The Art of Cancer Care
Cancer: It has probably been around as long as there has been nutinous DNA, and it certainly fills the history of the human race. Its earliest known written reference goes back to Egyptian papyri more than 5,000 years old, in which symptoms consistent with cancer are described. These early African physicians had no known effective treatment, used cautery as a palliative measure, and seem to have had rudimentary understanding that some tumors are benign and others malignant.

Today we recognize cancer not as a single disease with a single cure, but a collection of hundreds of types of normal cells which have transformed into dangerously greedy ones. This variety of disease makes research, clinical care and the social impact of cancer highly complicated.

At MSUCOM, we are in the vanguard of the fight against this second most powerful killer in our nation. Our Carcinogenesis Laboratory, world-renowned and headed by University Distinguished Professors Justin McCormick, Ph.D., and Veronica Maher, Ph.D., has for nearly three decades teased out the basic changes in DNA that occur when a cell is transformed. They’ve looked at a wide variety of environmental factors that impact the causes of cancer, and have received more than $18 million in extramural funding to support their work. (See page 4.)

In the Department of Family and Community Medicine, Professor Margot Kurz, Ph.D., has studied both the social impact of cancer and the harmful effects of secondhand tobacco smoke, making a significant contribution to the academic literature in both areas. (See page 8.)

In our clinical departments, through almost the full array of specialties, our physician faculty are also battling cancer in their patients. This work requires unique skill to stay abreast of rapidly changing knowledge and to encourage patients to adopt lifestyle habits — not smoking, eating a healthy diet, exercising and avoiding known carcinogens — in order to prevent or help control cancer. Hardest of all, these osteopathic physicians are healing through supportive relationships and empowering patients to adopt the positive and assertive attitude necessary to survive this disease.

We have much to celebrate in this arena, and many more challenges to face. What does not change is our belief that osteopathic medicine, with its holistic approach to this complex disease, is a potent opponent to cancer.

William D. Strampel, D.O.
Dean
Cancer touches all of our lives. It seems everyone has a friend or loved one who has suffered from cancer, or they have been afflicted themselves. Many of those close to us have been lost, many others have survived. While the threat of cancer appears overwhelming, the fight against it grows stronger every day.

Peter Gulick, D.O., is one of the physicians on the front lines of the battle against cancer. He has been a faculty member at MSUCOM for 21 years. A graduate of the Chicago College of Osteopathic Medicine, he is board-certified in both oncology and infectious diseases.

Dr. Gulick plays several roles in the college and in the community. He teaches oncology sections of many courses for osteopathic and allopathic students. He is a physician at MSU HealthTeam’s Infectious Disease Clinic, where he treats a significant number of mid-Michigan’s AIDS patients. In addition to all that, he is a full-time oncologist at the Breslin Cancer Center, in Lansing.

It might seem odd for a physician to specialize in both oncology and infectious diseases, but Dr. Gulick says the two fields have more in common than one might think. Both disciplines are concerned with how illnesses develop and spread, and the two fields will often cross paths in the same patients.

“The truth is that many cancer patients actually die from infections that result from their illness,” he says. “It gives me a unique perspective.”

Of course, Dr. Gulick doesn’t see his job as just treating cancer, but helping to prevent it. He has developed an program to help primary care physicians educate their patients. He has also delivered presentations specifically for the public, such as those given at MSUCOM’s Mini Medical School.

“The causes of cancer are multi-faceted,” says Dr. Gulick. “It’s a combination of genetics and environmental factors.” The American Cancer Society has published guidelines for screening based on age, health history and other factors. “It’s important to get those exams done,” he adds.

At the Breslin Cancer Center, Dr. Gulick and his colleagues treat a wide variety of cancers – from breast cancer to acute leukemia to lymphoma and others. There are five full-time oncologists at the hospital, which provides chemotherapy and radiation treatments in-house. There are also two osteopathic oncology fellowships, among the first of their kind.

The center is also deeply involved in cancer research. Many of its patients are enrolled in studies involving organizations such as the Southwest Oncology Group and the National Cancer Institute. Advances in technology have improved diagnostics and led to greater success for patients. However, Dr. Gulick also credits changing attitudes for creating improvements in the fight against cancer.

