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

Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine

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Dear Alumni and Friends,

As osteopathic physicians, health practitioners, researchers, healers and human beings, we need to continually broaden our perspective on public health and disease. Education and shared dialogue are quintessential; we must work to better understand the relationships among global warming, the health of ecosystems and the nature of health vulnerability. The cover article of this issue of Digest outlines the many challenges the health care community faces, urging advocacy for changes to the public health infrastructure that will support and enhance research into the most effective measures for emergency response/disaster preparedness, infectious disease surveillance, vaccination and access to primary health care for all susceptible populations.

The article, “Medical Marriages,” celebrates alumni physician couples who have overcome the many challenges of a medical marriage. Their experiences—representative of physician-partnered relationships lived by so many PCOM graduates—offer an authentic look at the partners in a physician relationship, as individuals and as a couple at various stages in their careers.

Finally, the research article focuses on the work of Dianzheng Zhang, PhD, assistant professor, biochemistry/molecular biology, who two years ago initiated a study to learn more about the chemo-preventive mechanisms of resveratrol in prostate cancer development. Resveratrol, a powerful antioxidant found abundantly in the skins of red grapes, is a component of Ko-jo-kon, an oriental medicine used to treat diseases of the blood vessels, heart, and liver. It has been identified as one of the most promising preventive agents against various cancers.

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

With warmest regards,

Matthew Schure, PhD
President and Chief Executive Officer
GA–PCOM Graduates First Biomedical Sciences Class

GA–PCOM’s first graduating class of biomedical sciences students received their master’s degrees on May 18. True to GA–PCOM’s goal of training physicians from the south in the south, eight of the 13 graduates will enter medical school in a southern state. Four of those will be members of the class of 2012 at GA–PCOM. One graduate, Rouenne Abasolo, MS/Biomed ’08, will move north to enroll in PCOM’s DO program.

“I chose the biomedical sciences program because I knew that to be a competitive medical school applicant I needed to reach my full potential in the classroom,” Ms. Abasolo explains. “GA–PCOM helped me accomplish this by offering a track that consisted of coursework and the composition of a scientific research review article. I learned to focus on my priorities and developed better study habits. I have been given the confidence to succeed in my future, and I owe much of that to GA–PCOM.”

DO Commencement

Two hundred and fifty-six students became 256 doctors on June 1, at PCOM’s 117th commencement ceremony. Five of the graduates completed the combined DO/MBA program, one graduate completed the combined DO/MPH program and three graduates completed the osteopathic manipulative medicine fellowship program.

Keynote speaker Philadelphia Mayor Michael A. Nutter congratulated the graduates and shared the story of his thwarted plan to become a physician. He encouraged the graduates to return to the city after their training is complete.

Graduate Programs Commencement

Over 230 doctoral and master’s level students were awarded their graduate degrees at PCOM’s ninth annual graduate programs commencement on July 25. Doctor of psychology degrees were awarded in clinical and school psychology; master of science degrees were awarded in school psychology, counseling and clinical health psychology, educational specialist in school psychology, organizational development and leadership, forensic medicine, biomedical studies and physician assistant studies. Barbara J. Byrne, PhD, emerita senior vice president for academic affairs, University of the Sciences in Philadelphia, presented the commencement address. The College awarded Aaron T. Beck, MD, director of the Beck Institute for Cognitive Therapy and Research, an honorary doctor of laws degree.

Also during the ceremony, Sherman L. Townsend, chairman, Delaware Institute of Medical Education and Research, was presented with an honorary doctor of laws degree in appreciation of his advocacy for quality medical education in the state of Delaware. Andrew D. DeMasi, DO ‘47, retired clinical professor and physician, obstetrics and gynecology, was named professor emeritus.
**Sharing the PCOM Story**

Matthew Schure, PhD, president and CEO, and John Fleischmann, EdD, campus executive officer, GA–PCOM, visited the nation’s Capitol in June to share PCOM’s chronicle with members of Congress. They met with Georgia Senator Saxby Chambliss, who told them how pleased he is to have GA–PCOM in the state. In a meeting with Pennsylvania Senator Robert Casey, Jr., Dr. Schure pointed out that 60 percent of this year’s graduating DO class will remain in Pennsylvania, making PCOM worthy of continued support.

**PCOM Comes Out Ahead in Survey**

An American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine (AACOM)-conducted survey of fourth-year DO students shows that PCOM students from the class of 2007 were more satisfied with the quality of their education than the general population of DO students in their fourth year. Over 92 percent of PCOM seniors said they were satisfied or very satisfied with the quality of their education, compared to 81 percent of seniors from other colleges of osteopathic medicine (COMs). In addition, over 82 percent of those surveyed were satisfied or very satisfied with their choice of osteopathic medicine as a profession compared to 77 percent of their peers in other schools. Finally, over 78 percent of the PCOM students would choose PCOM again as opposed to 70 percent of students from other COMs who would make the same choice.

**Psychology Collaboration Hits Prime Time**

PCOM’s clinical psychology students have been providing counseling services to patients at the College’s four Philadelphia Healthcare Centers since 2002. The counseling plays a crucial role in helping patients cope with emotional issues and physical challenges. It also provides valuable training for PCOM psychology students. This important collaboration was featured on Philadelphia’s NBC affiliate WCAU-TV. To view the story, visit the College’s Web site at www.pcom.edu and click on “PCOM in the Spotlight.”

**Kudos**

**Murray R. Berkowitz, DO**, assistant professor, OMM, GA–PCOM, presented “Disaster Planning for the Avian Flu” at the June meeting of the Tennessee Osteopathic Medical Association.

**Oliver Bullock, DO ’78**, chair, community medicine, department of family medicine, was the keynote speaker at the Forum on Health Care sponsored by the Delegates for Humanity Network, a think tank and action group of the Covenant with Black America. He also presented “The History of Hypertension in African Americans” at the Deliverance Evangelistic Church Health Fair and was a guest on “HealthQuest Live,” a weekly live call-in radio program. Dr. Bullock discussed health disparities in the African American community and strategies for addressing them.

**Terri Erbacher, PhD**, clinical assistant professor, psychology, with three psychology students, presented “Cultural Competence and Suicidal Youth: Intervening Sensitive with This Preventable, Community Health Problem” at Columbia University’s 25th Annual Winter Roundtable on Cultural Psychology and Education.

**Paul Evans, DO ’79**, vice dean and chief academic officer, GA–PCOM, received the designation, fellow of the American College of Osteopathic Family Physicians. Dr. Evans also presented “Millennium Medical Students: Challenges for Clinical Educators” at the June meeting of the Georgia/South Carolina Osteopathic Medical Association.

**Barbara Golden, PsyD**, assistant professor and director, clinical services, psychology, discusses a case with Julia Rovinsky (PsyD) and Umar Johnson (PsyD).
PA Program Forms Partnership with Brenau University

PCOM and Brenau University have signed an agreement to create a five-year accelerated BS/MS degree in physician assistant studies. The agreement mirrors the one between PCOM and University of the Sciences in Philadelphia. Students will complete a three-year specialized pre-professional program at Brenau, located in Gainesville, Georgia, and then relocate to Philadelphia to complete the first year of classroom-based study in PCOM’s physician assistant program. The first graduate year will be credited as the final year of baccalaureate study. For the fifth and final year of the combined BS/MS program, students will return to Georgia for clinical education at Georgia-based institutions.

“This agreement is the perfect response to our mutual goal of training health professionals to serve in the South,” says Matthew Schure, PhD, president and chief executive officer. “The innovative partnership takes advantage of the strengths of both institutions to assure undergraduates a path to a career in the health professions and to prepare highly qualified physician assistants for Georgia.”

“This is a win-win solution for Brenau University and PCOM,” continues John M. Cavenagh, PhD, PA-C, professor and chair, department of physician assistant studies. “The clinical placements that Brenau has secured at Georgia-based institutions are key. Limited availability of clinical placements nationwide is a major factor limiting growth of nearly all PA programs. This agreement offers PCOM the potential for growth, subject to accreditation approval.”

Rani Bright, MBBS, Receives Lindback Award

Rani Bright, MBBS, assistant professor, pathology, microbiology/immunology and forensic medicine, received the Christian R. and Mary F. Lindback Award for Distinguished Teaching. The Lindback Award recognizes academic excellence and outstanding teaching and is one of the most prestigious awards conferred on a faculty member in higher education.

Dr. Bright has been a member of the PCOM faculty for 20 years. She is certified through the American Board of Bioanalysis as a high complexity clinical laboratory director. In addition to teaching clinical parasitology, microbiology, infectious disease and public health, Dr. Bright gives grand-rounds and clinical core lectures at Lancaster General Hospital, the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey and continuing medical education seminars. Dr. Bright has published several papers on the topics of emerging infections and travel medicine.

Dr. Bright is a member of the American Board of Bioanalysis, the American Society for Microbiology, the Global Health Council and the American College of Physicians. She also serves as a consultant to the National Board of Osteopathic Medical Examiners.

Dr. Bright receives the Lindback Award from Dr. Schure.
Kudos

Katherine Galluzzi, DO, professor and chair, geriatrics, was installed as the 2008-2010 president of the Pennsylvania Osteopathic Family Physicians Society. An abstract of her journal article, “Managing Neuropathic Pain,” was highlighted in a recent issue of the American Academy of Pain Management's e-newsletter Currents: Pain Management News and Research.

