminded the committee of the many challenges that lie ahead: “the work of this committee is critical to the continued success of PCOM to enhance its programs while keeping tuition increases low.” Committee Chair Murray Zedeck, DO ’62, affirmed that the group’s role is to find and implement new ways to expand the reach of the College among its alumni base and other institutions.

Last year, the committee played a significant role in raising more than $300,000 for PCOM. They hope to repeat their success in FY08 and are off to a good start with gifts and pledges to the Unrestricted Annual Fund nearing $290,000.

Current members of the committee include John Becher, DO ’70; J. Steven Blake, DO ’89; Ronald Blanck, DO ’67; Lita I. Cohen, Esq.; Gerald Dwarkin, DO ’81; Carol Fox, MM; Carol Henwood, DO ’83; John Kearney; Bruce Kornberg, DO ’78; H. Sprague Taveau, IV, DO ’77; and Murray Zedeck, DO ’62. Roy Gorin, DO ’72; Robert Maurer, DO ’62; and Suzanne Kelley, DO ’77, served on the committee during their respective reunion years.

Class of 1958 Scholarship and Board Challenge

“The Class of 1958 has become the first to meet the new 50-Year Reunion Class Challenge Grant of the Board of Trustees. Instituted in 2007, the challenge is for the reunion class to raise a minimum of $10,000; once this minimum is met, each additional dollar raised by the class is matched by the Board, up to $100,000. Once the total funds raised—including the Board match—reach $50,000, a scholarship, named in honor of the class, is established at the College.

The challenge must be completed within the fiscal year of the class’ 50th reunion, although pledges may be paid over two to three years. As of January 31, the class of 1958 has raised $47,295. Paired with the Board’s match of $37,295, the class has exceeded its goal to originate a scholarship.

“We’re proud to be the pioneers of this new fundraising program that will support PCOM students in the years to come,” says Murray H. Cohen, DO ’58, class agent.

Michael J. Holt, DO ’58, made a $25,000 gift to the fund from his IRA. He is pictured with wife SuAnne (Clymer) Holt, RN ’58.

Faculty/Staff Campaign Sets New Record in Funds Raised

PCOM spirit was evidenced again this fall in the strong participation among faculty and staff giving on both campuses. The Georgia campus led in percentage of participation with 65 percent of employees participating in the campaign. Overall participation on both campuses was 43 percent. The College’s goal was to reach a total of $75,000 in confirmed pledges; by the official end of the campaign, a total of $77,100 was raised—a new record!

Campaign chair Markell Edler, media specialist, GA–PCOM, helped his campus achieve 65 percent participation.
It takes true grit to survive the rigors of medical training and a high level of energy and commitment to sustain a career in medicine. This is true regardless of gender. However, women who have dared to pursue this path have historically faced an additional share of challenges.

In the 1800s, women had to fight just to be allowed to attend medical school. In many cases, their families discouraged them from a profession that they believed was not “respectable” for women. Over the years, women tolerated biases and chauvinism from male professors, peers and preceptors who questioned their capabilities and commitment.

Osteopathic medicine was more welcoming to women. In 1892, five out of 21 students admitted by Dr. Andrew Taylor Still into his first class at the American School of Osteopathy were women. Throughout the early 20th century, women maintained a strong presence in osteopathic medicine. By 1930, more than 25 percent of DOs in the United States were women. Among them was Meta L. Christy, DO ’21, PCOM’s first African-American graduate.

When the Great Depression struck, the proportion of women applying to medical school sank along with the national economy. Among those who persevered during that time was the legendary Ruth Waddel Cathie, DO ’38, who was the first female chair of a basic science department at PCOM and, at that time, the only woman who held such a position in Philadelphia with the exception of those at Women’s Medical College.

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During the post-World War II era, the number of women in medical schools nationwide took a nosedive. Faced with competition from war veterans, fewer women were accepted. In addition, a shift in social mores dictated that women should...
stay home and raise families rather than work outside the home. As a result, between 1950 and 1969, only 20 women graduated from PCOM, comprising an average of only two percent of the graduating classes.

Those 20 graduates included Ruth Purdy, DO ’50, a groundbreaking internist, and Eleanor Masterson, DO ’57, the first woman to be appointed director of clinics at PCOM. The late Ethel D. Allen, DO ’63, was one of only two women in the Internal Medicine Society and was later elected as the first African-American councilwoman to the Philadelphia City Council where she sponsored legislation that created the Youth Services Commission to help combat gang problems.

With the women’s movement of the late 1960s and 1970s, the number of female medical students began to climb again. By 1986, women comprised nearly 29 percent of the PCOM student body, just as they had in the early part of the century. This growth trend has continued, and this academic year for the first time at PCOM, women outnumber men with female students representing 60 percent of the class of 2011.

Women who have succeeded in the medical profession characteristically have possessed a tough inner fiber and resolute will that has helped them overcome many obstacles. As women increase in numbers in medicine, they are pursuing areas that historically have been dominated by their male counterparts. They are advocating for women’s health interests and gender issues in the physician workforce. And many are taking their place as leaders in academic medicine and research. PCOM alumnae have made—and continue to make—significant contributions in each of these areas. Following are the observations of some about what it has meant to be a woman in medicine over the past 50 years.
Reflections from the Past

When Eleanor Masterson, DO ’57, applied to medical schools in the years after World War II, she was not welcomed despite her excellent grades. In her naiveté, she didn’t realize that the prevailing opinion at that time dictated that women should not have careers in medicine or any other profession for that matter. This point was irrefutably brought home during a preliminary interview with a surgeon at a medical school in New York.

“He told me in no uncertain terms that women don’t belong in medicine,” Dr. Masterson relates. “He said that women should be married, not frustrated old maids.”

Undaunted, she went on to apply at PCOM where she was one of only three women accepted into her class of 105 students. After graduating and completing her internship, she supervised in the PCOM clinics, taught classes and took over the practice of a physician who passed away suddenly. “Some of the female patients left the practice after I took over, but to my surprise, their husbands remained,” Dr. Masterson relates. She recalls one female patient in particular who said, “You’re too young.”

Always one to speak her mind, Dr. Masterson responded, “Just remember, when your daughters come home from a job interview and say, ‘Mom, I couldn’t get the job because I don’t have experience,’ you’re just as guilty as the person who didn’t hire them.” The patient stayed with Dr. Masterson.

While supervising in the PCOM clinics, Dr. Masterson assisted the late Paul Lloyd, DO ’23, in the Well Breast Clinic, a pioneering center for women’s health care established in the mid-sixties. In 1968, she became the first woman to be appointed director of clinics at PCOM. Ten years later, she was appointed chair of the osteopathic department of the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey where she remained until her retirement in 2006.

“As a female in medicine, I knew I had to excel,” she observes. “My operating philosophy was not to equal my male counterparts, but to be better.”

For Ruth Purdy, DO ’50, the most vivid memory of her medical training was her first exposure to the dissection lab at PCOM. “Embalmed bodies were hung by the heads on a rack in a cool room, secured by clamps on the ears,” she recalls. “The teaching staff took them off the rack and brought them to the dissecting table for us to work on. The fact that we were sitting at a table working on dead people was hair-raising, but you learned to recognize that this was part of your training.”

Although she was one of just three women in her PCOM class of 100, she always felt accepted by her male peers and even formed an informal study group with three of them that endured throughout medical school.

After graduating, her greatest challenge was being accepted as a DO in a subspecialty. “That was a bigger challenge than being female,” she says. Nevertheless, she became the first female osteopathic physician to practice internal medicine in Columbus, Ohio, and established a successful practice that grew from two to 16 physicians.

A member of the American College of Osteopathic Physicians, Dr. Purdy was the first female recipient of the O.J. Snyder Memorial Medal in 1989, one of the first women to serve on the PCOM Board of Trustees, and the 2007 AOA Mentor of the Year.

“Medicine attracts women who are survivors and pursuers. That is our fabric,” says Madeleine Long, DO ’78, who knows firsthand about survival and perseverance. She wanted to be a doctor from an early age, but was discouraged by many, including a nun at her high school during the late 1950s who told her, “Women are better suited to teaching, nursing or secretarial work. Or perhaps you could become a nun.”

Nursing seemed like the best of those options, so Dr. Long set aside her dreams and graduated from nursing school in 1963. While a cardiac nurse, she completed her bachelor’s and master’s degrees in nursing. “The desire to become a doctor never went away,” she relates.

Along the way she met Mary Ann Scheuhing, who became her close friend and mentor. Ms. Scheuhing believed so much in Dr. Long’s dream that she loaned her the tuition to attend PCOM. Last year, Dr. Long provided for a scholarship in her will to endow in memory of her friend and her parents, describing them affectionately as “My heroes, my mentors, my loved ones… they allowed my dreams.”

Although Dr. Long yearned to be a surgeon, she chose internal medicine as her specialty and ran a successful practice in Bryn Mawr, Pennsylvania. “Women were not at all encouraged to enter the surgical subspecialties,” she recalls. “In fact, when you went on surgical rotations, the locker room was for men only. The women had to change in the nurses’ locker room!”

“As a female in medicine, I knew I had to excel. My operating philosophy was not to equal my male counterparts, but to be better.”

— ELEANOR MASTERSO N, DO ’57
“I asked one of my male friends how he decided on a surgical subspecialty,” she continues. “He told me that the male students had locker room chats with male residents who gave them advice. Women never had this advantage.”

Dr. Long also observed the challenges that women faced who did enter the field of surgery. “Women were excluded when it came to practice partnerships. They were given the worst on-call schedules, and they were paid less than their male colleagues.”

Carole C. Kremer, DO ’76, also remembers exclusion via the locker room. “During my training, I found out that the attending physician was discussing cases with the male interns, residents and students in the locker room,” she relates. “This excluded me from that learning experience so I confronted them. ‘If you continue talking about cases in the locker room, I’m coming in,’ I said. They continued, so I went in. It only took one time. They never did it again.”