“You are seeing more of a team approach,” he says. “At Breslin, we try to create an interdisciplinary center, where we have experts in lung cancer, breast cancer, and others, along with surgeons, radiologists, and nurses all working together. Each person fills his or her own niche.”
The Science of Medicine

Researchers Take on Cancer in the Lab

by Steven D. Bevier

While physicians fight cancer in hospitals and clinics today, the treatments of tomorrow are being developed in laboratories across the country and around the world. One of the foremost labs in the world can be found on the campus of MSU, at the Carcinogenesis Laboratory. The Carcinogenesis Laboratory is under the direction of University Distinguished Professors Justin McCormick, Ph.D., and Veronica Maher, Ph.D. For nearly 30 years, they have led teams of researchers who have made remarkable breakthroughs in the study of cancer and its causes.

In 2005, Dr. McCormick and his colleagues published a paper in the journal Cancer Research, which showed that many extra copies of the Sp1 protein are present in some cancer cells. When they reduced the number of copies in the cancer cells to the normal level, the cells could no longer form a cancer. Because 90% of breast cancers and 50% of colon cancers also make extra copies of Sp1, the research team is testing a similar strategy to block cancer growth by these cells in these tumors.

That is just one major study that originated in this lab. Many of the day-to-day experiments are carried out by graduate students like Jie Zhang, M.D. Dr. Zhang is pursuing a Ph.D. in biochemistry and first became interested in cancer research after doing a rotation in the lab early in his research training. His current project involves a gene called LRP12 that was first discovered by Jing Qing, Ph.D., a former MSU student.

In order to earn a Ph.D., each student must produce an original research project, from hypothesis to conclusion. It’s the goal of every one of these budding scientists to answer some question about how cancer develops and how it might be cured.

“It’s a long process,” says Kristen McNally, who is finishing her Ph.D. work after five years at MSU. She has been studying the process by which the ultraviolet light of the sun causes mutations in human skin cells. Sunlight is the carcinogen to which humans have the highest exposure. “As a result of my studies, we are beginning to understand how the various types of sunlight damage in DNA are processed and repaired or bypassed.”

Dr. McCormick and Dr. Maher provide feedback and support to the researchers. As teachers, their guidance helps students develop their own interests and turn their ideas into useful experiments.

Cell and Molecular Biology student Dan Appledorn is planning to take his work into the public realm. After earning his doctorate, he hopes to get involved in education and science policy. He explains how working in the lab has taught him how each individual contributes to the larger goal of finding a cure.

“We have isolated cells along the entire line from normal to tumors,” he says. Each researcher works at different stages along the path – proteins, genes, cells – but, “We all have the same big picture in mind.”

It’s not just students who are accomplishing great things. Jeannine Scott, Ph.D., is a full-time researcher who came to MSU in 2003 after working in human genetics at the University of Washington. Dr. Scott serves as mentor to younger scientists, by helping to train undergraduate students in research methods and working alongside graduate students as they develop and carry out their own experiments.

That is in addition to her own research, which she approaches a bit differently than students under pressure to earn their degrees. “I can take more risks,” she explains. “My work can be open-ended, and I can use that to pursue new avenues of study; or help find new sources of information.”

The Carcinogenesis Lab has been a launching pad for many doctors, who have graduated to other successful endeavors. Many are teaching at other universities, while some are also physicians treating patients on a daily basis. Still others have taken their research to new levels at government, university or private labs.

There is a lot more work to be done before a discovery made in the lab can lead to an actual treatment for patients. It is a long road from concept to practical human use. Yet, the research being done now is paving the way to life-saving advances in the future. There are thousands of genes to explore and pathways to be studied. The current group of young scientists will move on to other endeavors, but a new crop will emerge and the Carcinogenesis Lab will continue to push the boundaries of cancer knowledge. As Ms. McNally puts it, “Each experiment answers a question, but it also raises new ones.”
The Power of Touch

Manual Medicine Provides Relief for Lymphedema Sufferers

by Steven D. Bevier

As anyone who has battled cancer can attest, the treatments and side effects can be just as difficult to handle as the disease itself. A common condition that faces many cancer survivors is lymphedema, or swelling of the limbs or abdomen that develops when the lymphatic system is damaged or malfunctioning.