William Gilhool, DO, co-director and physician, PCOM Healthcare Center - Lancaster Avenue Division, was a guest on the E. Steven Collins show on WRNB Radio, 107.9 FM. He discussed health issues important to men including screening for prostate and colon cancer.

George McCloskey, PhD, associate professor and director, school psychology research, received the Distinguished Contributions in School Psychology Award from the Pennsylvania Psychological Association.

Eugene Mochan, DO '77, PhD, professor, family medicine; associate dean, primary care and continuing education; and director, Center for Evidence-Based Practice, coauthored “Predicting Rheumatoid Arthritis Risk in Adults with Undifferentiated Arthritis,” published in American Family Physician.


Outstanding PA Alumna

Abby Jacobson, PA-C '01, was chosen as the recipient of the 2008 Physicians’ Assistant Outstanding Alumni Award. This award is presented in recognition of outstanding achievement, contribution, service and dedication to the PA profession. Ms. Jacobson practices dermatology in Lancaster, Pennsylvania. She has held numerous leadership positions in the American Academy of Physician Assistants, the Pennsylvania Society of Physician Assistants and the Society of Dermatology Physician Assistants. She is the owner of Strategic Medical Consulting LLC.
Kudos

nostic Imaging in the Primary Care Practice.” In addition, he presented “The Shoulder: Exam Basics, Common Injuries and OMT” at the meeting of the Louisiana Osteopathic Medical Association.

Ruth Thornton, PhD, professor and chair, biochemistry/molecular biology, and Farzaneh Daghigh, PhD, associate professor, biochemistry/molecular biology, attended the Medical Biochemistry Education Strategies Workshop sponsored by the Association of Medical and Graduate Departments of Biochemistry. They presented two posters: “Standardizing the Case Conference Experience within an Integrated Course” and “Successfully Launching an Integrated Course,” the latter, coauthored by Kerin Fresa-Dillon, PhD, professor, pathology, microbiology, immunology and forensic medicine.

Bruce Zahn, EdD, associate professor, psychology, presented “The Internship Application Process from Start to Finish” at the June Pennsylvania Psychology Association annual convention.

Dianzheng Zhang, PhD, associate professor, biochemistry/molecular biology, received a $15,000 Minority Junior Faculty Award from the Christian R. & Mary F. Lindback Foundation for his research, “Chromosomal Translocation-Induced Overexpression of ERG and Prostate Tumorigenesis.”

Physician Assistant Students Take First Step

Patrick Coughlin, PhD, professor, anatomy, cloaks a new PA student during the white coat ceremony.

Playing It Safe

PCOM physicians and DO students were among the 200 health care participants performing over 1,200 physicals on student athletes as part of Philadelphia Physicians for Student Athletics this past June. This program, founded by Jerry Steingard, MD, is based on a similar program created in Arizona by his brother, Paul Steingard, DO ’54.

More than 160 first- and second-year PCOM DO students helped give the physicals. “This was an excellent way to end our year,” notes J.D. McCullough (DO ’11) student coordinator of the event and class chair. “Working with attending and resident physicians, we performed a battery of physical exams. The event gave our class the opportunity to put into practice all the skills and knowledge we studied throughout our first year.”

“Our students rave about the opportunity to see real patients,” says John Simelaro, DO ’71, who participates in these yearly screenings. “The first-year students finish their semester jazzed up and looking forward to their second year. They feel like doctors.”

Rachael Engel (DO ’11) checks a student’s vision during a physical exam.

Pew Grant to Benefit Healthcare Center Patients

The departments of psychology and family medicine were awarded a three-year, $225,000 grant from the Pew Charitable Trusts to provide behavioral medicine services to underserved, vulnerable adults at PCOM’s Philadelphia Healthcare Centers. The goal of the grant is to help individuals who face significant social, behavioral and health problems become independent and productive members of the community.

The grant provides funding for a doctoral-level clinical health psychologist who, in addition to PCOM clinical psychology students, will provide behavioral medicine services such as stress management, weight reduction, diabetes self-management, coping with chronic illness, smoking cessation and other lifestyle change interventions. The initiative will expand the services already offered in the Healthcare Centers, with the psychologists and primary care physicians working to manage both mental and physical health problems.
Major Bequest Realized

The Lydia Throburn Memorial Trust has been liquidated and the proceeds divided between PCOM and Kirksville College of Osteopathic Medicine. Ernest Henke, DO ‘24, established the trust, named for a member of the family that boasted osteopathic physicians from both PCOM and Kirksville. The Throburn Trust supported many family members over the years and was liquidated when the last beneficiary passed away this spring. PCOM received more than $451,000 which will be placed in the College’s endowment.

Michael P. Szutowicz, DO ‘72, Memorial Scholarship

Carol Szutowicz, widow of the late Dr. Szutowicz, completed a scholarship (begun by family and friends) in memory of her husband who passed away in 1996. Criteria for the scholarship require the recipient to show a keen interest in a career in primary care, be a resident of Pennsylvania, and demonstrate financial need. Mrs. Szutowicz said that her husband “was a true family doctor who cared for hundreds of families, delivering their children and caring for them throughout their lives.” She hopes the scholarship recipients will reflect his compassionate care of patients in their own careers.

F. Munro Purse, DO ‘32, Award in Pediatrics

Pediatrics Clerkship Director Larissa Fernando Dominy, DO ’93, was committed to seeing the top pediatrics student recognized at the DO Senior Dinner Dance. With the help of Richard Purse, DO ’72, and other physicians, she raised more than $10,000 to endow the F. Munro Purse, DO ’32 Award in Pediatrics. Nicole M. Fields, DO ’08, was the first recipient. The award is named in memory of Dr. Purse’s father who was a beloved alumnus and teacher of pediatrics at PCOM.

The Class of 1978 Challenge Hits New Heights

The Class of 1978 was presented with a unique challenge by classmate Robert D. Gober, DO ’78. Dr. Gober wished the Class of 1978 to reach 100 percent participation and $100,000 for the Unrestricted Annual Fund as a 30-year Reunion gift to the College. To encourage his classmates, he offered to match the first $100 donated by each member of the class.

The Class of 1978 contributed $70,643, the largest amount raised toward the Unrestricted Annual Fund by a class (excluding one-time major gifts of $20,000 or more). Sixty-six donors, or 35 percent of the class, participated—a 38 percent increase from the previous year.

In addition to matching his classmates’ first $100, Dr. Gober made a leadership gift to honor all members of the Class of 1978.

Including other gifts to PCOM, the Class of 1978 contributed $103,937 to the College during the 2007-2008 fiscal year.
Global warming. The signs in nature are irrefutable. Deadly heat waves, record-breaking floods and monstrous storms are occurring with heightened frequency and intensity, killing and displacing hundreds of thousands of people and wildlife. The changes to our world are often symbolized by the polar bear looking for refuge as its habitat on the polar ice caps literally melts away.

But what about human health? What is the full spectrum of effects on human health that we can expect as a result of climate change and other related environmental problems?

That question is still being answered as the world’s scientists, governments and businesses confront the state of the environment. One thing is certain. Significant health problems are emerging, according to the World Health Organization (WHO), and physicians and other health care professionals must be prepared to respond. The WHO estimates that at least 150,000 additional deaths occur annually due to climate change, and this number is expected to double by 2030. Following are some of the challenges the health care community faces.
Weather Disasters

Since the 1990s, the world has witnessed some of the worst weather disasters in recorded history. Hurricanes Andrew and Katrina, typhoons in Southeast Asia and the recent flooding in the U.S. Midwest are among the extreme climate events that have left a trail of human suffering, disease and death in their wake. Victims in such situations may suffer from infectious diseases, injuries and stress-related disorders, as well as adverse health effects related to forced displacement, crowding in shelters, and hazardous exposure to contaminated water and toxic chemicals in runoff from agricultural lands.

Emerging Infectious Diseases

Mosquitoes, which breed and thrive in warm and wet climates, carry many potentially deadly infectious diseases such as malaria and dengue fever. If the earth’s temperature continues to increase coupled with more intense storms related to climate change, mosquitoes will increase in number, their biting season will become longer, and they will be able to survive in more parts of the world than ever before, according to David Condoluci, DO ’76, chief of infectious diseases for Kennedy Health System in New Jersey and clinical professor of medicine at the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey School of Osteopathic Medicine.

“Mosquito-borne diseases are likely to emerge in places where they’ve never been seen before,” says Dr. Condoluci. “Northern zones that typically get snow and ice in winter, for example, could become increasingly temperate and more hospitable to mosquitoes and other disease-carrying insects.” The WHO has voiced concerns that malaria, which is a major killer of people in the developing world, may become even more threatening as it spreads to new areas where people lack immunity because they have never been exposed.

In addition, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has predicted that mosquitoes may develop greater resistance to drugs and control methods such as insecticides because of the quicker turnover of parasite life cycles that occurs in warmer temperatures.

According to an EPA report, the proportion of the world’s population living within the potential zone for malaria transmission will increase from approximately 45 percent to 60 percent by the latter half of this century. A similar trend is expected for dengue fever.