Now a child and adolescent psychiatrist in Flint, Michigan, Dr. Kremer was one of seven women in her class of 246 at PCOM. She remembers that PCOM had few female professors and physicians, and female students hadn’t yet learned to support one another the way the male students did.

By the 1980s, women were learning to stick together and be more assertive, according to Kathleen Sweeney, DO ’84, director of osteopathic internship and family medicine residency and associate director of Altoona (Pennsylvania) Family Physicians. “We were influenced by the women’s movement of the sixties and seventies,” says Dr. Sweeney. “Doors had been opened and young women felt pressure to blaze new trails by choosing non-traditional careers that hadn’t been available to our mothers.”

Despite much progress, women still faced gender bias and inequities. “It was an unwritten rule that women should not have babies during their medical training because that indicated that you weren’t devoted to your career,” Dr. Sweeney relates. “We also felt that we had to tell potential employers if we planned to have children in the future.”

The only woman in her internship class of 25, she also remembers enduring sexual harassment, particularly from a surgeon who habitually made sexual advances toward women working with him in the OR while performing surgery. “We were afraid to say much back then,” says Dr. Sweeney. “Now women feel empowered.”

Janet Brown, DO ’83, remembers sexual harassment at a patient’s bedside while on clinical rotation as a medical student. “I was putting in my first central line,” she recalls. “A male resident and a male intern were standing at the foot of the bed. The scrubs I was wearing were much too large so they had a clear view down the front of my shirt as I worked. Fortunately, a nurse realized what was going on and safety-pinned my shirt closed. I was afraid to complain about the incident because the resident had direct input into my application for an internship.”

Now one of three physicians in the Phoenixville Area Family Medicine practice, Dr. Brown also remembers embarrassing sexual innuendos in the classroom. “If we complained, we were told, ‘You don’t know how to play with the big boys. You’re making a big deal out of nothing.’

“That was the tone of the time,” says Dr. Brown, who decided she wanted to be a doctor at age six when she started drawing chicken pox on all her dolls. “A lot of guys felt intimidated by women treading on their territory. I learned to toughen up and give it back. Fortunately, things have changed a lot since then.”

Cynthia Gabrielli, DO ’78, remembers being treated as an equal during her years of medical training. “We had only 20 women in a class of about 200, but the women represented some of the strongest students,” relates Dr. Gabrielli, who has been practicing pediatric and adolescent medicine with a special interest in sports injuries in Wilmington, Delaware, for 26 years. “We were very well accepted by the men at PCOM.”

One of the first female osteopathic physicians to practice at the Wilmington Medical Center, Dr. Gabrielli found that acceptance didn’t always come so easily from male patients. “During my medical training, I remember one gentleman who needed to have a pre-surgical exam but didn’t feel comfortable with a female,” she relates. “I persuaded him to allow me to complete the exam by remaining calm, professional and empathetic. You can overcome a lot of barriers that way.”

Currently, Dr. Gabrielli is one of three women and the only osteopathic physician on the board of the Delaware Academy of Medicine. She is a teaching attending pediatrician and residency preceptor within the Christiana (Delaware) Health Care System and at Nemours Alfred I. duPont Hospital for Children in Wilmington.

“We were influenced by the women’s movement. Doors had been opened and young women felt pressure to blaze new trails by choosing non-traditional careers that hadn’t been available to our mothers.”

— KATHLEEN SWEENEY, DO ’84
Leaders in Academic Medicine

For Janice Knebl, DO ’82, MBA, a career in academic medicine represents an opportunity to make an exponential difference in health care. “As a physician, you can make a difference on a one to one basis with your patients. But in academic medicine, your influence is exponential as you take your passion for medicine and share it with future generations of physicians,” says Dr. Knebl, founder and head of the division of geriatric medicine at Texas College of Osteopathic Medicine (TCOM). “I’ve had the opportunity to share my knowledge with 100 students each year for the past 19 years and hopefully, they’ve used that knowledge to care for their patients. I find that incredibly fulfilling.”

Through her academic leadership, Dr. Knebl obtained two federal grants for $3 million to create a geriatric medical residency at TCOM based on an interdisciplinary training model.

Dr. Knebl says her MBA has fueled her success in academic medicine. “One of my goals is to take my division to the next level as a department or center. To do that successfully, you must understand the business of medicine,” she says.

She is excited about new opportunities as a fellow of Executive Leadership in Academic Medicine for Women (ELAM), a professional development program established by Drexel University College of Medicine. “ELAM provides fabulous networking opportunities with women in powerful positions all over the U.S.”

Dr. Knebl is also committed to creating a culture in academic medicine that is more supportive to women. “The tenure structure needs to change to accommodate women who want to have families and part-time work options,” she says. She has also proposed a retraining program for women who take time off to have children. “Medicine advances so quickly that you can easily get behind,” she emphasizes. “We need to be creative in providing programs to encourage women to come back to the workforce because we need them. Women enhance medical education by challenging the way things have always been done. They also bring great compassion and a nurturing quality to the table—a softer, kinder medicine without any compromise on the intellectual side.”

Anita Atkins, DO ’57, was a leader and pioneer in obstetrics and gynecology at a time when women were scarce and not particularly welcome in this male-dominated subspecialty. She broke new ground in 1965 when she was appointed chair of ob/gyn at Riverview Osteopathic Hospital, which later became Suburban General Hospital in Norristown, Pennsylvania. In 1969, she performed
Dr. Atkins is most proud of creating an ob/gyn residency program at Suburban General Hospital in 1976 that is still going strong today. “Most of the residents in my program developed very successful practices,” says Dr. Atkins, who, along with her partners, developed one of the largest ob/gyn practices in Norristown during the time she practiced.

Jessica Fulton, DO ’99, is the first osteopathic physician to be appointed to the faculty of New York University (NYU) School of Medicine’s Department of Emergency Medicine. In addition to serving as assistant professor of emergency medicine, she is assistant residency director in emergency medicine at NYU and Bellevue Hospital Center and medical director of the Chemical Biological Radiological Nuclear Explosives Academy, a disaster preparedness program run by Bellevue in conjunction with the New York City Department of Health.

“I love teaching as well as being a mentor and advisor, especially to female students,” says Dr. Fulton, who is double boarded in emergency medicine and toxicology and has published chapters in several emergency medicine textbooks. She sees more opportunities for women in academic medicine every year and hopes to advance to residency director in the future.

Sharon Banks, DO ’96, discovered the importance of women mentoring women during her fellowship in rheumatology at Geisinger Medical Center in central Pennsylvania. When she showed an interest in research and teaching, one of her female mentors encouraged her to consider a career in academic medicine. As a result, Dr. Banks was accepted into a master’s degree program in health evaluation sciences at Penn State University. This enhanced her ability to conduct research as well as provided a career path.

Now assistant professor of medicine at Penn State Milton S. Hershey Medical Center, Dr. Banks serves as a mentor to medical students. “I love academic medicine because it offers such a broad range of career opportunities,” she says. “I get tremendous satisfaction from teaching young people how to be physicians. At the same time I love being able to share new knowledge I’ve gained from research as well as helping patients navigate the latest technology and best treatments available for their illness.”

Dr. Banks is collaborating on research studies pertaining to the field of rheumatology. “Women tend to be good collaborators, particularly in the research environment,” she observes.

As the first female dean of an osteopathic medical school, Silvia Ferretti, DO ’77, has helped Lake Erie College of Osteopathic Medicine (LECOM) triple in size since it was first established in 1992. During Dr. Ferretti’s tenure, LECOM has also opened a campus in Florida, established the LECOM School of Pharmacy and added numerous innovative curriculum programs.

These programs have helped to support a flexible academic environment that Dr. Ferretti considers especially important for female students who are trying to balance their work and family responsibilities as they pursue a medical education and career. “We offer many options that can help women to achieve that balance such as independent study and a brand new accelerated three-year primary care program,” emphasizes Dr. Ferretti, who previously chaired PCOM’s Department of Physical Medicine. For those interested in teaching, LECOM also offers a master’s degree in medical education.

Dr. Ferretti acknowledges her place as a pioneer and role model, and she is proud that LECOM has appointed many women to leadership positions. She predicts many more leadership opportunities for women in academic medicine nationwide in the future.

“Many new schools have opened. I believe that half of all medical schools will have female deans in the not too distant future.”

— JANICE KNEBL, DO ’82, MBA
Advocates of Women’s Health

After her general surgical residency at Mercy Suburban Hospital in Norristown, Pennsylvania, Lori Chapleskie, DO ’01, was among the first to complete a breast fellowship certificate program that had just been initiated through the Society for Surgical Oncology. Then, she received an offer she couldn’t refuse from Mercy Suburban CEO Lisa Mallon.

“Lisa offered to completely revamp the hospital’s Women’s Health Center if I would serve as its medical director,” relates Dr. Chapleskie. “She recognized that women in our geographic area are underserved when it comes to breast care and women’s health, and she saw the opportunity to remedy that.”

Dr. Chapleskie helped to design the newly remodeled center, which opened in August 2007 with state-of-the-art capabilities that include digital mammography and stereotactic breast biopsy. MammoSite® Partial Breast Irradiation Therapy will be added this year. A dedicated breast surgeon, she hand-picked staff members who share her philosophy of providing patients with compassion, sensitivity and support as well as plenty of information.

In addition to caring for patients, Dr. Chapleskie is a public advocate for breast health, regularly speaking at local health fairs, schools and special events organized by the Susan G. Komen Foundation. “We are working hard to educate women about the importance of breast care and surveillance. Today, cure is the norm rather than the exception for breast cancer, if women seek regular care.”