Genia Zimmerman, M.D., treats lymphedema patients as part of her practice at MSU’s Clinical Center. She is an assistant professor in the Department of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation and she sees how it affects many people in a variety of ways. Though the swelling is generally painless, she explains, it can severely limit movement or coordination.

Persons can be born with lymphedema, however, that is rare and the vast majority of sufferers develop the condition after a surgical resection of the lymph nodes, a common occurrence for those with certain types of cancer. About 30% of all breast cancer patients develop some form of lymphedema after treatment, according to Dr. Zimmerman.

Treatment consists of two stages. First, the doctor or a physical therapist will treat the affected limbs using manual medicine techniques — massaging the swollen tissues to help the lymphatic fluids drain and reduce the swelling. Then compression bandages are wrapped around the area to keep the swelling from returning.

Initially, patients go through this process three to four times a week, for four to five weeks, depending on the severity of the swelling. Over time the patients are taught how to apply the wraps themselves. “Lymphedema cannot be completely cured,” says Dr. Zimmerman, “but it does become manageable.”

As there are no medicines or surgeries that can effectively treat lymphedema, manual medicine is the best source of relief for patients.

After coming to MSUCOM as a resident from the Medical College of Virginia, Dr. Zimmerman undertook a fellowship in the osteopathic manipulative medicine department at MSUCOM. This provided her with the education and skills to use OMM in her practice. “I’m sort of an osteopathic M.D.,” she says.

Unfortunately, there is no shortage of patients for her clinic, but there is a need for more therapists who are certified in lymphedema treatments. There are two such therapists at the Rehabilitation Clinic, and they serve patients from all over lower Michigan. “We’re only limited by space and time,” says Dr. Zimmerman.

For 16 years, Alex Gottschalk, M.D., has been quietly sitting in front of screens and viewboxes in MSU’s Radiology Building, working steadily without fanfare as a professor of diagnostic radiology. But Dr. Gottschalk is a pioneer, whose curriculum vitae includes 26 pages of lists of publications, appointments at the nation’s top universities, and leadership posts in several national professional societies. His experience is nothing less than an anchoring thread in the history of radiology.

Recently Dr. Gottschalk was recognized for his contributions by receiving the Radiology Society of North America’s Gold Medal, one of the field's highest honors. “Alex has made great contributions to radiology and nuclear medicine over a long career,” noted Brian C. Lentle, M.D., RSNA president, “during which he has consistently published textbooks in nuclear medicine recognized for their great pedagogical value.”

Prior to coming to MSU, Dr. Gottschalk was on the faculty at Yale University, the University of California at Berkeley, and the University of Chicago, where he was also chief of the nuclear medicine section, chairman of the Department of Radiology, and director of the Argonne Cancer Research Hospital.

He is the author or co-author of 88 books or chapters in books, 95 abstracts, and 197 articles in peer-reviewed journals. He is also the former editor-in-chief of the Yearbook of Nuclear Medicine.

He has served on committees for the National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute, as well as national committees for the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, the National Institute of General Medical Sciences, and the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education.

Dr. Gottschalk is a past president of the Association of University Radiologists, the Society of Nuclear Medicine, and the Fleischner Society. He is a fellow of the American College of Radiology and the American College of Chest Physicians. He earned a bachelor’s degree from Harvard College and the M.D. from Washington University Medical School.

Alex Gottschalk, M.D., professor of radiology
Margot Kurtz

Cancer, geriatrics, depression, physical functioning, exposure to environmental tobacco smoke, and medical education – these are all topical threads in the tapestry of the career of Margot E. Kurtz, Ph.D., professor in the Department of Family and Community Medicine. Dr. Kurtz was a pioneer in the study of passive (secondhand) smoking, investigating its causes and effects. Since that time, her work has focused on the influences and interactions of the physical and psychological aspects of cancer for patients and their family caregivers. In a series of publications, she and her co-authors have been able to plot the trajectory of symptoms and actions relative to smoking, providing a rational basis for assessing programs, policies and treatment protocols for tobacco use.

For example, one study demonstrated that depression, a very common occurrence among cancer patients, can be reduced if clinicians manage symptoms so that patients are able to continue their social activities during treatment. In the area of cancer prevention in a large-scale study, Dr. Kurtz demonstrated that low-cost educational interventions in the workplace can positively impact women’s attitudes and practices continue their social activities during treatment.