“Dengue fever has traditionally been seen in tropical areas and in the developing world,” notes Dr. Condoluci.
On a global level, the WHO and other organizations are advocating for changes to the public health system that will improve the world’s ability to respond to the effects of climate change. The WHO is coordinating and supporting research into the most effective measures, including improved disease surveillance and control programs, more thorough disaster preparedness, vaccination, public education and improved access to health care.

The organization is also working to develop better estimates of the scale and nature of health vulnerability and advising members on the adaptive changes they need to make to their health systems to protect their populations.

“The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has been taking action through aggressive efforts to provide information and raise public awareness,” says Dr. Condoluci. “The CDC has a dedicated Web site for emerging infectious diseases designed to alert the community and public health agencies around the world about potential problems. The CDC also initiated a network system that provides regular e-mail updates to subscribers, as often as several times daily, regarding developing infectious disease situations that may pose a public risk.”

The WHO is instituting public health measures for mosquito control, improving methods for identifying areas at risk, implementing
measures to reduce and eliminate pools of stagnant water where mosquitoes breed, and promoting the use of anti-malaria mosquito nets in high-risk areas such as Africa as well as insecticides.

Working together, the WHO and CDC have implemented an early alert and intervention system for areas of potential infectious disease outbreaks. A team goes to the suspected area, identifies the disease source and quarantines as much of the area as possible to contain the disease. “In recent years, they have used this system effectively to deal with the SARS (severe acute respiratory syndrome) outbreak and other viruses,” notes Dr. Condoluci.

“In addition, many researchers are working to develop new vaccines for prevention and new antivirals and antimicrobials for treatment of these infectious diseases,” he says.

In the U.S., Hurricane Katrina taught that it is vital to enhance infrastructure and capacity to deal with public health emergencies. When health facilities throughout the New Orleans area were destroyed, the ability of health care professionals to provide care was severely compromised. Many other cities throughout the world are situated at sea level and could face a similar fate.

The world health community must respond to the challenges posed by global warming, says the WHO, or the price will be high in terms of disease, health care expenditures and lost productivity.

Water-Borne Diseases

Heavier downpours and flooding are associated with global warming. In combination with warmer temperatures, this could increase the incidence of cholera, which is transmitted by contaminated water. When flooding overwhelms the water and sewer infrastructure, water and sewage become contaminated and warmer temperatures make it more likely that cholera will survive. In addition to cholera, infections such as E. coli, cryptosporidium and hepatitis A could become more prevalent under these conditions, according to Dr. Condoluci. It is estimated that more than 700 U.S. cities, primarily northern, have sewer systems that regularly overflow into water supplies during heavy rainstorms.

Climate changes that affect the ocean, such as warmer temperatures and more precipitation, can change the marine ecosystem, leading to possible increases in diseases transmitted from fish and shellfish, according to the EPA. Higher surface temperatures stimulate the growth of algae, such as toxic “red tides” which have increasingly plagued the coastal waters of the U.S. in recent years, as well as more northern reaches of the Mediterranean Sea. When these algae are eaten by fish and shellfish, they pose a threat of food poisoning to the humans who eat them.

Higher ocean surface temperatures may also increase the severity of cholera epidemics in coastal regions, according to a research study at the University of Michigan.

Heat-Related Illnesses

In recent years, heat waves have been hitting parts of the world where people are unaccustomed to and unprepared to deal with such extreme heat. The 1990s was the warmest decade in recorded history. In 1995, a severe heat wave in

World Health Organization
www.who.int/en
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
www.epa.gov
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
www.cdc.gov
Chicago resulted in 465 deaths. In 2003, Europe experienced an excessive heat wave that led to more than 44,000 related deaths.

One serious consequence of extreme heat is dehydration, which can lead to heat stroke and a multitude of other serious problems, including kidney stones. A recent study published in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences suggests that the prevalence of kidney stones may rise by 30 percent or more in some areas of the U.S. if global temperatures continue to rise as forecast. According to computer model predictions, the southeastern U.S. will experience a four-degree increase in average temperature by 2050.

An increase in the frequency or severity of heat waves is especially threatening to more vulnerable populations such as the elderly, infants and people with respiratory and cardiovascular disorders and diabetes. It is critical for those who are vulnerable to be in an air conditioned environment during intensely hot weather, but this is often difficult, particularly for those in lower socioeconomic groups and for people in parts of the world where air conditioning is rare because it has not been needed in the past.

Heat Intensifies Air Pollution

Hotter temperatures increase the formation of ground-level ozone, a key component of smog that can damage lung tissue. Studies have shown that exposure to ozone and other air pollutants created by burning fossil fuels can cause complications for people who suffer from cardiovascular and respiratory diseases as well as premature deaths.

For people with asthma, air pollution can increase sensitivity to allergens, trigger attacks and increase the incidence of upper respiratory infections. Pollen-producing plants such as ragweed thrive with Chicago resulted in 465 deaths. In 2003, Europe experienced an excessive heat wave that led to more than 44,000 related deaths.

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WHAT CAN HEALTH PROFESSIONALS DO?

Physicians and public health practitioners can help by directly reducing the health impacts of climate change through improved primary health care for vulnerable populations, according to the EPA. The WHO encourages health professionals to bring their understanding of prevention to discussions about ways to mitigate climate change as well as helping people to adapt to climate change. At the primary care level, this may include, for example, advising patients to install air conditioners, reduce activity and stay hydrated during extreme heat, and remain indoors during “red alerts.”

Physicians can also mitigate the effects of climate change while enhancing patient wellness by encouraging individuals, as appropriate, to walk or bicycle to their destinations instead of driving. Urging patients to eat healthier foods that are grown locally, such as fruits, vegetables and grains, will also help to reduce the risk of climate change as well as lower the risks of coronary artery disease, stroke, hypertension, obesity and diabetes.

It will take the collective talents of health care professionals worldwide, working with each other and with their patients, to meet the many challenges that lie ahead.
Individuals suffering from serious mental health disorders are particularly vulnerable to extreme heat and climate events, which can cause stress reactions such as increased agitation, irritability, frustration and fatigue, according to Theresa Kovacs, PsyD ’07, clinical coordinator of a cognitive remediation program at a state psychiatric institution in northeastern Pennsylvania.

“For individuals with psychiatric disorders, any occurrence outside the norm, such as extreme heat or climate events, is stressful and they respond with poor coping capabilities,” says Dr. Kovacs. “In addition, proper hydration is a concern for patients who take anti-psychotic medications. We constantly monitor the weather, particularly heat, humidity and heavy rain, so that we can ensure the safety of our patients.”

During severe heat, the hospital activates “weather bans” during which patients must stay in air conditioning or, if they are scheduled to leave the facility, must be transported in an air conditioned vehicle. “Severe weather can have a profound effect on the ability of our inpatients to get out into the community,” notes Dr. Kovacs. “At the same time, consumers who live in the community may not come to us for their appointments because they usually need public transportation and can’t cope with waiting in extreme weather.

“Our response to helping clients during extreme climate events such as heat waves, heavy rains or wind storms is to support and educate them,” she continues. “We treat from a recovery model, so we try to educate rather than dictate what they should do. When they can’t leave due to a weather ban, we provide them with alternatives such as occupational therapy, recreational activities and psychiatric support to help them cope.”

Dr. Kovacs also notes that chronically mentally ill individuals often have co-morbid health risks such as cardiac problems. Extreme increase in temperatures can add accompanying agitation and increased stress, which poses further risks to overall health.

Dr. Kovacs, who has received training in neuropsychology assessments, has observed the same vulnerability to climate events in patients with traumatic brain injury as well as those with Alzheimer’s disease or dementia. “We have an older population that is growing rapidly in size, and many will develop dementia symptoms such as confusion and memory difficulties,” she says. “As global warming increases, it is urgent that we find more and better ways to treat those in need.

“It is well documented that mental health and physical health go hand in hand,” she emphasizes. “When the issue of global warming is being addressed in the U.S. and worldwide, it is vital to ensure that adequate public health resources are directed to mental health care as well as physical health.”

Global warming was first predicted in 1896 by a Swedish scientist, Svante Arrhenius. He asked a key question: “Is the mean temperature of the ground influenced by the presence of the heat-absorbing gases in the atmosphere?” He became the first person to investigate the effect that doubling atmospheric carbon dioxide would have on global climate.

The term “greenhouse effect” was coined even earlier in 1827 by Jean Baptiste Fourier, a French mathematician and scientist who is credited with the discovery that gases in the atmosphere might increase the surface temperature of the Earth.
Over the years, many PCOM alumni have met and married fellow physicians. They were lab partners, study partners, roommates and, most importantly, friends before falling in love. This article features seven such couples. Some have been married just a few years and others are celebrating nearly 30 years together. All have overcome the many challenges of a medical marriage, surviving demanding schedules during medical school, residencies, fellowships and on call hours in practice when time together is scarce.

Many couples have children, some very young and some grown. They have lovingly made sacrifices for the sake of their families, taking staggered vacations, working alternate schedules, even choosing alternate specialties. All emphasize the crucial support that family and friends provide to a two-physician family.

These physician couples consult with each other about their medical practices and studies. Some even practice together. All respect and understand the demands that the profession places on their spouse and appreciate the advantage of having a spouse who knows firsthand what it’s like to have a tough case or a really long day or night.