Susan Poserina Marcel, DO ’86, advocates for women’s health in an entirely different realm. As a psychiatrist at Thomas Jefferson University, her primary focus is helping women who suffer from depression. “I teach patients how to take better care of themselves in terms of managing stress as well as improving diet and fitness habits,” she explains. “My osteopathic training was perfect for this specialty where we focus on the mind-body connection every day.”

Dr. Poserina Marcel notes that depression is a huge problem among college-age women. “I talk to many who have childhood issues that have festered for years. These young women often break down at age 19 or 20 because the protective cocoon of home isn’t there anymore. I am seeing greater incidence and acuity of depression among them than ever before. It’s gratifying to help women make profound changes in their lives by helping them understand why they feel and behave the way they do.”

Dr. Poserina Marcel is often a guest lecturer at Jefferson’s Women’s Outreach Center, whose programs are open to the public. She also raises awareness about mental health problems among Jefferson medical students. “My goal is to help the next generation of doctors to identify mental health problems earlier and help patients get treatment sooner.”

For Rebecca Reed, DO ’97, women’s health advocacy means helping girls navigate the treacherous ropes of adolescence so they grow up to be healthy, productive members of society. As one of seven physicians practicing with Medford Pediatrics in New Jersey, Dr. Reed sees thousands of adolescent girls with issues that include depression, eating disorders, poor body image and reproductive health. “Eating disorders are affecting girls as young as age seven or eight,” she notes. “I emphasize healthy eating and more realistic expectations. I point out that magazine photos of professional models are usually computer-enhanced. I also encourage them to focus on their strengths as individuals.

“The level of depression among adolescent girls is alarming,” says Dr. Reed. “I could spend 50 percent of my time on mental health issues every day.” She tries to help by providing “anticipatory guidance,” counseling them about friends, body image, sexuality, alcohol and drugs.
Physician Workforce Issues: Bridging the Gender Gap

Brenda May-DePaola, DO ’97, faced what is, perhaps, the ultimate gender-based challenge when she served as the only female medical officer on a U.S. Navy aircraft carrier. As one of 10 female officers among 600 enlisted women and thousands of enlisted sailors, she quickly recognized the importance of building respect both as a physician and as a role model. “Surprisingly, the men were warm and accepting,” says Dr. May-DePaola. “They threw me a curve ball once in a while to see if they could embarrass me, but it never worked.

“Enlisted women need strong role models,” she continues. “So I made a conscious effort to up my game, always making sure that my uniform and hair were impeccable and that I carried myself with dignity. “I would never let anyone see me cry,” she adds. “Women just naturally cry more easily than men when they’re angry or upset, but I did it in the privacy of my office.”

Now a staff cardiologist at the National Naval Medical Center in Bethesda, Maryland, and the mother of two daughters ages six and 18 months, Dr. May-DePaola has also learned the importance of balancing work and family responsibilities. “I was fortunate that my husband’s career enabled him to work part time from home for several years during my residency and fellowship,” she relates. She also had as her mentor a cardiology department head who was a mother with three children. “She told me, ‘Don’t ever apologize if you need to leave early to take care of one of your children. And if the guys ever say anything, let me know, I’ll set them straight.’ She showed me that I could have a successful career and a family. Women need to mentor each other in this way.”

After 10 years of service, Dr. May-DePaola will leave the Navy this summer to join a private cardiology practice in Fayetteville, North Carolina, where she will be the only female cardiologist in the city. “I’m moving on because of the constant threat to deploy. I just couldn’t accept the idea of leaving my children for months at a time. My new practice offers tremendous career opportunities as well as being very family-oriented.”

Valerie Funk McAuley, DO ’99, emphasizes the importance of knowing the family values of a practice before you join it. The mother of three children, she was expecting her first when she interviewed with the family practice she joined near Exton, Pennsylvania. “I worked hard to find the right practice, asking the hard questions about their position on maternity leave of absence and family responsibilities. I was fortunate to find colleagues whose family values match mine.”

This was put to the test when Dr. McAuley’s second child was born eight weeks prematurely and spent five weeks in neonatal intensive care. “My colleagues could not have been more accommodating,” she relates. “They gave me five weeks off in addition to my six-week maternity leave.

“They see great value in having a female physician in their practice,” adds Dr. McAuley. “Women and children feel comfortable with me and I bring a lot of new families into the practice.”

Her husband’s support has also been key to her work and family balance. “My husband was at a hiatus in his career a few years ago, and decided to take some time off to stay home with our children,” she explains. “This has been invaluable, especially since our four-year-old son was diagnosed with autism, which presents extra challenges.”

As the mother of six children ranging in age from one to 22, Janine (Balducci) LoBello, DO ’03, knows a thing or two about the challenges of balancing work and family. Two of her children were born during her years at PCOM, and the youngest arrived during her residency in

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– VALERIE FUNK MCAULEY, DO ’99
anatomy and clinical pathology at St. Joseph’s Hospital & Medical Center in Phoenix, Arizona. At the same time, her three older stepchildren needed her time and attention in many different ways. Although it was hectic and she was often exhausted, she balanced the demands of her medical training and her family with the help of her very supportive husband, who is a well-established obstetrician in maternal-fetal medicine, and a nanny.

“I don’t think there’s a right time to have children when you are a physician,” says Dr. LoBello. “You will always have demands on your time, whether you are still in training or in practice. You face a different set of challenges at each juncture of your career. Each woman has to decide what works best for her and her family.”

After completing her residency, Dr. LoBello decided a part-time position as a pathologist was the perfect solution for her. Although such positions are not plentiful, she found one at a small community hospital in the Phoenix area. She is employed by a group of pathologists who are subcontracted by the hospital to provide pathology and laboratory services.

“I wanted a situation that would give me more time with my kids and a lot of flexibility,” she relates. “I also recognize the importance of staying in the game.”

Linda Nadwodny, DO ’95, decided that working three-quarters of a full-time schedule would enable her to balance her practice with the needs of her family, which includes two children. She negotiated a contract with a family practice in Lansdale, Pennsylvania, that was looking for a female physician. However, she ended up working close to a full-time schedule for a salary based on 75 percent of full-time. That was only part of the pay inequity she experienced. “After I had been with the practice four years, they brought in a male physician who was paid more money than I was even though he saw half as many patients as I did,” she relates.

The lesson? “Pay attention to the business side of your practice and advocate for yourself,” says Dr. Nadwodny. “Don’t underestimate your worth to a practice. Although the gender-based salary gap is not as wide in medicine as in the business world, it still exists and the situation will only improve if women get more involved in the business side.”

Dr. Nadwodny took her own advice by establishing her own very busy family practice in Lansdale. “In my role as a partner in the practice, I have control over my salary and schedule,” she asserts. “If I want to attend my daughter’s violin recital, I arrange my day so I can do that. Having that flexibility is important to me.”

Specialties: Breaking Down Barriers

Helen Levey (DO ’10), a second-year student at Georgia Campus - Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine, is considering a number of traditionally male-dominated specialties without the slightest trepidation, thanks to female physicians who have broken down many barriers. Ms. Levey’s list of possibilities includes orthopedic surgery, emergency medicine, endocrinology, cardiology and infectious disease. "If you’re good at what you do, gender doesn’t matter,” she asserts.

Monique Gary (DO ’09) is set on a career in surgical oncology. She will face stiff competition for one of only 30 such fellowships nationwide, but she’s up for the challenge. “Medicine is a calling, and surgical oncology in particular is my calling,” she says.

“When you know what you’re supposed to do with your life, there are no limits to what you can accomplish.”

Inspired by her grandmother, a two-time breast cancer survivor, and the memory of her late mother who died of cancer when Ms. Gary was seven, she is also motivated by the health disparity she has observed. “I met a patient with stage IV vulvar cancer. She is going to die because she had no health insurance and didn’t seek care early enough. My ultimate goal is to open centers where affordable comprehensive care is provided to cancer patients.”

Fourth-year surgical resident Lori Timerman, DO ’03, is considering offers to join general surgery practices in Philadelphia and North Carolina. As the mother of two children under age two, she knows the demands of a career in surgery will be especially challenging, but she’s determined to make it work. Another challenge she’s faced is the bias among some attending physicians regarding the performance of a female surgeon versus a male.

“It’s nothing that I haven’t been able to overcome,” she emphasizes. “I’ve invested a lot of time in training, and I’m going to spend a lot of time working, so I want to love what I’m doing.”
When Melissa Neumann Schwartz, DO ’91, chose the surgical subspecialty of otolaryngology, she was one of only four women who had ever gone through her residency program. She had just one fellow female resident, no female professors and no female role models. “I felt like a pioneer,” she says, and indeed, she was.

Now a solo practitioner in Elkins Park, Pennsylvania, after 10 years in a group practice, Dr. Schwartz says that the number of women in otolaryngology is now approaching 50 percent. “More women are assuming positions of leadership,” she notes. “The American Academy of Otolaryngology - Head and Neck Surgery elected its first female president two years ago.

“Overall, I’ve had a very positive experience as a woman in this field,” she continues. “It’s important to be mindful of the way you are perceived by colleagues as well as patients. Having a strong, confident demeanor is an asset.”

The mother of three children, Dr. Schwartz says the field is demanding but rewarding. “I’ve managed to achieve balance in my work and family life. I work a reasonable schedule and I don’t handle trauma cases, which can be very disruptive. When you choose a subspecialty, it’s important to plan ahead and think about where you want to be personally and professionally 10 years from now.”

From the beginning of her surgical residency, Jennifer Blitz Sobol, DO ’99, was encouraged by male urologists to enter their subspecialty. Now a specialist in neurourology, she was heavily courted by 10 urology practices in Detroit, Michigan, where there are only six female urologists out of 150 in practice. “Currently, only five percent of all practicing urologists nationwide are women, and female patients in this specialty want female physicians, so there is a huge demand,” says Dr. Sobol, who is one of two women in a practice of 27. She also sees male patients who, for the most part, accept her gender. “I meet a lot of them in the ER where they are writhing in pain. They don’t care at all about my gender; they just want my help!”