Her work in the area of cancer care has focused on the influences and interactions of the physical and psychological aspects of cancer for patients and their family caregivers. In a series of publications, she and her co-authors have been able to plot the trajectory of symptoms and both physical and psychological functioning in such a way as to identify the periods of maximum vulnerability for patients and their caregivers. For example, one study demonstrated that depression, a very common occurrence among cancer patients, can be reduced if clinicians manage symptoms so that patients are able to continue their social activities during treatment.

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Weaving a tapestry of research

Margot Kurtz

Reading, Writing and Research

by Pat Grauer

Cancer, geriatrics, depression, physical functioning, exposure to environmental tobacco smoke, and medical education – these are all topical threads in the tapestry of the career of Margot E. Kurtz, Ph.D., professor in the Department of Family and Community Medicine. A prolific researcher, Dr. Kurtz has published nearly 70 articles in peer-reviewed journals, attracted significant extramural funding, and has served as a reviewer for 10 national or international scientific journals, including Cancer, the European Journal of Public Health, Preventive Medicine and Health Care for Women International. Her work has served to illuminate the complex interactions among human health, emotional health, social interaction, and environment, offering scientists and clinicians alike a firm foundation for decision-making and additional scholarship. For the past 15 years, she has conducted her studies using multiple databases constructed by Barbara Goven, Ph.D., R.N., university distinguished professor of nursing, and Bill Given, Ph.D., professor of family practice. Her work in the area of cancer care has focused on the influences and interactions of the physical and psychological aspects of cancer for patients and their family caregivers. In a series of publications, she and her co-authors have been able to plot the trajectory of symptoms and both physical and psychological functioning in such a way as to identify the periods of maximum vulnerability for patients and their caregivers.

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Her research on active and passive smoking, significant precursors to cancer, has shed light on behaviors, knowledge and attitudes in national, familial, and psychosocial contexts. This work, which ties the key environmental, individual and developmental processes influencing thoughts and actions relative to smoking, provides a rational basis for assessing programs, policies and treatment protocols for tobacco use.

Dr. Kurtz was a pioneer in the study of passive (secondhand) smoking, investigating adolescents, young adults, and women in Malaysia, Germany, Nigeria and the United States. This seminal work demonstrated the critical importance of attitude, and the need to intervene at an early age. A 1998 recipient of Michigan State University’s Distinguished Faculty Award, she has also contributed significantly to the understanding of medical education, producing resource books, videotapes and a body of research on clinical education and the doctor/patient relationship.

Dr. Kurtz has been invited to present scientific papers at many international symposia – including those in Germany, France, the Czech Republic, Switzerland, Thailand, Australia, Denmark, Nigeria, New Zealand, Malaysia and Brazil. In June, she will travel to the International Symposium on Supportive Care in Cancer in Geneva, Switzerland, to make a presentation on the relationship of physical functioning to depression among geriatric cancer patients.

by Steven D. Bevier

For scientists who conduct their business in research labs, it isn’t enough to have a brilliant idea. In order to turn that idea into a successful endeavor, one must secure funding. With so many researchers competing for limited funding, it is tough to make one’s work stand out. That’s where Martin Furey, M.A., can help. He is management analyst in MSUCOM’s Office for Research, which means he’s the go-to guy for college scientists looking to get their projects off the ground.

Helping researchers craft their grant proposals is the key to his job. He helps scientists and doctors brainstorm their ideas, suggests ways to improve the presentation of those ideas, and provides writing assistance on the proposal itself. Taking very detailed technical problems and making them accessible to readers can greatly improve any proposal’s chance for success.

“The people who serve on funding committees are intelligent,” he explains, “but they aren’t necessarily experts on the subject that the researcher is working on. I try to approach it from that perspective and help the proposal read in a way that makes it easy to digest.”

Another way that he helps scientists is finding available grants and matching them to the appropriate projects. In 2001, Metropolitan Hospital in Grand Rapids, one of MSUCOM’s partners in the Statewide Campus System, was looking to establish a new center that would provide translators to serve the area’s large refugee population. Mr. Furey helped identify a $1.5-million Technology Opportunity Grant, awarded through the U.S. Department of Commerce. Coordinating with representatives from Metropolitan and MSUCOM – including Mark Norman, Ph.D., then the director of medical informatics, and Colleen Kniffen, executive assistant to the dean – he wrote the proposal that won the grant and got the translation center on its feet.