They plan for their futures together with the utmost respect for each other’s goals and talents. Here are their observations about the glue that makes a medical marriage stick.

COMMON GOALS

Teaching, research and clinical medicine. These are the career goals that led Carl Hoegerl, DO ’01, and his wife, Seeniann John, DO, MPH (’01 NYCOM), to Geisinger Medical Center in Danville, Pennsylvania, where Carl is a neurologist and Seeniann is in the midst of a three-year gastroenterology fellowship.

“Being able to pass on what I’ve learned is important to me, so I want to be in a place where I can teach medical students, residents and fellows,” says Carl, who met Seeniann when they were pre-med students at Gannon University in Erie, Pennsylvania.

Seeniann plans to pursue research and clinical medicine as well as teaching. “I need all three to be fulfilled,” she says. “So an academic medical center is the ideal place for both of us.”

In addition to pursuing career goals together, the couple is raising their 18-month-old son, Johnny, with help from Seeniann’s mother. “Without my mother-in-law, it would be very tough,” says Carl.

Seeniann’s mother often stays with them and sometimes they take Johnny to her home in Binghamton, New York, for a few days. “Those breaks give us a chance to make time for each other, but at the same time, we really miss him,” says Carl.

“It’s sometimes hard to balance everything,” reflects Seeniann. “It really helps to have a supportive husband. Carl knows what I’m going through because he did it, too. If I was married to someone who wasn’t in medicine, I’d worry that he would start resenting my work because it takes so much of my time.

“The fact that our overall goals are the same is a big factor in making things work, although we are different in a lot of ways culturally,” says Seeniann, whose family was originally from India. “We complement each other and of course, we love each other very much.”
Marriages

S T A R T I N G  O U T

On June 30, 2005, Brandon Raudenbush (DO ’09) was renovating a house he had just bought near PCOM, converting the garage and basement into apartments and hoping to attract some roommates to share expenses. Halfway through the day, he needed a break, so he went to the Student Affairs Office to put up a posting for roommates. When he arrived, Elenee Peters Raudenbush (DO ’09) was there with her mother looking for a place to live.

“My mother and I only had one day to find a place to rent because my father had brain cancer and we couldn’t leave him for very long,” says Elenee. “And Brandon just happened to walk through the door.”

The two became close friends, carpooling to school and studying together. “When my father passed that year, Brandon really helped me through that difficult time,” she recalls. By the end of their first year at PCOM, their relationship was serious, and in December 2006, they got married.

“We were roommates, then we were best friends, then we were a couple,” says Elenee. “We shared the same strong faith and family values. And we even knew each other’s oddities just from living in the same house!”

Now fourth year students, the Raudenbushs are expecting their first child and starting to anticipate the challenges that lie ahead with their residencies and work life. Both of their mothers will help them take care of their new baby. This year, they also face the “couple residency match” in which the couple applies together, giving an identical rank order listing of cities and hospital systems. The two hope to match either in the Eastern Ohio/Pittsburgh area near Elenee’s mother or in the Philadelphia area near Brandon’s family.

“Getting into the same hospital is specialty dependent,” notes Brandon, who has decided on orthopedic surgery. “My specialty will be more of a challenge because there are fewer residency programs, only four in Pennsylvania with two or three spots per program and a couple hundred people competing for them.” Elenee will pursue a family practice residency.

“We’d like to match with the same hospital so we can conveniently work in the same area, especially if our schedules are opposite so someone can be home with the baby,” Brandon adds.

The couple is already seeing the value of being married to a fellow physician. “During the past year as third-year students on rotation, we had our first experience with being in the hospital every day, facing stressful situations and emotions,” observes Elenee. “Sharing that experience has been very beneficial to both of us. We understand each other’s feelings and concerns.”
John Lindmark, DO ’02, and Amy Polhamus Lindmark, DO ’02, recently accepted positions as pediatric intensivists in a group practice that covers two Chicago area children’s hospitals. During the interviewing process, many people found it hard to believe that a married couple could work together in such a demanding specialty.

“Since we went through college, medical school, residency and fellowship together over a period of 14 years, we’ve learned not to let our close relationship cloud our professional judgment,” says Amy, who first met John when they were pre-med students at Allegheny College. Married two weeks before graduating from PCOM, they matched together for pediatric residencies in Michigan State University’s fast track program, followed by three-year pediatric critical care fellowships.

Amy notes that their patients’ parents often like the fact that a married couple is taking care of their children. “Developing rapport with the parents of very sick children takes a couple days, and then you’re going off service,” observes Amy. “I’ve found that the parents are very receptive when I say that my husband is the physician coming on next.” The two also like the advantage of consulting with each other on cases.

From a scheduling standpoint, it’s very hard to be a couple in ICU medicine, according to John. “Sometimes we go a whole week with only a transient conversation because we’re on opposite schedules at different hospitals,” he says. “Often, one of us will plan to make dinner for the two of us and, invariably, the other one has to stay late at the hospital. That’s when it’s really helpful to have a spouse who does the same kind of work. When Amy sends me a text page that a child with a head injury has just come in, I know she’s probably not coming home for the rest of the evening, and I understand that.”

Despite the demands of work and schedule, “we still do have a life,” says Amy. Among their many shared interests are travel, swimming and training together for marathons. “When we have time off together, we cram in as many things as possible!”

Thomas Tylman, DO ’79, and Kathleen Missory Tylman, DO ’80, are proof positive that physician couples can practice together successfully over the long haul. The two have run a busy internal medicine practice in Williamsburg, Virginia, for more than 20 years.

They met as pre-med students at Penn State University. “I looked around the anatomy lab for the ‘nerdiest’ guy I could find; I knew I would need a smart partner,” says Kathy. “Tom was wearing mismatched clothes because he was color blind and a neck collar because of an injury. His glasses were held together with tape. That pretty much defined a ‘smart nerd’ for me.”

As it turned out, the two lab partners discovered that they could be good friends and work well together. “That has carried us through 29 years of marriage,” says Kathy. “We’ve always helped each other and pushed each other forward.”

The two married right after Tom graduated from PCOM on an Air Force scholarship. While Kathy finished her fourth year at PCOM, the couple searched for a place where they could both get internal medicine residencies—he in the military and she in the civilian world. “At that time, Dayton (Ohio) was the only city in the entire country where that was possible,” says Tom. Both got slots there.

After the couple completed their residencies, the Air Force assigned Tom to Homestead AFB, Florida, and Kathy accepted a position as an independent contractor to the Air Force. Now they were practicing together, which was fortuitous since Kathy discovered she was pregnant with their first child. “If she had to come in late because of morning sickness or because the baby was sick, I came in early to see her first patient,” says Tom.
A few months after the baby was born, Kathy was expecting their second child. “That was a challenging time,” she says. The children were 20 months apart. “On any given night one of us was up feeding the baby, the other comforting our older child. Often we were simultaneously on call. Then, of course, there was work the next day.”

Their daily stress was exacerbated by the responsibilities of the military. “I can still recall one particularly frightening event. Tom and all military personnel were commanded to the AFB during a hurricane evacuation. I had to put the children in the car and leave the area,” Kathy remembers. “We didn’t know if we were going to see each other again. At that point, I said, ‘This is too stressful. It’s time for a change.’”

Together, they decided that Tom would leave the military. They found a private practice opportunity in Williamsburg, Virginia. The Tylmans stepped into the practice together, bolstered by support from Tom’s mother who lovingly gave them all of her modest life savings. “The practice got busy quickly after a retiring physician signed his entire practice over to us,” explains Tom.

“The new dilemma was that we had a six-month-old, a toddler, a full practice and we were on call in the ER two consecutive weeks out of every nine,” says Kathy. “So my parents moved from Pennsylvania to Virginia to help with child care and office duties. We couldn’t have started or stayed in practice together without support from both of our families.”

The Tylmans’ world revolved around the hospital and their children. “We often picked them up after school and they sat in the doctors’ lounge while we made rounds,” recalls Kathy. “When we went on weekend trips, we’d work on charts together. It really never stopped; we had to bring the office home regularly. But we were careful not to miss the kids’ activities. Working together, we could arrange our schedules to make sure of that.”

In 1997, the Tylmans sold their thriving practice to a larger corporation to make more time for family. “As the kids became teenagers, we knew we had to be home more to monitor their activities, and that meant putting an end to ER call,” says Kathy. “We modified the practice accordingly and became outpatient doctors.”

Now empty nesters, the Tylmans are finding each other again as they continue to nurture their practice and pursue their own individual interests as well. Kathy relishes offshore fishing trips and Tom enjoys reading, museums and the fine arts. “I have learned a lot about the French Impressionists because of Tom and he understands the importance of wind and ocean currents because of me,” says Kathy. “We open doors for each other.”

Although Donald DeBrakeleer, DO ’90, and Lynne DeBrakeleer, DO ’90, aren’t in private practice together, they often find themselves working together in the operating room. As founder of the Laser Vaginal Rejuvenation Institute of Philadelphia, Don performs pelvic reconstruction and pelvic floor surgery. Lynne is on staff with a company that provides anesthesiologists to ambulatory surgical centers, including those where Don operates. Do they work well together? “I never have more compliments about the anesthesiologist than when Lynne works with me,” Don says proudly.