While she loves urology, Dr. Sobol acknowledges that you need a thick skin to survive its rigors. “You have to be willing to take criticism,” she advises. “As a female, you have to be better and more confident than your male colleagues. If you mess up, they are more likely to blame it on your gender. You have to learn to let it roll off your back.”

On the social side, Dr. Sobol says she broke into the “old boys’ club” by keeping up with sports and learning to understand “the male sense of humor.”

Jeanne Doperak, DO ’02, is in the very unusual position of having many female mentors at the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center (UPMC), a hotbed of female sports medicine specialists in this heavily male-dominated specialty. After completing a sports medicine fellowship at UPMC, she received a faculty appointment and serves as assistant team physician for the university’s men’s basketball team. She is also head team physician for St. Vincent College in Latrobe, Pennsylvania, and assistant team physician for Carnegie Mellon University. Her mentors include Robin West, MD, an orthopaedic surgeon at UPMC’s Center for Sports Medicine and a consultant to the medical team for the Pittsburgh Steelers.

After assisting Dr. West at the Steelers training camp, Dr. Doperak observes, “Even professional athletes are very accepting of female sports medicine physicians.” She also feels fully accepted by her male colleagues at UPMC and by male student athletes. “My biggest challenge has been finding a woman’s restroom when I’m traveling with the teams!”

“Although it’s a very competitive field, no one ever discouraged me from pursuing it,” she says. “You have to create opportunities to prove yourself by going to games and going down on the sidelines to offer assistance. It’s hard work, but I’ve found that anything is possible.”
“Join the Navy and see the world!” That motto has attracted many adventurous young men and women to pursue a career in the United States Navy, and James H. Black, DO ’62, was among them. Always one to embrace new opportunities, Dr. Black never imagined the enormous success he would enjoy when he joined the U.S. Navy in 1974. During a distinguished military career that spanned 24 years and two oceans, the 2008 recipient of the O.J. Snyder Memorial Medal was one of the first osteopathic physicians to be selected for flag rank by the Navy, retiring as a rear admiral in 1998.

Throughout his years of service, Dr. Black remained intensely proud of and loyal to his osteopathic roots and to PCOM. A charter member and past president of the Association of Military Osteopathic Physicians and Surgeons (AMOPS), he worked tirelessly to raise awareness and respect for osteopathic physicians within the Navy. As the first military representative on the American Osteopathic Association’s committee for post-doctoral training, he helped military osteopathic physicians and their internship and residency program directors to gain acceptance for their programs from the AOA. A member of the PCOM Board of Trustees since 1999, Dr. Black helped smooth the way for more PCOM students to receive Navy scholarships and has proudly presided over the commissioning of PCOM students into the U.S. Navy at Commencement for more than 15 years.

Dr. Black first learned about osteopathic medicine from his family physician, the late William Martz, DO ’50. “Looking at the patient as a whole person and not a disease seemed like a good philosophy to me,” says Dr. Black. He decided to pursue a career in medicine while an undergraduate student at Gettysburg College and applied to only one medical school. “Dr. Martz and his wife took me to PCOM for a visit and I was sold,” he recalls.

His first adventure after graduating from PCOM was an internship at Fort Worth Osteopathic Hospital in Texas. He went there sight unseen on the word of his friend, Lawrence Barbour, DO ’62, who believed that this would be a good opportunity for both of them. Dr. Black went on to complete a residency in anesthesiology under the late Francis Wheeler, DO ’53, and remained in practice at Fort Worth until 1974.

During that time, several of his fellow physicians decided to start what would become the Texas College of Osteopathic Medicine. Although he was somewhat skeptical at first, Dr. Black’s bold spirit won out and he became one of the initial donors to the new college, now part of the University of North Texas. He also served as a member of the school’s admissions committee and was appointed a clinical instructor.

By 1973, Dr. Black was becoming disenchanted with his daily routine in the OR. “Those four green walls day in and day out were beginning to close in on me,” he recalls. He was ready for a new adventure. One day, while attending a Texas Osteopathic Medical Association meeting, he stopped by a U.S. Navy recruiting booth. “A career in the Navy sounded like it would be a lot of fun,” he relates. Encouraged by an osteopathic physician colleague who had previously served in the Navy, Dr. Black approached his wife, Joann, with the idea. “What would you say if I decided to join the Navy?” he asked.

“I think you’ve lost your mind!” was her initial reply. “I wasn’t surprised that he was thinking about new opportunities, but I didn’t expect the Navy!” relates Mrs. Black, his wife of 50 years. Nevertheless, she supported her husband’s career move, and in 1974, packed up their four children and joined him in this new journey.

“The best decision I ever made was to join the Navy,” says Dr. Black. “I had so many more opportunities in the military than I ever would have had in a civilian career. And we lived in beautiful places like Hawaii, Japan and...”
San Francisco where most people only go on vacation.”

Commissioned as a commander, Dr. Black completed his training in aerospace medicine at the Naval Aerospace Medical Institute in Pensacola, Florida, and was designated a flight surgeon. His first assignment was senior medical officer on the USS Ranger, an aircraft carrier in the Pacific Fleet with 5,000 on board. “Being brand new to the ship and the Navy, I had a lot to learn,” he recalls. “One of the biggest challenges was learning all the Navy acronyms!”

Dr. Black also recalls challenges at sea. “One time, we had to get out to a submarine where a young sailor was suffering from appendicitis. They dropped me from a helicopter in a harness down onto a destroyer,” he relates. “Then we took a motor whale boat from the destroyer to the submarine. The sea that day was rough with very high swells. It was very difficult to get the patient back to the destroyer to examine him.” They navigated a safe return to the ship where the patient received much-needed care.

After two years in the Pacific, Dr. Black headed to Washington, DC, for assignments in the Navy’s Bureau of Medicine and Surgery where he served as head of the aerospace physical examination review section and handled medical officer assignments. Since the Bureau also processed Navy scholarship applications, Dr. Black seized the opportunity to advocate for PCOM students who were applying.

“At that time, PCOM students were finding it difficult to be accepted for Navy scholarships,” recalls Carol A. Fox, MM, associate vice president for enrollment management. “Dr. Black’s advocacy was instrumental in helping more PCOM students receive scholarships. He also smoothed the way for the commissioning of PCOM students by advocating on our behalf at the local Navy recruiting office.”

From his post in Washington, DC, Dr. Black headed west again, serving in a number of assignments that included commanding officer of naval hospitals in Oak Harbor, Washington and Yokosuka, Japan.

Later, as fleet surgeon for the entire U.S. Pacific Fleet, Dr. Black was responsible for the medical care provided on all ships, submarines and aircraft throughout the Pacific Rim. He also served as fleet surgeon for the U.S. Atlantic Fleet with additional responsibilities for the U.S. Atlantic Command, which includes all branches of the military, as well as the NATO command in Norfolk, Virginia. In 1993, he was selected for flag rank and promoted to rear admiral. He retired five years later after more than two decades of service.

Dr. Black continues to encourage students who are considering a military career. “The career opportunities are tremendous, and the Navy pays for your tuition and books as well as a stipend,” he emphasizes.

Each year, Dr. Black looks forward to the commissioning ceremony at the PCOM Commencement. “It’s very special to him because he remembers a time when osteopathic physicians were not allowed to be officers in the Navy,” notes Mrs. Black. “He has never forgotten his roots and, regardless of his rank and responsibilities, he has always been first and foremost an osteopathic physician.”

Dr. Black emphasizes the importance of giving back to PCOM. “Without the College, none of us would be where we are today,” he stresses. As a member of PCOM’s Board of Trustees and past president of the Alumni Association, Dr. Black continues to give back in myriad ways. “I have great pride in the College and I’m committed to seeing that we continue to maintain our excellent standing among medical schools.”
SALLEE ANN ECKLER, PhD, (DO ’08)
2008 MASON W. PRESSLY MEMORIAL MEDAL RECIPIENT

A Heart for Serving Others

For Salle Ann Eckler, PhD, (DO ’08), the 2004 tsunami in Southeast Asia was a defining moment. “I wanted to donate money but I felt that anything I could give would be too minuscule to make a difference,” relates Dr. Eckler, who was a first-year PCOM student at the time. Inspired by the desire to provide meaningful assistance to the victims of this disaster, she proposed an idea to her friends at PCOM. “Let’s all sacrifice something we enjoy for two weeks and donate the money we would have spent to a tsunami relief fund.”

Encouraged by her friends’ enthusiasm and the support of Tina Woodruff, EdD, assistant dean for student affairs, Dr. Eckler took her idea campus-wide and the “Sacrifice-2-Save Tsunami Campaign” was born. Students, faculty and employees flocked to Evans Hall to sign up. “People sacrificed things like coffee, snacks and choice parking spaces. We were able to present the American Red Cross with a check for almost $11,000.”

But that was only the beginning of Dr. Eckler’s efforts to serve others. When Hurricane Katrina struck the Gulf Coast the following year, she organized another Sacrifice-2-Save campaign, collecting money as well as clothing and food, which PCOM students transported to New Orleans. As president of PCOM’s Student Government Association (SGA), Dr. Eckler had the opportunity to present this philanthropic idea to the Council of Osteopathic Student Government Presidents (COSGP). As a result, other osteopathic medical schools initiated similar programs.

“God put it in my heart to do this,” she says. “I hope that the program will continue to motivate students to approach such tragedies with a spirit of sacrifice and humility and a heart for serving others.”

Dr. Eckler has also stepped up to serve her fellow students. When the first class of students arrived on the Georgia Campus of PCOM in 2005, she flew down to help introduce them to life at PCOM in her capacity as SGA president. After answering their many questions, she went a step further and initiated a very successful “Big Brothers, Big Sisters” program, matching first-year students in Georgia with second-year students in Philadelphia. “I was struck by the fact that the students on this brand new campus didn’t have any mentors to help them through the first year of medical school,” she remembers. “With this program, at least they would have someone to ask for advice about what books to buy or how to make it through the next anatomy lab.”