Mr. Furey started at MSUCOM in 2000 as a graduate assistant in public relations, before moving to the research office in 2001. He has worked on projects with many of MSU’s top researchers, including Terrie Taylor, D.O., David Kaufman, D.O., Margot Kurtz, Ph.D., and John Goudreau, D.O., Ph.D. In that time, the college’s overall research dollars have increased by more than 50 percent.

Working with Associate Dean for Research Justin McCormick, Ph.D., Mr. Furey helps to direct MSUCOM’s ongoing effort to expand its research portfolio. The Office for Research offers a variety of services to help scientists turn their ideas into results. In addition to assisting with grant proposals, they help graduate students find faculty mentors and they help doctors create pilot studies, sometimes contributing seed money to get the ball rolling. Mr. Furey also provides editorial assistance on journal articles being submitted for publication by faculty and students. Mr. Furey came to East Lansing as a University Recruitment Fellow after completing a B.A. in English and biology at Williams College and Oxford University. While he chose to focus his Ph.D. studies on language, he remains interested in science and technology and contributes regularly to BYTE magazine.

“The best thing about my job, apart from the great people I work with,” Furey remarked, ”is the variety of research projects I get to learn about. It’s exciting to learn what’s on the cutting edge of so many faculty members’ disciplines. The most rewarding part of my job is helping investigators who didn’t get funding on the first round refashion their proposal so it gets funded on resubmission. We have a really good track record on that.”
by Steven D. Bevier

Researchers from the College of Osteopathic Medicine took the lead in an extraordinary meeting on Zomba Plateau in Malawi from March 22-25, 2005. Forty-five participants from 11 different countries gathered for a first-of-its-kind conference to discuss the pathogenesis of fatal cerebral malaria.

The focus of the meeting was an ongoing research study being conducted in Blantyre, Malawi. This autopsy-based case-control study is a collaborative effort shared by Terrie Taylor, D.O., university distinguished professor at MSUCOM and the Blantyre Malaria Project, and Malcolm Molyneux, of the Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine and the Malawi-Liverpool Wellcome Trust Clinical Research Programme. Researchers have completed 85 autopsies since 1996, making this the largest study of its kind. One to two million African children die each year after contracting malaria, with the majority dying with cerebral malaria. Yet the exact pathology of the disease is unknown.

“The need for this type of study emerged when it became clear that even highly effective new anti-malarial drugs did not lower the mortality rate,” says Dr. Taylor. The importance of identifying mechanisms of the disease became clear, and the Blantyre group decided to initiate the search by systematically collecting autopsy data that could be related to the pre-morbid condition of the patient.

The purpose of this meeting was to review the findings generated by this study and consider the remaining gaps in the understanding of malaria pathogenesis. There was also discussion about the infrastructure in Blantyre — which includes a sophisticated research ward, the capacity to conduct careful autopsies, and the ability to preserve material suitable for analysis — and how it could be harnessed to address the remaining questions.

An exciting development is the researchers’ capacity to carry out magnetic resonance imaging. Thanks to the work of the Department of Radiology at Michigan State University, General Electric has donated an MRI machine to the malaria research endeavor in Blantyre. This will expand the project greatly, as investigators can move beyond autopsies and collect detailed information on the cerebral status of all children. In addition, serial imaging will allow the team to establish a sequence of events (whereas autopsies only provide “snapshots”) and follow patients through their recovery period.

“The MRI creates valuable new opportunities for clinicopathological correlates, and those studies will form the core of a new research proposal,” says Dr. Taylor.

Myron Magen, D.O., dean emeritus of MSUCOM, was in attendance and marveled at the success of the conference. “I was absolutely amazed by the quality and stature of the speakers,” said Dr. Magen. “This also gives worldwide exposure to the research being done by MSU and the College of Osteopathic Medicine. I am tremendously proud of Dr. Taylor and the college.”

Formal sessions included scientific presentations, group discussions, and brainstorming. It was also a rare opportunity for scientists from a wide variety of backgrounds and interests to meet, talk, and establish new relationships, while taking in stunning scenery and wildlife. The meeting served to define the focus of malaria research for the next five to 10 years, with an ambitious new goal of developing a unified theory of malaria pathogenesis, taking into account the parasite, the host, and interactions between the two.