“We’ve always had complementary working styles,” says Lynne. “Don likes to take his time analyzing the situation and I like to get to the point, so we balance each other nicely.”

Engaged in the ER at PCOM’s former City Avenue Hospital and married the day before graduation, the DeBrakeleers recognized early on that they worked well together. They chose to be partners during their rotating internships at PCOM, despite advice to the contrary. “Many told us, ‘Don’t do it. You’ll end up divorced from being together so much,’” Lynne recalls. “But we thought it would be much worse if we never saw each other, so we
MILITARY MATCH

Eugene A. Eline, Jr., DO ’85, and Mary Jo Eline, DO ’85, fell in love over a microscope as lab partners at LaSalle College. Married at the end of their first year at PCOM, the Elines built successful careers as military physicians, he in orthopedic surgery and she in radiology. While they completed their internship and residency training at military hospitals in Virginia, Georgia and Hawaii, they also had three children. “I arrived in Honolulu for residency training two weeks before Gene,” recalls Mary Jo. “He got there just in time for the birth of our third baby.”

With three small children under age four, Mary Jo sent an SOS to her aunt and grandmother, who came to Hawaii to help care for them. Even with their help, life was hectic and time together scarce. “We had one of every three weekends together,” Gene remembers. “We always had so much on our plates but Mary Jo has always been unbelievable at managing time.”

After completing their residencies in Hawaii, the Elines received Army assignments at Fort Jackson, South Carolina. In 1995, after nine years of military service, they left the Army so that Gene could pursue a spine fellowship at the University of Pittsburgh, which had one of the top programs in the country. “Gene was one of the first DOs to be accepted into the program,” Mary Jo says proudly. “It was a tremendous accomplishment.”

Since radiology positions were in short supply in Pittsburgh at that time, Mary Jo stayed in South Carolina with the children while Gene completed his one-year fellowship. “That was the toughest year,” says Mary Jo, who accepted a radiologist position at the Beaufort Naval Hospital. “I was in a new job and taking care of the kids by myself. But it was worth it for Gene to have that opportunity.”

After Gene returned, the Elines spent 10 idyllic years practicing and raising their kids in Beaufort. Then, with the kids all in college, they began looking for a new challenge. They found it in Atlanta, Georgia. Gene joined Resurgens, the largest orthopedic surgery group in the U.S., where he is now a partner. Mary Jo is practicing with a teleradiology group.

How did they survive all the challenges? “You must enjoy what you’re doing or you’ll never get through it,” says Mary Jo. “We’ve always enjoyed our work and we’ve always been willing to support each other as we pursued goals. It really helps when both spouses are physicians because you have such a deep understanding of the daily routine with all its challenges and triumphs.” Al-though they’ve made many sacrifices, they don’t feel deprived. “If medicine is a career that two people really want to pursue, you can make it work, just as we have.”

In addition to their practices, the Elines are involved with PCOM’s Georgia Campus. Mary Jo has served as a preceptor and Gene has played a role in making clinical rotations available to third- and fourth-year students at nearby Gwinnett Medical Center. Both agree, “We’re excited that more PCOM doctors will be practicing in the South!”
chose to be together, and it worked out well.”

During their residencies, things changed dramatically. While Don completed an OB/GYN residency at Hahnemann University Hospital, Lynne did her anesthesia residency at the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey. Each was on call about eight nights each month, so they were only home together about half of each month.

Then during their third year of residency, their first son was born and they took turns as single parents. “Don was a natural since he was training as an obstetrician,” recalls Lynne.

The following year, their second son arrived, delivered by Don who was then a fourth-year resident. After completing their residencies, the DeBrakeleers moved to Orange County, New York, where Don joined a new OB/GYN practice and they had their third son. Lynne worked a part-time schedule to allow more time with their kids. “We always took care of the kids ourselves as much as possible,” says Lynne. “When we were on call at night, we often brought them to the hospital and put them to bed in the call room.”

Don emphasizes that although Lynne has always worked part time, that doesn’t make her career any less important. “Lynne is really great at her work, no matter how many hours she works,” he says. “A lot of married physicians have conflicts over whose career is more important. We’ve never had that. We really respect each other.”

“As physicians, we all have egos, and it can be hard to admit when you’re wrong,” reflects Lynne. “But I can’t think of a time when we’ve disagreed about what should be done in the OR. We’ve always been on the same page both at work and at home.”

A FAMILY TRADITION

Meeting and marrying at PCOM runs in the family of Pamela Giliberto Mehalick, DO ’81. Her father, James Giliberto, DO ’47, met her mother, Dorothy Bolognese, RN ’47, when she was a PCOM nursing student. Her brother, James Giliberto, Jr., DO ’83, met his wife, Gaylin, when he was on a clinical rotation at the hospital where she was a nurse. So her family wasn’t surprised when Pam announced that she was going to marry Gerald Mehalick, DO ’81, a fellow PCOM student she met while on a fourth-year rotation at Sullivan County Medical Center in LaPorte, Pennsylvania.

“I had to cancel our first date because I was sick,” Pam recalls. “Gerry thought it was an excuse. Eventually we did go out but I had to drive because he was embarrassed by his old car.”

Despite the inauspicious beginning, their relationship grew, and Gerry convinced Pam to stay at LaPorte for a second rotation. After graduation, Gerry completed a family practice internship, but when he and Pam decided to get married, he changed his career course to psychiatry. “We knew we would have a two-career marriage and we definitely wanted children,” says Gerry. “Pam was going into pediatrics and I felt that a practice in psychiatry would give me a more flexible schedule to balance the demands that she would face in her practice.”

The plan worked well. Their first child, born as they were beginning their second year of residency, was followed by three more over the next five years. “Gerry was a wonderful, very involved father from the beginning,” says Pam. “Every fourth night when I was on call, he was both mother and father to them.” Gerry also did most of the pick-ups from day care until they found an extraordinary au pair, Jodi, who stayed for seven years and became a part of their family. “Jodi really helped us make everything work when the children were young and we were just getting started in our careers,” notes Pam, who has been in practice with Advocare Children’s Medical Associates in Ridley Park, Pennsylvania, for 20 years.

Gerry happily accepted the extra responsibilities involved with raising a family. “I was always invested in Pam’s full participation in her profession and I’m very proud of her accomplishments,” he says. “She became a physician in an era when women in medicine were heavily scrutinized. Part of what attracted me to her was the way she carried herself in those situations. She has an incredible work ethic and has been one of the top producers in her practice every year. At the same time, she is a tremendously dedicated mother who is the glue and the focus of our family.”

“I’ve also been blessed to find work that is meaningful while accommodating our family’s schedule,” he adds. Gerry practices community psychiatry for a non-profit organization in Delaware that provides a state-funded assertive community treatment program for the most severely and persistently mentally ill patients.

“Our life has been devoted to our children and our work,” reflects Gerry. “Pam and I have always consulted and supported each other as physicians and as parents. Our children have become wonderful people, and that is our greatest reward.”
RESEARCH SHOWS

Fruit of the Vine
May Combat Prostate Cancer

It has been known for some time that red wine is good for your heart. The reason? The grapevine produces large amounts of a powerful antioxidant called resveratrol (RSV) to protect itself against environmental stresses. Found abundantly in grape skins, this antioxidant also plays a key role in producing the human health benefits of red wine.

Now, in addition to benefiting the heart, RSV has been identified as one of the most promising preventive agents against various cancers, including breast, thyroid and colon cancers. Two years ago, Dianzheng Zhang, PhD, assistant professor, biochemistry/molecular biology, began research to learn more about the chemo-preventive mechanisms of RSV in prostate cancer development. Chemoprevention is the use of dietary changes or supplements to prevent the development of or slow the progression of cancer. As a nutritional scientist, Dr. Zhang is particularly interested in the way that nutritional factors such as RSV affect health or disease.

“It has been estimated that up to 50 percent of all cancers could be prevented or remedied by attention to dietary factors,” says Dr. Zhang. “As living organisms, we continuously interact with our environment, exchanging chemical components as we breathe and eat. If you eat food with good nutrients, you have a better chance of being healthy. If you eat an unbalanced diet, it can be like poison. We are constantly changing the nature of our bodies through our diet. My ultimate goal is to get more people to pay attention to what they are eating. I also want to increase awareness about the importance of micronutrients, which includes vitamins and minerals as well as phytochemicals such as RSV.”

In his current research, Dr. Zhang is working to clarify the underlying molecular mechanisms of RSV and how it affects the development of prostate cancer. “The high occurrence rate of prostate cancer and the relatively slow progression to significant disease makes this an ideal target for chemoprevention,” he says. His focus in this study is the androgen receptor (AR), a transcriptional factor involved in regulating many genes, which also plays an essential role in prostate cancer development. “My preliminary research showed that RSV can affect AR activity. Now I have developed a unique model system that enables us to demonstrate how RSV can affect the development of prostate cancer by regulating AR activity specifically. This is something that wasn’t known before.”

The results of Dr. Zhang’s research, which is funded by the Pennsylvania Department of Health, will be helpful in determining whether RSV should be clinically tested as a specific dietary supplement for prostate cancer prevention. It will also provide valuable insights into the design of new strategies for directly combating the essential transcriptional co-regulators in prostate cancer. In addition, the knowledge obtained from this research may be applied to the exploration of newer and more efficient nutritional factors against prostate as well as other cancers.