Dr. Eckler’s leadership qualities and heart for service have been widely recognized. Elected second vice chair of the COSGP, she was also appointed as that organization’s student liaison to the American Osteopathic Foundation board of directors. A recipient of the Morton E. Terry Memorial Student Leadership Award, she has also received the Martha and Michael J. Avallone Memorial Scholarship and the PCOM Alumni Association Scholarship.

Her inspiration comes from her faith, her family and her experiences at PCOM, says Dr. Eckler, who looks forward to a residency in general surgery. “My faith is a huge part of my life, and I love the fact that the osteopathic philosophy incorporates the spiritual aspect of a person.” Enthusiastically supported by her mother and two older sisters back home in Louisville, Kentucky, she has also been influenced by her father’s death when she was 12. “It was hard to lose him,” she reflects. “That kind of experience can either make you bitter or change you for the better. Knowing what grief feels like has given me an empathetic outlook on patients and an understanding of how to speak to them and their families.”

Dr. Eckler, who holds a doctorate in pharmacology and physiology, credits her experience at PCOM with helping her to “become comfortable with who I am as a physician. I’ve had wonderful mentors and everyone has been so warm and embracing,” she relates. “I’ve been blessed by the College in so many ways, and I want to continue to do good things for PCOM.”

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Dr. Eckler has also stepped up to serve her fellow students. When the first class of students arrived on the Georgia Campus of PCOM in 2005, she flew down to help introduce them to life at PCOM in her capacity as SGA president. After answering their many questions, she went a step further and initiated a very successful “Big Brothers, Big Sisters” program, matching first-year students in Georgia with second-year students in Philadelphia. “I was struck by the fact that the students on this brand new campus didn’t have any mentors to help them through the first year of medical school,” she remembers. “With this program, at least they would have someone to ask for advice about what books to buy or how to make it through the next anatomy lab.”

Dr. Eckler’s leadership qualities and heart for service have been widely recognized. Elected second vice chair of the COSGP, she was also appointed as that organization’s student liaison to the American Osteopathic Foundation board of directors. A recipient of the Morton E. Terry Memorial Student Leadership Award, she has also received the Martha and Michael J. Avallone Memorial Scholarship and the PCOM Alumni Association Scholarship.

Her inspiration comes from her faith, her family and her experiences at PCOM, says Dr. Eckler, who looks forward to a residency in general surgery. “My faith is a huge part of my life, and I love the fact that the osteopathic philosophy incorporates the spiritual aspect of a person.” Enthusiastically supported by her mother and two older sisters back home in Louisville, Kentucky, she has also been influenced by her father’s death when she was 12. “It was hard to lose him,” she reflects. “That kind of experience can either make you bitter or change you for the better. Knowing what grief feels like has given me an empathetic outlook on patients and an understanding of how to speak to them and their families.”

Dr. Eckler, who holds a doctorate in pharmacology and physiology, credits her experience at PCOM with helping her to “become comfortable with who I am as a physician. I’ve had wonderful mentors and everyone has been so warm and embracing,” she relates. “I’ve been blessed by the College in so many ways, and I want to continue to do good things for PCOM.”
Medical professionals know there is more than one way to treat most health problems. The best treatment is highly individualized, taking the patient—not just his or her particular problem(s)—into account.

But one group most often is not presented with options.

When healthcare professionals treat patients with alcohol and drug problems there’s a clear tendency to apply the so-called “tough love” approach. Yet, when they deny patients treatment until they are sober, they deny them compassion.

“We tell our patients we won’t treat them until they are no longer doing the thing that they are struggling with, and this is when they most need our help,” laments Frederick Rotgers, PsyD, associate professor, psychology, and co-editor of the journal *Addiction Research & Theory*.

The modern version of the 12-Step Treatment Model demands that patients with an alcohol or drug problem stop using substances before they begin treatment. There isn’t much flexibility built into the program.

“We still demonize the person using drugs and alcohol; we put a moral face on the problem,” offers Dr. Rotgers. “We’re the only Western, Euro-influenced nation that does this,” he adds.

“There’s not a single study in 40 years that tells us ‘tough love’ works,” emphasizes Dr. Rotgers, who teaches what is believed to be one of the only graduate-level full-term Harm Reduction Therapy (HRT) courses in America.

“The notion that ‘tough love’ is the only answer is akin to the thinking that if aspirin cured my headache, it must cure all headaches.”

Dr. Rotgers and other behavioral health experts have a different approach. They have embraced HRT, a somewhat controversial methodology in which professionals work with patients with drug and alcohol problems—whether or not they have made the commitment to stop using substances.

In November, Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine and Dr. Rotgers hosted the Second National Harm Reduction Therapy Conference, a three-day conference of more than 100 behavioral health experts, primarily from North America and Europe.

According to the Association for Harm Reduction Therapy, HRT is a non-judgmental approach to helping people experiencing alcohol and drug problems reduce the negative impact of substance use, abuse or dependence in their lives. “We might ask a patient who is having great difficulty stopping his use of drugs and alcohol if he can cut back, reduce the amount used—right now—and we’ll focus later on helping him stop the use of drugs and alcohol,” says Dr. Rotgers.

“Clearly, we want them to stop, but we don’t fool ourselves into thinking that they will stop just because everyone around them is telling them that they’re hurting themselves,” explains Dr. Rotgers. “We need to be pragmatic. We need to focus on what is the reality that we are facing.”

An example of HRT: needle exchange programs for heroin users. Traditionalists chide supporters of such programs, arguing that they foster greater drug abuse.

“But when you consider that 50 percent of new cases of HIV/AIDS in Newark, New Jersey, are in women who are sexual partners of drug users but who are not drug users themselves, where is the logic in the argument against these programs?” questions Dr. Rotgers.

One student of Dr. Rotgers who utilizes HRT is Roger McFillin, MS, MEd (PsyD ’09). Mr. McFillin explains that...
patients sometimes are surprised by the HRT approach: “My biggest surprise with HRT is some of the responses I’ve received from patients when I don’t respond with judgment or disgust to relapse. It continues to amaze me how simple, empathetic responses and just maintaining a commitment to the patient’s goals can motivate someone toward change.”

Dr. Rotgers is not at all surprised by his student’s discovery: “You’re much more likely to have success with the patient, to be able to help him, if simple trust is developed.”

One method for developing trust is for the therapist to take an honest interest in the patient’s other behavioral health and physical health problems. “Don’t get caught up in the idea that their problem with drugs and alcohol is all that there is to them,” advises Dr. Rotgers, who co-authored a July 2005 article about Harm Reduction and Traditional Treatment in the journal *Addiction Professional*.

HRT is patient-focused. Psychologists, psychiatrists and other healthcare professionals work to help the person abusing drugs and alcohol to reach goals the patient sets, whether or not those goals include changing substance use. They help the patient with his or her full range of problems, providing therapy for depression and other behavioral issues and making referrals to the appropriate healthcare professional for medical problems, even though the patient chooses to continue substance use.

“We have a moral and ethical obligation to help these patients, to help the other aspects of their health care,” says Dr. Rotgers, who also is a board member of the Harm Reduction Therapy Center in San Francisco. “We don’t turn away diabetics who need help because they have failed to lose weight or they’re eating too many sweets.

“HRT works in synergy with osteopathic medicine,” offers Dr. Rotgers. “We focus on the whole patient. We don’t believe that drug or alcohol use is the defining characteristic of a person.”

In almost any medical or behavioral health setting, the patient makes the final decision about what to do. “People do not stop using until they’re ready to stop,” notes Dr. Rotgers. “In HRT, we recognize that to be successful we have to meet people and work with them where they are.”

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### A Student Weighs-In

Roger McFillin, MS, MEd (PsyD ’09), has utilized HRT principles in his doctoral practicum placements and while working with adolescents as a counselor in a school district. He sees how effective HRT can be, but he also knows that the relatively simple principles are not always simple to apply. “When patients fail to meet expectations it can evoke some strong emotions.

“I’ve been able to reframe success in therapy by assisting patients to reduce the harm related to destructive behaviors as they work to achieve the goals they set in therapy.”

The biggest challenge he sees for HRT is rooted in core beliefs among some practitioners and others that suggests relapse and treatment non-adherence are directly related to character flaws in the patient.

“I strongly believe HRT principles can be utilized by other professionals including social workers, educators and medical professionals,” says Mr. McFillin.
It’s a muggy August afternoon and Crystal Hartman (DO ’10) and Susan Holencik (DO ’10) are at either end of a rowing shell carrying it down a wooden dock to the Schuylkill River. Casey Lafferty (DO ’10) follows with a seat and riggers. She sets the seat and riggers in the shell and tightens the wing nuts that hold the apparatus in place. With the boat rigged and ready to go, Stuart Abelson walks down the dock accompanied by George, his service dog. Chris Higgins (DO ’10) helps Mr. Abelson into the boat and loosely straps his calves together. Mr. Abelson takes hold of the oar handles and, with a volunteer rower in the seat behind him, shoves off from the dock, slicing a path through the duckweed-covered river.

Scenarios such as this unfold dozens of times a week at the Philadelphia Rowing Program for the Disabled (PRPD) where PCOM students join other volunteers to help people with disabilities get into boats and row the river Thomas Eakins helped make famous.

PRPD is one of many adaptive rowing programs in the country. Through the program individuals with disabilities ranging from blindness to multiple sclerosis and cerebral palsy have the opportunity to experience the pleasures and freedom that rowing offers. The program provides all the equipment necessary, including stable ocean shells (boats), fixed seats for rowers who have leg impairments (standard rowing employs a sliding seat) and seat backs and straps for holding the rower in place if necessary. There are additional modifications possible, including small pontoons for added stability. The program also makes available able-bodied rowers to help row the boat.