The conference on fatal cerebral malaria drew physicians and scientists from all around the globe to Malawi.

Michael Kron
New Director of Institute of International Health

by Pat Grauer

An expert on infectious diseases that afflict many of the world’s population, Michael Kron, M.D., M.Sc., has been appointed the director of the Michigan State University Institute of International Health (IIH). He succeeds Evangelos Petropoulos, M.D., IIH’s charter director, and Herbert L. Whitting, Ph.D., who assumed the role of acting director at Dr. Petropoulos’ retirement.

IIH was established in 1987 to marshal university resources to address problems of world health by facilitating research, undertaking collaborative international health projects overseas, and serving as a center for information exchange.

Dr. Kron presently serves as the principal investigator on a National Institutes of Health-funded collaborative study to identify compounds that might be useful in treating human filarial diseases, which infect millions of persons. The research, funded by $3 million for five years from the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, includes cooperation among an international network of laboratories, including MSU’s Department of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology, European Molecular Biology Laboratory-Grenoble in France, Goeteborg University in Sweden, and Basilea-Roche Pharmaceutical Ltd in Basel, Switzerland. The researchers are working to identify novel chemical scaffolds that inhibit recombinant parasite annexoy-cytochrome A synthetase (AARS).

Under an exploratory grant from the Fogarty International Center of NIH, Dr. Kron is also leading a group focused on the natural products and biodiversity issues of terrestrial and marine organisms in the Philippines, which, with seven hundred islands, is considered one of five biodiversity hotspots worldwide. Partners in this project include the University of the Philippines and MSU’s microbiology botany curator, and physiology departments, the Food Safety and Toxicology Center, and the Center for Ethics and Humanities in the Life Sciences.

Dr. Kron, associate professor of medicine in the Division of Infectious Diseases, had most recently served as the director of IIH’s Minority International Research Training Program (MIRT), also funded by the Fogarty Center. Under this program, groups of about 15 students travel overseas each summer to conduct biomedical research under the guidance of foreign and MSU faculty mentors. He has a broad array of international health work in his career, including as a consultant to the NIH MSLU Sudan Medical Parasitology Program in Khartoum, fellow in the Division of Infectious Diseases and Geographic Medicine at Case Western Reserve University, a member of the core faculty for the MSU Genetics Program Center for Latin American and Caribbean Studies, and as a visiting scientist for the NIH-Philippines Tropical Medicine Research Center in Manila.

He serves as an advisor to the World Health Organization Special Program in Tropical Diseases, and has been a member of three National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases study sections on infectious diseases. He holds five MSU-U.S. patents related to assay development and anti-parasite drug discovery, and has two patents pending.

At present he has four active research grants, serving as principal investigator on three.
Graduation Day
MSUCOM Commencement and Hooding Ceremony, Wharton Center, May 5, 2005

Sister Anne Brooks, D.O., Class of 1982, (left) served as this year’s graduation speaker.

Three graduating students were also commissioned in the Armed Forces (l. to r.) Matthew Snyder, D.O., (Air Force), Eryn Hart, D.O., (Navy) and Antoinette Burns, D.O. (Air Force).

Kathleen Hannon, D.O., with her family including her uncle, Robert Reagle, D.O. (left).

Jennifer Frink, D.O., with her son, Alexander, and fellow graduate Theresa Kulling, D.O.

Regina Injety, D.O., was hooded by her husband, William Uicker, Ph.D.

(Left to right) Gurpreet Singh, D.O., Michael Kuhn, D.O., and Aaron Fraser, D.O.

Sonika Gill, D.O., with proud family members.

Marjorie Alvir, D.O., and family

Ariel Ponce, D.O., and his aunt, Aida Ponce, M.D.

Three graduating students were also commissioned in the Armed Forces (l. to r.) Matthew Snyder, D.O., (Air Force), Eryn Hart, D.O., (Navy) and Antoinette Burns, D.O. (Air Force).

Graduates gather for the big day.

Bridget McArdle, D.O., (left) and Karyn Gilbert, D.O.

Courtney Scher, D.O., was hooded by her mother, Alison Carroll, Ph.D.