“Identifying nutritional factors to apply in chemoprevention may help to improve health status by preventing prostate cancer or by helping men who develop this disease to avoid surgery,” says Dr. Zhang. “In addition, a chemoprevention approach to prostate cancer could greatly improve health status by serving as a model for other types of cancer.”

Dr. Zhang emphasizes the importance of collaboration in research both within PCOM and in partnership with other schools. “I originally started this research while I was completing my post-doctoral studies at Baylor College of Medicine,” he explains. “Since coming to PCOM in 2006, I have continued to collaborate with my Baylor colleagues. This has enabled us to push the research forward more quickly, moving a step closer to determining the effect that RSV has in all three stages of the cancer process—initiation, progression and metastasis.”

He is also developing research collaborations with colleagues at the Central South University in the People’s Republic of China, where he is a visiting professor. “PCOM provides a very positive environment for collaboration,” he notes.

PCOM students Joseph Farrell (DO ’09), Megan Dambach (DO ’10) and Melanie Leong, MS/Biomed ’08, have also worked with Dr. Zhang on his research along with research assistant Ellen Cho. “I have learned so much from working with Dr. Zhang,” says Ms. Leong, who intends to pursue a medical degree. “He provides very
Looking ahead, Dr. Zhang hopes to pursue research on another health benefit of RSV—longevity. “Research using a mouse and other animal models has already established that reducing calorie intake, also known as calorie restriction, by 30 percent can almost double your lifespan,” relates Dr. Zhang. “Studies have also shown that RSV acts like calorie restriction by changing gene activity. It seems to keep mice from feeling hungry, so they eat less. In humans, we have noted a change in physiology; they look healthier, and some participants experience a reduction in symptoms from medical conditions. We want to learn more about the implications for human health.”

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Class of 1945
Arnold Melnick, DO. Aventura, FL, was honored with the Distinguished Service Award of the American College of Osteopathic Pediatricians. Dr. Melnick was the founding dean of Southeastern College of Osteopathic Medicine, now the Nova Southeastern University College of Osteopathic Medicine. Retired from his post as executive vice chancellor and provost of the Health Professions Division of NSU, he continues with his avocation of medical writing, with six published books and more than 160 published professional articles.

Class of 1952
Hymen Kanoff, DO, Huntingdon Valley, PA, was elected to serve his 17th term as speaker of the House of Delegates of the Pennsylvania Osteopathic Medical Association.

Class of 1968
Class Agents: Alfred J. Poggi, DO; Howard R. Levy, DO; and Sheldon P. Kerner, DO
Alfred J. Poggi, DO, Somerset, PA, was re-elected to the board of trustees of the Pennsylvania Osteopathic Medical Association. His son Christopher Poggi, DO, joined him in practice this year.

Class of 1970
Class Agent: James J. Nicholson, DO
Dudley W. Goetz, DO, Arlington, TX, was awarded life membership in the Texas Osteopathic Medical Association. This award is given for exemplary service to the osteopathic profession.

Joe Heck, DO ’88
On Being of Service

How many careers can a person undertake in a lifetime? Nevada State Senator Joe Heck, DO ’88, is well on his way to finding out. He’s not trying to set a record or prove a point; it’s just that Dr. Heck is having one heck of a good time creating a life of public service.

Dr. Heck began in public service more than 25 years ago when he was a volunteer firefighter and ambulance attendant in rural Pennsylvania. In 1991, during his emergency medicine residency, he joined the Army Reserves, and in 1992, he moved to Nevada to practice. In 1998, he was recruited by the Department of Defense to serve as the medical director of the Casualty Care Research Center of the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences in Bethesda, Maryland. There he provided medical support for several federal law enforcement agencies and oversight for the medical response to acts of terrorism.

Committed to issues of national security, Dr. Heck later returned to Nevada and created Specialized Medical Operations, Inc., a corporation that provides medical training, consulting and operational support to law enforcement, EMS and military special operations. In addition to running his business, practicing emergency medicine and volunteering as a tactical physician with the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department, he ran for and was elected to a seat in the state Senate in 2004. As a state senator, he has served on the Natural Resources, Human Resources and Education, and Commerce and Labor Committees and as vice-chair of the Transportation and Homeland Security Committee.

In January 2008, Dr. Heck was deployed to Iraq. As commander of the Reserve’s 6252nd Army Hospital in San Diego, he could have declined the three-month tour in Iraq. “But my number came up,” he says simply. “I’m going on 17 years in the Reserve. This is what you train for.” While in Iraq, Dr. Heck served as chief of emergency services at a combat support hospital. “It was an enriching experience, and I was honored to put into use my military and civilian training to take care of our troops.”

Dr. Heck credits his wife, Lisa, a registered nurse, for helping make all his endeavors possible: “She’s the most understanding wife in the country,” he asserts. Mrs. Heck works with Dr. Heck at his company and is active in his political campaigns. The couple has three children: Joey, Chelsea and Monica.

In addition to his understanding wife, Dr. Heck credits his success to having “a type-A personality. I’ve always been very goal oriented and systematic,” he continues. “I follow the point A to point B plan.” The next point in his plan? “I am up for re-election this year and my hope is to return to Carson City and continue to serve my constituents to the best of my ability.”
Class of 1972
Class Agent: Donald Wesley Minteer, Jr., DO
Richard M. Purse, DO, Yardley, PA, has been appointed a member of the Radiation Protection Committee for the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, representing the Pennsylvania Osteopathic Medical Association.

Class of 1973
Class Agent: Herbert J. Rogove, DO

Class of 1974
James A. McLaughlin, DO, Bastrop, TX, was awarded life membership in the Texas Osteopathic Medical Association. This award is given for exemplary service to the osteopathic profession.

Class of 1977
Class Agent: H. Sprague Taveau, IV, DO, MBA
H. Sprague Taveau, IV, DO, Amarillo, TX, was awarded life membership in the Texas Osteopathic Medical Association. This award is given for exemplary service to the osteopathic profession.

Class of 1978
Class Agent: Lorraine M. DiSipio, DO
James E. Oxley, DO, Goshen, NY, was appointed vice president of medical affairs at Orange Regional Medical Center in Middletown.

Class of 1979
Class Agent: Earl H. Brinser, DO
Joseph V. Pongonis, DO, Langhorne, PA, was re-elected to the board of trustees of the Pennsylvania Osteopathic Medical Association.
William B. Swallow, DO, Dingmans Ferry, PA, was elected to the board of trustees of the Pennsylvania Osteopathic Medical Association.
William A. Wewer, DO, Harrisburg, PA, is serving his 20th year as secretary/treasurer of the Pennsylvania Osteopathic Medical Association.

Class of 1981
Class Agent: Gerald E. Dworkin, DO
Jay D. Feldstein, DO, Avondale, PA, was promoted to corporate chief medical officer at AmeriHealth Mercy Family of Companies in Philadelphia.
John K. Mariani, DO, Haddonfield, NJ, was appointed director of orthopedic services for Kennedy Memorial Hospitals–University Medical Center.
Lawrence M. Neustadter, DO, Voorhees, NJ, joined the department of radiology at AtlantiCare Regional Medical Center in Atlantic City. He is certified by the American Board of Radiology.

Class of 1982
Class Agent: Anthony J. Silvagni, DO
Janice A. Knebl, DO, Fort Worth, TX, has been selected as a member of the 2007-2008 Class of Executive Leadership in Academic Medicine Fellows by the Hedwig van Ameringen ELAM Program for Women at Drexel University College of Medicine in Philadelphia. Fellows complete a one-year program of leadership training that prepares senior women faculty for leadership roles at academic health centers. Dr. Knebl is a professor of geriatrics at the University of North Texas Health Science Center at Fort Worth.

Class of 1983
Class Agent: Mary Ann DiBiagio, DO
Alfred M. Sassler, DO, Foster, KY, has joined the medical offices at King's Daughters Medical Hospital in Ashland, and King's Daughters Medical Specialties in Portsmouth.

Class of 1984
Class Agent: Paul V. Suhey, DO
Patrick J. Kerrigan, DO, Hanover Township, PA, was the recipient of the 2008 Spirit of Youth Award presented by Philadelphia Eagles coach Andy Reid. The award was presented at the Fifth Annual Volunteers of America Celebrity Dinner on May 15, 2008.
Carol K. Robison, DO, Carlisle, PA, will serve as secretary/treasurer of the medical staff for a one-year term at Carlisle Regional Medical Center.

Class of 1985
Class Agent: Michael P. Meyer, DO
Michael M. Weinik, DO, Philadelphia, PA, was appointed team physician for the Philadelphia Phillies. He is on staff at Temple University Hospital in the physical medicine and rehabilitation department.

Class of 1986
Class Agent: John C. Sefter, DO
Class of 1987
Class Agents: Elliott Bilofsky, DO; and Katherine C. Erlichman, DO

Elliott J. Bilofsky, DO, Everett, PA, joined the medical staff at Fulton County Medical Center. Dr. Bilofsky is certified by the American Osteopathic Academy of Otolaryngology Head and Neck Surgery Facial Plastic Surgery.