This is Mr. Abelson’s tenth year with the program. “The first time I was on the water it felt right,” he explains. “I love the atmosphere. These are a great group of inspiring people. We all have disabilities, we all love life. We’re free on the river; nobody judges you. The volunteers make this possible.”

PCOM students have been involved in the program for over five years. One of the first volunteers was Laura Bajor, DO ’07. As a first-year at PCOM, Dr. Bajor was looking for a boathouse to join where she could row recreationally and affordably. As she explored the boathouses along Boathouse Row, she found they were not welcoming to a casual rower. Then she discovered PRPD on the other side of the river. “I loved PRPD from the first night I got there,” she recalls. “The place radiates positive energy, and the emphasis is on making the most of what you have available to you.” There she met a disabled rower, Gerri Shulman, MD, an associate professor of medicine at Temple School of Medicine, who had been rowing with PRPD since 2000. “She became an informal mentor to me during my years at PCOM,” continues Dr. Bajor. “We would go rowing and talk about cases, what it was like to be in residency and in practice and just life in general. Another thing that was really great about PRPD was the chance to interact with people dealing with physical challenges who were not my patients—to learn as a peer and as a friend what life is like for a blind person, an amputee, etc. I made some very close friends that I otherwise might never have met.” Dr. Bajor was soon followed by other PCOM volunteers; “we never made a formal recruitment effort; people just heard about how much fun it was and started showing up.”

Several years later, in the spring of 2007, Emily Dilzer (DO ’10) met Cami Reynolds, one of the directors of PRPD, while working at a soup kitchen in Philadelphia.
Ms. Reynolds explained the program and told Dilzer that they were looking for more volunteers. Ms. Dilzer came back to campus, made a few announcements, and quickly built a new core group of volunteers who head down to the river Thursday afternoons from May through October.

“It’s great training for the ‘real world,’” says Ms. Holencik. “It gives us a chance to interact with people with disabilities on their own terms. I think this will help us keep our humanity when we’re doctors; we won’t see people as a disability or a disease—we’ll see them as complete human beings.” Ms. Hartman agrees. “Volunteering at PRPD makes us more understanding of what they’re going through.”

And then there’s the rowing. “It’s a great way to de-stress,” says Ms. Lafferty. “It’s important to get away from the books, get outside and get physically active.” Most of the PCOM volunteers had never rowed before joining PRPD, but they are taught by more experienced volunteers. In addition to rowing with PRPD members, they can also head out on the river on their own. “But it’s more than just rowing,” says Mr. Higgins. “After we row we usually hang out with the rowers and volunteers. We have picnics. It’s a very social experience.”

As much as the disabled rowers appreciate the volunteers, the other volunteers can’t say enough good things about the PCOM students. “We are spoiled to have them,” says Karen Becker, a volunteer from Bachelors Barge Club. “They are a great group of kids,” adds Ms. Reynolds. “They are the first ones to bring the boats down to the water. They help out with anything that needs to be done. They are a joy to have around.”

Ms. Reynolds became involved in PRPD when her daughter, who has mild cerebral palsy, joined the club as a rower. “I was just a mom,” she explained. She went from mom, to rower, to director. “I never did anything athletic before this,” she confesses, but now she is an avid rower and volunteer. “I strongly believe that doctors should tell all their patients with disabilities to get involved with an adaptive sport. I’ve seen the difference it makes in people’s lives.”
Class of 1964
Class Agent: James P. Tierney
The late Leonard W. Johnson, DO, was honored with a special campus monument at Florida A&M University, where Dr. Johnson received his undergraduate degree. The monument was unveiled during the university's 2007 Homecoming celebration in memory of Dr. Johnson and his outstanding contributions to the university.

Class of 1967
Class Agents: John E. Callahan, DO, and Allan N. Fields, DO
Ronald R. Blanck, DO, Fenwick Island, DE, joined the advisory board for Aurora Imaging Technology, Inc.

Class of 1973
Class Agent: Herbert J. Rogove, DO
Anthony J. Lopresti, DO, Vallejo, CA, is an assistant professor and primary care doctor for Touro University Medical Center. Dr. Lopresti teaches clinical systems.
Ellen M. Platt, DO, Cedar Grove, NJ, maintains a private practice specializing in the primary use of psychotherapy while de-emphasizing the use of psychiatric medications.

Class of 1975
Class Agent: Jon J. O'Brien, SJ, DO
Jeffry A. Lindenbaum, DO, Warrington, PA, was one of five finalists for the 2007 American Osteopathic Association Mentor of the Year Award.

Class of 1977
Class Agent: H. Sprague Taveau, IV, DO
Silvia M. Ferretti, DO, Erie, PA, was the recipient of the Outstanding Service Award presented by Lake Erie College of Osteopathic Medicine.

Class of 1978
Class Agent: Lorraine M. Disipio, DO
Richard B. Bloom, DO, Independence, MO, began law school at Stetson University College of Law in August.

96 Years Young
Abe Lucks, DO ‘46
Snowy days and insufficient outerwear play a recurring role in the life of Abe Lucks, DO ’46, Cedarhurst, New York. As a child, Dr. Lucks’ mother brought him to a medical clinic for treatment of a severe case of measles. When he did not get better, she asked the doctor what it would cost to see him at his private office. Mrs. Lucks borrowed the $25 and, on a snowy winter day, took her son to the doctor. The doctor noticed she was not wearing a winter coat and refused to take her money.

Approximately 85 years later a similar scene played out in Dr. Lucks’ office when he gave a homeless patient a coat of his own to ward off the winter chill. A freelance writer waiting in his office witnessed this act of kindness and asked to write a story about the doctor. Dr. Lucks acquiesced only after repeated requests by the reporter and a promise to write about the doctor’s family—the most important thing in his life.

In addition to his love of family, Dr. Lucks has a love of medicine, which he practices to this day at the age of 96. Dr. Lucks knew he wanted to be a doctor from the time he was six. “When I went to the clinic it smelled of ether,” he recalls. “I loved that smell; it was like perfume to me.”

Not able to afford medical school, he instead became a pharmacist like his two brothers. But Dr. Lucks never gave up his dream, and when he was 30 he enrolled in what was then PCO. He and his wife lived in a basement apartment at 48th and Spruce Streets. “Those were tough years,” he recalls. His brother helped pay his tuition and, in exchange, Dr. Lucks returned to New York every weekend to help him in his pharmacy.

Dr. Lucks has been in family practice in the same office in South Ozone Park, New York, for sixty years. He accepts no appointments, no Medicare, and he doesn’t send bills. What he does do is see patients three days a week regardless of their ability to pay.

When he’s not working, Dr. Lucks enjoys playing golf and walking. “I never smoked and I never drank,” he says to explain his good health. Ask him about his achievements and he barely mentions the documentary a local television station made of him or his mention in “Ripley’s Believe It or Not.” But you’ll learn about his children, grandchildren and great grandchildren—all of whom clearly keep Dr. Lucks young.
Carlo J. DiMarco, DO, Media, PA, a board-certified osteopathic ophthalmologist, was named president-elect of the American Osteopathic Association during its annual business meeting held in July.

Marcella M. Frank, DO, Hamilton, NJ, is the medical director of the Center for Sleep Medicine at Capital Health System. Dr. Frank holds faculty positions at Robert Wood Johnson Medical School and Capital Health System.

Class of 1982
Class Agent: Anthony J. Silvagni, DO
Katherine K. Feinstein, DO, San Diego, CA, was cited as a “Top Doc in Pediatrics” by San Diego Magazine. She is a member of Children’s Primary Care Medical Group, Inc., in El Cajon.

Class of 1983
Class Agent: Mary Ann DiBiagio, DO
Gary A. Aaronson, DO, New Hope, PA, is chief of the pulmonary disease section at Frankford Hospital. Dr. Aaronson is also a member of Frankford Hospital’s board of directors.

Col. (Ret.) Daniel F. Battafarano, DO, San Antonio, TX, received the Laureate Award from the Army Region of the American College of Physicians for abiding commitment to excellence in patient care, education, research, and in service to the community and the College.

Class of 1984
Class Agent: Paul V. Suhey, DO
Anthony Brown, DO, Medford, NJ, was cited among the “Top Physicians of South Jersey for 2007” by South Jersey Magazine. In addition, Dr. Brown was recently presented with three teaching awards: the Golden Apple Teaching Award from medical students at the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey - School of Osteopathic Medicine (UMDNJ-SOM), Class of 2007; the Teacher of the Year Award from internal medicine interns and residents at UMDNJ-SOM, Kennedy Health System; and the Teaching Award for Outstanding Preceptor of Year from family medicine residents at UMDNJ-SOM.

John H. Simmons, DO, South Paris, ME, and his wife, Doreen, were featured in an article in Maine Food & Lifestyle, a magazine that focuses on “connecting people to local resources.” Dr. Simmons and his wife are the owners and operators of Stoneheart Farm, a 75-acre sheep farm. The Simmons raise grass-fed sheep which they sell to restaurants in Portland.

David S. Tabby, DO, Merion Station, PA, is associate professor of neurology at Drexel University College of Medicine. Dr. Tabby is the director of the fourth-year neurology clerkship.

Class of 1985
Class Agent: Michael P. Meyer, DO
Byron Littlefield, DO, Adairsville, GA, was featured in an article, “Adairsville Doctor Celebrates 20 Years,” published in the Daily Tribune News.

Class of 1986
Class Agent: John C. Sefter, DO
David J. Carlson, DO, Johnstown, PA, was appointed chief medical officer for Conemaugh Health System.

Steven Locnikar, DO, Scottsdale, AZ, authored a best seller, Doctor Hyde: A True Story of Addiction and Redemption, which explores drug addiction from inside the medical profession.