Sonika Gill, D.O., with proud family members.

Kathleen Hannon, D.O., with her family including her uncle, Robert Reagle, D.O. (left).
The Michigan State University College of Osteopathic Medicine is grateful to the hundreds of individuals and organizations who, through their giving, support the cause of osteopathic medicine and allow us to create physicians to meet the health needs of the community.

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Roche Laboratories, Inc.

R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Company

Pfizer, Inc.

Novartis Pharmaceuticals Corp.
Slavery to Freedom Reaches Fifth Year

The Visiting Faculty Lecture Series returned to Michigan State University this past February and brought with it another group of fantastic speakers. This marks the fifth year of this unique program, which seeks to bring multicultural scholars from across the nation to interact with students and the community, through classes and lectures.

This year’s speakers were:

- Rev. Frederick D. Haynes III, senior pastor, Friendship-West Baptist Church, Dallas, Texas
- Rev. Dr. Jeremiah A. Wright Jr., senior pastor, Trinity United Church Of Christ, Chicago, Illinois
- Rev. C. T. Vivian, civil rights activist, Atlanta, Georgia
- Lerone Bennett Jr., executive editor, Ebony magazine.

**Slavery to Freedom: An American Odyssey**


State Rep. Michael Murphy, Rev. Dr. Jeremiah A. Wright Jr., Dr. Anderson and Dean William Strampel, D.O.

**Lerone Bennett Jr.**

**Rev. Haynes and Dr. Anderson**
In Search of Health Policy

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

When I was in my graduate program, we lamented that the United States and South Africa were the only developed countries without a national health policy. Since then, South Africa has adopted a national health policy. It seems that we have also. Our policy is “if we ignore it, it will go away.”

At the federal level, we are consumed with discussions to privatize portions of the Social Security system with no mention of the looming shortage of the Medicare system which dwarfs the Social Security problem. Also, in the same month Congress debates bills to increase funding for the war in Iraq by $85 billion and decrease Medicaid funding by $60 billion.

At the state level, the 36 tax cuts from the decade of the ’90s have left us without adequate revenue to meet our commitments for the current decade. The “solutions” being offered are to cut physician fees and GME by 4 percent even though physicians are already reimbursed at 60 percent of cost and there is a general shortage in the future and will need more physicians.

Even the “backbone” of our health care financing system — employer-based insurance — has begun to erode dramatically. Employers are cutting back on the health care benefits they provide for employees and dependents. The hiring of part-time employees who are not eligible for benefits and the failure to cover dependents is causing an increase in Medicaid recipients from families of the employed. The bastion of employer-based coverage, the United Auto Workers contract, has undergone major erosion in the past year. First was the transition to PPO coverage, stepping away from the traditional right to the provider of choice. Next was the invocation of an unknown 23-year-old clause in the UAW contract that allowed the imposition of co-pays and deductibles if the cost of health care could not be born by the employee. The backdrop of these changes is a call for the federal government to assume responsibility for the health care costs of retirees to help make American business globally competitive.

Where does all of the noise and confusion lead? I believe it is a prologue for a serious discussion of what we as a country believe about health care. While the policy direction of our health care system is not yet clear, there are several landmarks that are discernable in the future.

• The need for health care will increase as the population ages. We need more physicians, nurses and ancillary health care providers.
• While we have high quality health care delivery systems, we do not have an organized health care system. We will invest to create an organizing infrastructure because we cannot afford the inefficiencies we currently experience.
• We will make major investments in information technology. We are 30 years behind industries such as banking and transportation in the use of information technology. We need to do this not only to become more efficient, but also to improve the quality of health care by reducing medical errors.
• We will increase consumer participation in health care purchasing decisions. This trend is already underway as a means to save money for employers. In the future we will include consumers in the payment of health care because the consumer will not make cost-conscious health care decisions if they are insulated from the cost of health care.
• Health promotion activities will be stressed. Despite the fact that a large portion of morbidity is due to personal behaviors (smoking, drinking, overeating, substance abuse, lack of exercise) health promotion funds are always the first to be cut in times of economic crisis. Consumers and purchasers of health care will come to understand that the true reduction of health care costs will not come from reducing services or reimbursement, but by reducing preventable diseases.