Anthony E. DiMarco, DO, Glen Mills, PA, was elected vice speaker of the House of Delegates of the Pennsylvania Osteopathic Medical Association.

Craig A. Frankil, DO, Newtown, PA, joined the medical staff at Shore Memorial Hospital in Somers Point, New Jersey.

Joan M. Grzybowski, DO, Conshohocken, PA, was re-elected to the board of trustees of the Pennsylvania Osteopathic Medical Association.

Robert S. Jones, DO, Mohnton, PA, was elected to the board of trustees of the Pennsylvania Osteopathic Medical Association.

Joseph A. Giaimo, DO, West Palm Beach, FL, was appointed to the Practicing Physicians Advisory Council Committee for Medicare. Only 15 physicians across the country are selected for this federal committee.

Jeffrey C. Hager, DO, Beach Haven, NJ, was elected president of the medical staff for a two-year term at Southern Ocean County Hospital in Manahawkin.

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


David Silver, DO, Lutherville, MD, was promoted to chief medical officer at Baltimore Medical System.

Class of 1987
Class of 1988

Class of 1989
Class Agent: Judith R. Pryblick, DO

Maryanne J. Henderson, DO, Pittsburgh, PA, was appointed medical director of the Children’s Institute in Squirrel Hill.


James J. Tayoun, Jr., DO, Philadelphia, PA, was elected chairman of the department of surgery at St. Francis Hospital in Wilmington, Delaware. Dr. Tayoun joined the medical staff at Jennersville Regional Hospital in West Grove.

Martin S. Weiss, DO, Fort Worth, TX, was named “Super Doc in Cardiology” by Texas Monthly Magazine (December 2007).

Christopher T. Cessna, DO ’02, and his wife, Kelly A. Cessna, DO ’03, Sacramento, CA, are the proud parents of Luke Christopher, born on November 26, 2007. Brother Zachary, age two, was happy to welcome his new brother.

Jarad S. Fingerman, DO ’96, Newtown, PA, and his wife, Laura Glickman, are the proud parents of Chloe Rose, born on April 24, 2008. Chloe joins her big sister, Alexis Paige, age three.

Melanie Rompella Justice, MS/Psy ’05, Calabasas, CA, and her husband, Andy, are the proud parents of Sabina Iris, born on March 7, 2008.

David F. Sarknas, DO ’03, and his wife, Clare L. Gimpel, DO ’04, Pittsburgh, PA, are the proud parents of Megan Elizabeth, born on April 3, 2008.

Class of 1990
Class Agent: Jennifer L. Waxler, DO

Michael E. Dietz, DO, Cincinnati, OH, joined HealthSource of Ohio.

Donna R. Moyer, DO, Perrinton, MI, was elected president-elect of the Michigan Osteopathic Association.

Philip N. Scaglione, DO, Eckensburg, PA, joined the medical staff at Cortland Regional Medical Center. Dr. Scaglione is an orthopedic surgeon.

Alice J. zal, DO, Narberth, PA, was elected vice president of the Pennsylvania Osteopathic Medical Association.

On a Personal Note

Class of 1990

Christopher T. Cessna, DO ’02, and his wife, Kelly A. Cessna, DO ’03, Sacramento, CA, are the proud parents of Luke Christopher, born on November 26, 2007. Brother Zachary, age two, was happy to welcome his new brother.

Jarad S. Fingerman, DO ’96, Newtown, PA, and his wife, Laura Glickman, are the proud parents of Chloe Rose, born on April 24, 2008. Chloe joins her big sister, Alexis Paige, age three.

Melanie Rompella Justice, MS/Psy ’05, Calabasas, CA, and her husband, Andy, are the proud parents of Sabina Iris, born on March 7, 2008.

David F. Sarknas, DO ’03, and his wife, Clare L. Gimpel, DO ’04, Pittsburgh, PA, are the proud parents of Megan Elizabeth, born on April 3, 2008.

Class of 1990
Class Agent: Jennifer L. Waxler, DO

Maryanne J. Henderson, DO, Pittsburgh, PA, was appointed medical director of the Children’s Institute in Squirrel Hill.


James J. Tayoun, Jr., DO, Philadelphia, PA, was elected chairman of the department of surgery at St. Francis Hospital in Wilmington, Delaware. Dr. Tayoun joined the medical staff at Jennersville Regional Hospital in West Grove.

Martin S. Weiss, DO, Fort Worth, TX, was named “Super Doc in Cardiology” by Texas Monthly Magazine (December 2007).
Class of 1994
Class Agent: Judith A. Gardner, DO
Robert S. Dolansky, Jr., DO, Breinigsville, PA, received the 2008 Frederick Solomon, DO Award of Merit presented by the Pennsylvania Osteopathic Family Physicians Society.

Madeline A. Goodman, DO, Falmouth, ME, passed the American Board of Psychiatry & Neurology subspecialty examination in psychosomatic psychiatry at Maine Medical Center in Portland, Maine. Dr. Goodman is associate clinical professor of psychiatry at the University of Vermont College of Medicine. She is the proud mother of Samuel, age three.

Class of 1995
Class Agent: Francis N. Ogbolu, DO
Leah J. Jones, DO, Wheeling, WV, is on the medical staff of Medical Group Associates at Wheeling Hospital. She has been recertified in internal medicine by the American Osteopathic Board of Internal Medicine.

Class of 1996
Class Agent: Joanne Elena Hullings, DO
Dennis P. McHugh, DO, Plymouth Meeting, PA, was appointed medical director of the Mercy Suburban Center for Joint Replacement in East Norriton.

Jeffrey R. Melrose, DO, Malvern, PA, joined the medical staff at Great Valley Family Medicine in Exton.


Glen R. Scott, Jr., DO, Anderson, SC, was appointed to the 2008 Board of Examiners for the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award. The award, created by public law in 1987, is the highest level of national recognition for performance excellence that a United States organization can receive. As an examiner, Dr. Scott is responsible for reviewing and evaluating applications submitted for the award.

Class of 1997
Class Agents: Armando C. Sciullo, DO; and Laurie Ann C. Spraga, DO
Valerie Z. Crawford, DO, Beaver Creek, OH, joined the medical staff at Greene Memorial Hospital in Xenia.

Susan S. Panah, DO, Bradford, PA, joined the medical staff at Bradford Regional Medical Center in Bradford.

Michael F. Stretanski, DO, Sunbury, OH, authored five chapters in the second edition of Essentials of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation, Musculoskeletal Disorders, Pain and Rehabilitation. He is on the MedCentral Health System medical staff in Mansfield.

Class of 1998
Class Agent: James V. Lieb, DO
Karen E. Agersborg, DO, Philadelphia, PA, was named chief of the division of endocrinology and metabolism at the Chestnut Hill Hospital, University of Pennsylvania Health Care System.

Matthew W. Lawrence, DO, Wilmington, DE, joined the medical staff at Jennersville Hospital in West Grove, Pennsylvania.

Class of 2000
Class Agents: Edward T. Casey, Jr., DO; Kristen M. Lehmann, MS/PA-C; and Christiane M. Petrillo, MS/PA-C
Christopher A. Davis, DO, Springfield, PA, was elected to the board of trustees of the Pennsylvania Osteopathic Medical Association.

David O’Neill, DO, Palmerton, PA, joined the medical staff at Lehighton Medical Associates in Lehighton.

Monique M. Scally, DO, Stratford, NJ, became board certified by the National Board of Echocardiography.

Class of 2001
Class Agents: Kenneth M. Andrejko, DO; Constance E. Gasha Andrejko, DO; Melissa H. Guarino, MS/PA-C; and Nicole Miller, MS/PA-C


David A. Glusko, DO, Reading, PA, joined the medical staff at Family Health Care in Meyerdale and Salisbury.

Abby Jacobson, MS/PA-C, Exton, PA, was the recipient of the 2008 Physicians’ Assistant Outstanding Alumni Award presented by Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine.

Arthur Jones, Jr., DO, Milford, DE, joined the medical staff at Bayhealth Women’s Care Associates in Milford.

Concetta R. Oteri, DO, North Conway, NH, joined the medical staff at Willowbend Family Practice in Bedford.

Class of 2002
Class Agents: Edward John Armbruster, DO; Heather C. Beraducci, MS/PA-C; Steven Robert Blasi, DO; and Erin G. Wolf, MS/PA-C


Timothy A. Leone, DO, Mechanicsburg, PA, was the recipient of the 2007-2008 Frederick G. Meoli Scientific Paper Senior Award presented by the University of Medicine & Dentistry of New Jersey – School of Osteopathic Medicine’s Department of Surgery. Dr. Leone is a general surgeon with Susquehanna Surgeons, Wormleysburg.

Suzanne Templer, DO, Miami, FL, completed her infectious disease fellowship at the University of Illinois at Chicago. She is presently employed as an infectious disease attending at Lehigh Valley Hospital, Allentown, Pennsylvania.
Class of 2003

Class Agents: Joshua M. Baron, DO; Mark B. Abraham, JD, DO; Daniel J. Morrissy, III, DO; Jacob Mathew, MS/PA-C; and Joseph D. Norris, MS/PA-C

Gregory A. Ambuske, DO, Bradford, PA, joined the medical staff at Quality Care Internal Medicine in Bradford.

Aileen E. John, DO, High Point, NC, joined the medical staff at Bethany Medical Center in High Point. Dr. John is board certified in family medicine.