Deebeanne M. Tavani, DO, Boothwyn, PA, was selected as Teacher of the Year by the surgical house staff at Lankenau Hospital, where she practices general endocrinology.

Class of 1987
Class Agents: Elliott J. Bilofsky, DO, and Katherine C. Erlichman, DO
Stanley J. Savinese, DO, Glen Mills, PA, was appointed medical director of Plush Mills, a senior living community in Wallingford.

Kennedy Sbat, DO, Pottstown, PA, director of Critical Care Medicine at Pottstown Memorial Medical Center, recently opened the Sleep Wellness Center of Pottstown.

Peter A. Silkowski, DO, Clarksville, TN, became board certified in medical management by the Certifying Commission in Medical Management.

Class of 1988
Class Agent: Eric M. Lipnack, DO

A. Scott McNeal, DO, Collegeville, PA, was appointed senior vice president for medical affairs, North Philadelphia Health System. Dr. McNeal was elected as a member of the board of governors of Hahnemann University Hospital.

Andrew S. Pumerantz, DO, Pomona, CA, joined the College of Osteopathic Medicine of the Pacific at Western University of Health Sciences as an associate professor of internal medicine and as chief of the division of infectious disease.

Stephen G. Smaldore, DO, and Kellie B. Smaldore, DO, Bel Air, MD, were featured in an article published in the Harford Business Ledger titled “Family Practitioners Also Raising a Family Together.”

Class of 1993
Class Agents: Larissa Fernando-Dominy, DO, and Clara M. Higgins, DO
D. Gregory Jones, DO, Mountain Gap, PA, has been appointed associate director of Wilkes-Barre General Hospital’s emergency services department. Dr. Jones is board certified in emergency medicine.

William Jones, DO, Plano, TX, has been appointed director of pediatric anesthesiology at the Children’s Medical Center of Dallas, Legacy Campus. In addition to his appointment, he has been named to the faculty of the University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center.
Class of 1995
Class Agent: Francis N. Ogbolu, DO
Marshall E. Eidenberg, DO, Moosic, PA, joined the emergency department as emergency medical associate at Geisinger Wyoming Valley Medical Center.

Class of 1996
Class Agent: Joanne E. Hullings, DO
Christopher J. Mehallo, DO, Drexel Hill, PA, is a non-surgical sports medicine physician at the Rothman Institute in Philadelphia and Media. Dr. Mehallo completed his osteopathic rotating internship and family medicine residency at Merida South Pointe Hospital in Cleveland, Ohio. He then completed his primary care sport medicine fellowship at the Horizon Orthopedic/Lutheran Hospital in Cleveland. He serves as a consultant to several Delaware County high schools and is the sports medicine physician for Cheyney University, Neumann College and Penn State Delaware County.

Patricia A. Wolfe, DO, Austell, GA, joined WellStar Pediatric & Adolescent Center. Dr. Wolfe is board certified by the American Academy of Pediatrics.

David A. Wood, DO, Dallas, PA, was nominated for the 2007 American Osteopathic Association Mentor of the Year Award.

Class of 1997
Class Agents: Armando Sciullo, DO, and Laurie Ann Spraga, DO
Sean D. Dakshaw, DO, Eden, MD, joined the medical staff of Atlantic General Hospital and Atlantic General Health System. Dr. Dakshaw specializes in emergency medicine.

Class of 1999
Class Agent: Tabatha Jeffers, DO
Jill B. D’Amico, DO, Harrisburg, PA, joined Devonshire Family Health Center, a service of Holy Spirit Health System.

Susan Bryan James, DO, Plymouth, MA, recently became board certified by the American Osteopathic Board of Obstetrics and Gynecology. She is an obstetrician/gynecologist with Pilgrim

On a Personal Note

Steven R. Blasi, DO ’02, Easton, PA, married Jessica Bottos on September 1, 2007, in Easton.

David Bohorquez, DO ’97, and Deborah Gracia Bohorquez, DO ’99, Plantation, FL, are the proud parents of Zachary Sebastien, born on November 2, 2007.

Christopher Cianci, DO ’06, New York, NY, married Lindsay Lepore on May 27, 2007, in Saddle River, New Jersey. The couple honeymooned in the Greek Islands. Dr. Cianci is an internal medicine resident at St. Luke’s Roosevelt Hospital.

David Herzing, MS/PA ’03, DuBois, PA, is happy to announce his engagement to Lindsey Schoening. A fall wedding is planned.

Heather Markovitz Hofflich, DO ’01, Irvine, CA, and her husband, David, are the proud parents of son Jacob Aaron, born on February 4, 2007.

Susan Bryan James, DO ’99, Plymouth, MA, and her husband, Scott, welcomed their first child, Gavin Bryan, born on September 18, 2006.


Teresa Pirri McGrath, DO ’04, Wildwood, NJ, and her husband, Joseph, are the proud parents of Ryan Michael, born on September 4, 2007. Ryan joins his big brother, Brenden, age two.
**Home Care is Where the Heart Is**

*Deborah Summers, MS, PA-C ’06*

Five days a week, Deborah Summers, MS, PA-C ’06, Conshohocken, Pennsylvania, hits the road visiting the elderly, the disabled and the morbidly obese in their homes. Without her visits, these patients might spend their last days in a nursing home rather than their own home. In many ways, she is fulfilling the original mission of the physician assistant profession—filling the gaps in primary care that were created in the 1960s when physicians began gravitating en masse to specialties.

“I get a great deal of satisfaction knowing that I’m helping people who may not be able to get medical care without home visits,” says Ms. Summers. Ms. Summers visits approximately six homes a day, spending anywhere from half-an-hour to an hour or more with each patient. “I get to see the patients in their environment, and that’s very important. I can see their other caregivers and meet their family. I can see their surroundings. It’s truly a holistic, osteopathic approach to care.”

Ms. Summers practices traditional primary care, managing her patients’ various medical conditions, making referrals to specialists, looking for signs of dehydration, mental changes, and even elder abuse. When necessary, she contacts the Philadelphia Corporation for the Elderly to conduct interventions.

Ms. Summers has had a passion for caring for people from the time she was 16 and was working as a nurses’ aide. After raising a family, working as a medical secretary and doing a stint in finance, Ms. Summers finally had the opportunity to pursue her dream of practicing medicine. She entered the USP/PCOM collaborative physician assistant program and earned her bachelor’s degree, master’s degree and physician assistant certification in five years.

After graduating from the program Ms. Summers worked for six months in PCOM’s geriatrics division, where a large part of her responsibility was conducting home visits, before signing on with Home Visit Doctors in the West Oak Lane section of Philadelphia. In addition to caring for her patients, a favorite part of her job is acting as preceptor to PA students. “The students drive with me to the patient’s home and we discuss each case. I find teaching incredibly rewarding, and it’s a good opportunity for me to encourage new PAs to enter primary care.”

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**Class of 2000**

**Class Agents:** Edward Casey, DO, Kristen Lehmann, PA-C, and Christiane M. Petrillo, PA-C

**Kathy L. Rumer, DO**, Philadelphia, PA, has completed a fellowship in plastic and reconstructive surgery at Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine. She has opened a private practice, Delaware Valley Aesthetics-DEVA, located in Bala Cynwyd. Dr. Rumer is married to Kerry DeAngelis; the couple celebrated their nuptials in 2006 in Sorrento, Italy.

**Class of 2001**

**Class Agents:** Connie Andrejko, DO, Kenneth Andrejko, DO, Melissa H. Guarino, PA-C, and Nicole Miller, PA-C

**Andrew J. Marcantonio, DO**, Wellesley, MA, joined the department of orthopaedic surgery at Lahey Clinic in Burlington. He completed a fellowship program in orthopaedic traumatology at the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center in 2007.

**Eric Steen, DO**, Radford, VA, has joined Surgical Associates of SWVA in Pulaski. Dr. Steen is in general surgical practice with **Stuart Goldstein, DO ’89**.

**Class of 2002**

**Class Agents:** Edward J. Armbruster, DO, Steven Blasi, DO, Heather C. Beraducci, PA-C, and Erin G. Wolf, PA-C

**Edward J. Armbruster, DO**, Voorhees, NJ, will complete his fellowship in hand, upper extremity and microvascular surgery at the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey - New Jersey Medical School in June 2008. He will then start in practice with Lower Bucks Orthopaedics at Lower Bucks Hospital, Bristol, Pennsylvania.

**Louis E. Costa, DO**, Harrisburg, PA, is working to complete an advanced laparoscopic general surgery fellowship under the direction of Joseph B. Petelin, MD, and the Surgix Institute. Upon completion, he intends to practice in...
Certificates of Merit

Roberta R. Ball, DO ’80, Cheltenham, PA, was elected president of the American College of Osteopathic Neurologists and Psychiatrists.

John A. Cifala, DO ’45, Arlington, VA, was one of the recipients of the American Osteopathic Association’s highest honor—the Distinguished Service Certificate. Dr. Cifala was honored for his outstanding accomplishments in advancing the osteopathic medical profession and his achievements in professional medical affairs.

Silvia M. Ferretti, DO ’77, Erie, PA, was inducted into the American Osteopathic Association’s Mentor Hall of Fame. She was lauded for her “outstanding leadership in teaching others and tireless advocacy for the profession.”

Jarad S. Fingerman, DO ’96, Newtown, PA, was inducted as a fellow of the American College of Osteopathic Surgeons.

Cynthia R. Fusco, DO ’91, Yardley, PA, was inducted as a fellow of the American College of Osteopathic Surgeons.

John C. Green, DO ’84, Athens, OH, was inducted as a fellow of the American College of Osteopathic Surgeons.

Marc A. Greenstein, DO ’97, Short Hills, NJ, was inducted as a fellow of the American College of Osteopathic Surgeons.