Stephanie B. Kaliner, DO, Malvern, PA, had her article titled “Eating Disorders on the Increase” published in the Phoenix.

Keith L. Leaphart, DO, Philadelphia, PA, was appointed to the board of directors of the West Insurance Group. Dr. Leaphart currently works for the Lenfest Foundation.


Rebecca J. Odorizzi, DO, Tamaqua, PA, joined the department of family medicine at Hamburg Family Practice.

Class of 2004

Class Agents: Michael Anthony Caromano, MS/PA-C; and Patrick Henry D’Arco, MS/PA-C

Stacey Franz, DO, New York, NY, completed her physical medicine and rehabilitation residency program at New York – Presbyterian Hospital in June 2008. Dr. Franz then began a one year fellowship in musculoskeletal medicine, sports medicine and interventional spine care at the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey (UMDNJ-Kessler).

Jill Carey-Melton, EdS, PsyD ’07

Bridging the Achievement Gap

Jill Carey-Melton, EdS, PsyD ’07, was a successful practicing school psychologist when she decided to return to school for her doctoral degree. “I was seeing a lot of children who needed therapy, and I knew I wasn’t properly equipped to offer the therapeutic counseling they needed,” she explains. “I liked PCOM’s focus on cognitive behavior therapy, which is very adaptable for school settings. It’s wonderful to study psychology at a medical school because we know that psychological stress often leads to physical problems.”


As a school psychologist at the Upper Elementary School in Moorestown, New Jersey, one of Dr. Carey-Melton’s goals is to look closely at children who have been assessed as needing special education. “There are many reasons a child may not be achieving,” she says. “Special education is not the only answer. We must look at the whole child including their economic situation and their home support systems. There are times when interventions may work just as well, if not better. We need to be careful how we label children.”

In particular, Dr. Carey-Melton studies the achievement gap between white and black students in suburban schools. “There has been an over-representation of black males in special education classes in suburban schools for over 30 years,” she explains. “There are many reasons this may be the case, including unfair labeling and unfair discipline practices coupled with the fact that over 60 percent of African American children live in single parent households. When the student comes home from school there may be no one there to help with homework or projects. There may be economic disparities. Not all children have computers in their homes or a support network for assisting with organization and planning in the evenings.”

To help create parity, Dr. Carey-Melton is working to bring the voices of the single parent mothers into the school district, to create therapeutic support networks for the males using cognitive behavior therapy and to create increased expectations of the African American students. In addition, she has established a support group at her school for African American girls. The goal is to help enhance the girls’ self-esteem, teach respect for one another and help instill positive racial identification.
Class of 2005
Michael R. Lattanzio, DO, Allentown, PA, joined the medical staff at Lehigh Valley Hospital and Health Network.

Joseph Rosenblatt, DO, Philadelphia, PA, completed his cardiovascular fellowship at Albert Einstein Medical Center. Dr. Rosenblatt was appointed clinical professor of medicine, division of cardiology at the University of Rochester, Rochester, New York. He started his new position in July 2008.

Class of 2006
Class Agents: Caroline E. Ahlquist, MS/PA-C; and Mary C. Wilhelm, MS/PA-C

Jane Mack, MS/ODL, West Chester, PA, is chairwoman of the board of managers of the Hickman Retirement Community in West Chester. Ms. Mack was honored for 20 years of service at a Volunteer Appreciation Dinner held on April 25, 2008.


Deborah Summers, PA-C, Philadelphia, PA, was elected to the board of directors of the Eastern Pennsylvania Geriatrics Society. She is a physician’s assistant with Home Visit Doctors in Philadelphia.

In Memoriam
Donald T. Borle, DO ’47, Edgewood, RI, June 13, 2008
James J. Breslin, Sr., DO ’56, Clarkston, MI, June 12, 2008
John Bailey Flack, DO ’40, Belmont Hills, PA, June 8, 2008
Olwen F. Forbes, DO ’42, Solon, OH, April 22, 2008
Howard R. Foster, DO ’57, Woodbury, NJ, May 2, 2008
Milton A. Freedman, DO ’36, Kingston, PA, April 21, 2008
Bruce C. Gilfillan, DO ’70, Fort Worth, TX, June 8, 2008
Seymour Piwoz, DO ’56, Elkins Park, PA, April 12, 2008
Edward J. Spodobsalski, DO ’43, Lower Gwynedd, PA, June 19, 2008
Marie B. Stamps, RN ’42, Newport News, VA, May 14, 2008
Jeffrey Scott Stern, DO ’96, Huntingdon Valley, PA, August 21, 2008
Irving Tenenbaum, DO ’53, Cape May, NJ, April 17, 2008
David E. Wildman, Jr., DO ’97, Bryn Mawr, PA, June 8, 2008
Dennis B. Zaslow, DO ’74, Miami, FL, July 2, 2008

Certificates of Merit
Laurence H. Belkoff, DO, Lafayette Hill, PA, was inducted as president of the American College of Osteopathic Surgeons.

Carlo J. DiMarco, DO ’78, Erie, PA, was installed as the 2008-2009 president of the American Osteopathic Association on July 19.

William R. Henwood, DO ’76, Sharon, PA, was named “Outstanding Physician of the Year” by the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center – Health System.

Suzanne K. Kelley, DO ’77, Harrisburg, PA, was the recipient of the Pennsylvania Osteopathic Medical Association’s Distinguished Service Award.

Jeffry A. Lindenbaum, DO ’75, Holland, PA, was inducted President of the Pennsylvania Osteopathic Medical Association.

Ruth E. Purdy, DO ’50, Dublin, OH, was recognized by the Bureau of Osteopathic History and Identity as a “Great Pioneer in Osteopathic Medicine.”

E-MAIL YOUR NEWS AND PHOTOS TO MADELINE LAW: MADELINE@PCOM.EDU
All of my life I wanted to be a physician. My father was an osteopathic physician who had graduated from PCOM. He had a general practice and was loved and respected by his patients. After I graduated from PCOM, I considered doing a surgical residency, but finally decided on internal medicine. During my residency, my father developed some medical problems so I decided to switch to family practice and assist him in his practice.

At that time, HMOs were more of an experiment than the norm, and I had the opportunity to practice “traditional” medicine. My father and I were joined by my cousin and had three medical offices. I practiced office medicine and hospital medicine and served as medical director of a large nursing and rehabilitation center.

Over the years, our practice, like all others, became fully entrenched in managed care. At one point, my cousin left for “greener pastures” and my father retired. I went through a succession of associates and gradually downsized the practice to one office. I quickly discovered that my role was no longer just physician, but also financial manager of the practice.

My hours grew longer and longer. I found myself staying in the office—sometimes until midnight—to complete my paperwork. Additional time was spent fighting with insurance companies to advocate for my patients’ care and medications.

I could no longer afford to hire physicians, so I started to work with nurse practitioners. I never really had time off since I had an obligation to supervise my nurse practitioners. Meanwhile, like most physicians, I tried to work more productively by seeing more patients per hour. The personal care that I tried to provide for my patients began to erode. I became more of a symptom solver and realized that I knew less and less about my patients’ general well-being.

Obviously, something had to change. As I evaluated my options, I considered leaving the area to take a salaried position in another state. I researched selling my practice to a local hospital chain as many of my colleagues had done. Then, another opportunity arose. I learned about doctors changing their practices to a “concierge model.” When I was approached by a management company, I decided to change my practice.

I know that concierge medicine has been criticized by some as an elitist model. I also know that it is not the answer to all the problems that plague our nation’s medical system. However, for me, concierge practice has been a godsend. By practicing this model of medicine, I see one patient per hour—an average of eight patients per day. I have the proper time to take a patient’s complete history, to discuss his or her symptoms, to perform a complete physical, to investigate any social needs he or she may require, to formulate a treatment plan, to research any unique medical problems, and to be a patient advocate again. What I do now is what I was trained to do as an osteopathic physician—to be a holistic physician.

Today, my patients are happier and healthier. I’m happier and healthier. I love my job again and the promise of my profession. How many physicians can attest to the same experience?
Thanks to these leaders, PCOM’s fundraising programs are growing in size and scope.

This “fundraising think tank,” as Committee Chair Murray Zedeck, DO ’62, describes it, has created new strategies and opportunities for the College’s fundraising program. The group has also worked with the Development Committee of the Board of Trustees to successfully complete two million-dollar years for the Unrestricted Annual Fund.
When we heal the earth, we heal ourselves.
— david o r r

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

NOVEMBER 5
President’s Recognition Reception
Hilton Hotel City Avenue, Philadelphia, PA

JANUARY 30
Founders’ Day
PCOM Campus, Philadelphia, PA

FEBRUARY 19-22
Florida Osteopathic Medical Association Convention & Alumni Reception
Hyatt Regency Pier 66, Fort Lauderdale, FL

MARCH 4-8
American College of Osteopathic Family Physicians Convention & PCOM Alumni Reception
Gaylord National Resort, Washington, DC

MARCH 25-29
American Academy of Osteopathy Convocation & PCOM Reception
The Peabody Hotel, Little Rock, AR

MAY 29-30
Alumni Weekend
PCOM Campus and Hilton Hotel City Avenue, Philadelphia, PA