Lynwood W. Hammers, DO ’79, Trumbull, CT, was the recipient of the 2007 Dr. Floyd J. Treaney Memorial Medal presented by the American Osteopathic College of Radiology. Dr. Hammers is a proprietor and sole radiologist at Healthcare Imaging, LLC, New Haven, where he specializes in ultrasound and ultrasound-guided procedures. He also serves as associate clinical professor in the Yale University Department of Medicine and the Department of Diagnostic Imaging.

Sherman N. Leis, DO, ’67, Narberth, PA, received the Orel F. Martin Medal, the American College of Osteopathic Surgeons’ highest award. Dr. Leis was also elected to the ACOS Board of Governors.

R. Dale McCormick, DO ’58, York, PA, was inducted as fellow of the American College of Forensic Examiners.

Douglas B. Paul, DO ’86, Clayton, OH, was inducted as fellow of the American College of Osteopathic Surgeons.

Stanley Schiowitz, DO ’44, Great Neck, NY, was one of the recipients of the American Osteopathic Medicine’s highest honor—the Distinguished Service Certificate. Dr. Schiowitz was honored for his outstanding accomplishments in furthering the profession and his leadership in shaping the first osteopathic medical school in New York State—the New York College of Osteopathic Medicine of New York Institute of Technology in Old Westbury.

John P. Simelaro, DO ’71, Bryn Mawr, PA, was the recipient of the 2007 Teacher of the Year Award presented by the American College of Osteopathic Internists.
Central Pennsylvania. His wife Sandra (Ranieri) Costa, DO, is a member of Heritage Family Medicine. Heather Kerlin, DO, Charlotte, NC, accepted a position as an urgent care physician with Presbyterian Medical Group. Timothy A. Leone, DO, Mechanicsburg, PA, recently became board certified as a general surgeon by the American Osteopathic Board of Surgery. Dr. Leone joined Susquehanna Surgeons, a member of Heritage Medical Group, LLP, in August. Marshall G. Miles, DO, Allentown, PA, was the first DO to be accepted into the fast track general and plastic surgery residency at Lehigh Valley Hospital. In July, Dr. Miles will become a partner in the Plastic Surgery Associates of the Lehigh Valley. Carrie Samiec, DO, Collingswood, NJ, had a case report, “Evans Syndrome and Good Syndrome: Two Rare Conditions in a Patient with Thymoma,” published in CHEST (October 2007). Dr. Samiec also presented the case at the ACCP/CHEST conference held in Chicago; she won best case in her session. Now board certified in pulmonary medicine, Dr. Samiec is working to complete a fellowship in pulmonary and critical care medicine at the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey - School of Osteopathic Medicine. Michele Tartaglia, DO, Cherry Hill, NJ, is an assistant professor of obstetrics/gynecology at the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey - School of Osteopathic Medicine. She works full-time in the clinical setting in Washington Township, and is the assistant program director for the residency program. Jon W. Taveau, DO, Moreno Valley, CA, will graduate from his neurosurgery residency this year, and intends to complete a year of fellowship training in cranial and spinal trauma. He and wife Diane are expecting their second child this spring.

**Class of 2003**

Class Agents: Joshua Baron, DO, Jacob Matthew, PA-C, and Joseph D. Norris, PA-C

Philemon Parker Bailey, DO, Georgetown, DE, joined the medical staff at Beebe Medical Center. Jarrod H. Gipe, DO, Carlisle, PA, joined Carlisle Regional Medical Center (CRMC) and will be practicing with CRMC’s Pain Clinic and Blue Mountain Anesthesia Associates of Carlisle.

Thomas R. Haley, DO, Pottstown, PA, joined the department of internal medicine at Pottstown Memorial Medical Center.

**Class of 2004**

Class Agents: Michael Caromano, PA-C, and Patrick D’Arco, PA-C

Janet L. Gould, DO, Charleston, SC, was awarded Outstanding Resident of the Year by the South Carolina Academy of Family Physicians.

**Class of 2006**

Class Agents: Caroline Ahlquist, PA-C, and Mary Cate Wilhelm, PA-C


Kristin A. Conley, DO, Portsmouth, VA, graduated as internal medicine Intern of the Year from Portsmouth Naval Medical Center. Sean P. Conley, DO, Portsmouth, VA, is headed to Naval Air Station Pensacola for six months to train as a flight surgeon.

Johnny Lops, DO, Brooklyn, NY, co-authored an article, “Lithium-Induced Sialorrhea,” published in Primary Psychiatry (July 2007). Dr. Lops is a resident psychiatrist with North Shore - Long Island Jewish Health System.

**In Memoriam**

Mark I. Ackerman, DO ’74, Meadowbrook, PA, September 25, 2007.


Marvin Kanefield, DO ’61, Blue Bell, PA, November 5, 2007.

Gladys M. Lacavera, RN ’45, Ocean City, MD, August 20, 2007.


Frederick M. Wilkins, DO ’55, Fort Worth, TX, October 17, 2007.
My Turn

By Huy Do (DO ’10)

In this My Turn essay, second-year student Huy Do records some affecting experiences encountered during a medical mission trip to his homeland of Viet Nam. Several months ago, Mr. Do recruited a team of students to work alongside physician and non-medical volunteers, providing basic health care and health education in Dien Khanh Hospital and in rural village areas surrounding Ho Chi Minh City.

I listened to a 15-year-old’s heart with Dr. Kuwayama, one of our team physicians, as the girl’s mother stood beside us. She was very concerned and hoped that we could explain what was making her little girl so ill. She told us that the girl was tired all the time and that her face turned blue easily. We knew her heartbeat was not normal. The “lub-dub” sound was not present. Dr. Kuwayama proceeded to check the patient’s fingers, lungs and pulse. He, too, had a worried facial expression and went on with his preliminary diagnosis. He told us that the ongoing symptoms and signs such as abnormal heartbeats, bluish skin and lips, and clubbed fingers suggested that she might have a severe congenital heart disease. The patient would require extensive surgeries at a big hospital in the city—care and follow-ups that poor families like this one would likely not have access to. This girl is just one of many children in Viet Nam who are born with congenital heart disease—and my encounter with her was among just one of the heart-shattering experiences that I witnessed during my medical mission trip to Viet Nam.

During the trip, the team and I primarily worked in Dien Khanh Hospital, where we went on morning rounds to visit patients in different wards. Daily, we comforted patients, informed them of their health status, treated them, and advised them about ways to improve their conditions and the conditions of their communities. We hosted health educational series on malaria, tuberculosis, HIV, sanitation, nutrition, occupational health, and first aid.

Throughout my mission, I met some of the most compassionate and charitable people; among them was a dentist. She organizes many mission trips to the rural and mountainous areas of the country to perform surgeries, especially eye procedures, and to provide preventative health care. I traveled with her team on a one-day trip to an orphans’ temple to help feed the children and to serve as a resource to them. When I met the children, each wore a very simple shirt and stained shorts. I was saddened to discover that the children spend their formative years at the temple. They earn their daily sustenance by performing menial tasks; older children build coffins and sell them for food.

I also became acquainted with several religious Brothers from the Mendicant Order Dominic. They minister at a local clinic outside of Ho Chi Minh City. However, their services extend beyond the clinic—in the care of HIV patients. They have two homes for their patients, many of whom are abandoned by their families and organized medicine because of their disease and economic status. I had an opportunity to visit one of the homes in Cu Chi, an isolated shelter named “Nhà Co,” which translates to “Grass House.” For surrounding the house is a small field of grasses and beyond the grassy areas is a muddy pond with wild plants growing in all directions. As I arrived at the house, the pond exuded a pungent scent that was unbearable for a moment. The house was simple and it was built by weaving bamboo branches with palm leaves. There were about 20 patients there and each had a small 8’ by 4’ bed. Each patient had a bag beside his/her bed and they told me that the bag was their “luggage”; they owned no other possessions. As I talked with them, I realized that they once had been husbands, wives, fathers and mothers. Now, they are disowned out of fear and shame of their disease.

Without the help of the religious, one of whom lives in the house with the patients, they would be facing the most difficult moments of their lives completely alone.

Needless to say, the experience was a period of personal reflection and growth as I was confronted with the reality of medicine in Viet Nam—public hospitals that are poorly equipped, overcrowded and often unavailable to the poorest and the sickest. For a time, I was transformed into a child with heart disease without hope of surgery, an abandoned child scraping by day to day without parental love, and an HIV patient with an identity solely of disease. In each situation, I wanted to do so much more, to restore life and well-being to these people. As I continue with my medical training, I have hope that I may help.

Under the sponsorship of the Asian Pacific Medical Student Association (established jointly in 2007 by PCOM and Johns Hopkins School of Medicine), Mr. Do is planning another medical mission trip to the provinces of Khanh Hoa and Lam in Viet Nam during the summer of 2008. Inquiries about physician participation and/or donations may be made by calling 301-704-3542 or by emailing huysdo@pcom.edu.
MARK YOUR CALENDAR

FRIDAY, MAY 30
Continuing Medical Education Seminars at the PCOM Campus
Welcome Party at the Belmont Mansion, Fairmount Park

SATURDAY, MAY 31
Continuing Medical Education Seminars at the PCOM Campus
Caribbean Island Adventure and Campus Open House at the PCOM Campus
Reunion Receptions and Dinner Dance at the Hilton Philadelphia City Avenue
CALENDAR OF EVENTS

MAY 1
Pennsylvania Osteopathic Medical Association (POMA) Alumni Reception
King of Prussia, PA

MAY 18
Biomedical Sciences Graduate Program Commencement
GA–PCOM
Suwanee, GA

MAY 30-31
PCOM Alumni Weekend
PCOM Campus
Philadelphia, PA

JUNE 1
DO Commencement
Kimmel Center
Philadelphia, PA

JULY 25
Graduate Programs Commencement
Kimmel Center
Philadelphia, PA

He who has health has hope; and he who has hope has everything. — ARABIC PROVERB