It is said that we don’t inherit the world from our parents — we borrow it from our children. What is the health care legacy that we want to leave our children? Certainly, it is not the one that we have created for ourselves.

Upcoming Events

August 26: Convocation & White Coat Ceremony Wharton Center
September 9: 7th Annual Osteopathic Open Eagle Eye Golf Club Bath, MI
September 9-10: Silverfest Weekend

MSUCOM Alumni Office
A110 E. Fee Hall
East Lansing, MI 48824
(517) 432-4979 or toll-free (877) 853-3448
email: camp@msu.edu
www.com.msu.edu/alumni

Alumni Endowed Scholarship
Two second-year osteopathic students are recipients of this year’s Alumni Endowed Scholarship. Leana May and Ahmed Bazzi, both Class of 2007, will receive awards from this fund, which was established and maintained by contributions from MSUCOM alumni and other alumni programs.

WHERE ARE YOU?
Please keep us informed of recent moves or changes in your practice. It is important for college reports, grant writing, etc., that we have up-to-date information on our alumni.
Changes to your information can be made on the MSUCOM Web site under the alumni section or by calling (877) 853-3448.
Mitzi C. Amelon, D.O., Class of 1989
I did my internship and family practice residency at Garden City Hospital. After nine years in private practice – including six years with my father, D.O. – I left to spend more time with my family, volunteer at my daughter’s school and provide lactation support. I have worked with the Little Traverse Bay Band of Odawa Indians in Petoskey, Caro State Psychiatric Facility and Boston Hospital and I am currently performing assignment at the Alamo Navajo Health Clinic in Magdalena, New Mexico. I recently trained to administer the Healthy School Action Tool and I am a member of the Michigan Action for Healthy Kids. I am also in a folk group at my church. I have been married to Chris Pavlioski for 16 years, and we share two beautiful daughters, Shannon, 12, and Devon, 10.

Tammy Born, D.O., Class of 1986
I am in private practice in Grand Rapids. Being an osteopathic physician allows me to accomplish my calling in life — to help others. I believe that MSUCOM gave me an excellent education and allowed me to fulfill this purpose. Being a D.O. means that I can practice medicine in the way medicine should be practiced, by treating the whole person. Serving on the board allows me to work with students whom I hope to influence and help them to catch the vision of what they are called to do in life. It has kept me in contact with the school and the excellent staff and I hope to promote the vision and cause of osteopathic medicine nationwide.

Jeff DeWeerd, D.O., Class of 1997
Being on the board of the Alumni Association provides me one avenue to give a little back to MSUCOM. I feel my education at MSUCOM was solid, and prepared me well for what was to come. Our class was very diverse in age, in culture, and in previous experience. I found that being in a setting with more mature folks who actually cared about one another was a refreshing way to go through school. Being involved with the Alumni Association allows me to keep my foot in the door with my alma mater, and keep track of some of the amazing friends I made. It also allows me to be involved in finding ways to achieve ongoing support for the many programs that my alumni sponsor, including creating an endowment fund, sponsoring student grants and scholarships, and creating a local and nationwide awareness of the ever-increasing family of quality physicians graduating from MSUCOM.

Steve Duplesis, D.O., Class of 1976
After graduating — in the first class at MSUCOM — I focused my family medicine career in Cedar Springs, Michigan, for 25 years, first in a solo private practice then with an established multi-specialty group. In 2001, I returned to campus and joined the faculty as an assistant professor of family and community medicine and practice at the Clinical Center. I am also conducting a stress fracture study on MSU athletes and serve as the Sparrow Hospice Medical Director. Since 2003, I have been a board member, promoting student involvement as a campus liaison. I was Senior in the Sun co-chair in 2005 and invite all alumni to join us in 2006 for a phenomenal experience. Being on campus and working with alumni programs is an absolute pleasure! GO GREEN!

Glen Hatcher, D.O., Class of 1975
Immediately after completing my orthopedic residency at Detroit Osteopathic Hospital and setting up practice at Detroit Medical Center, I found that I had the opportunity to remain close to the medical school that initiated my professional career. As the longest serving member of the Alumni Board, I am face the fact that my final term will soon end. It has been a pleasure to serve, but also an overwhelming honor to represent the alumni during the three terms that I have served. I have seen board members come and go over the last 15 years. They all had three things in common: love for their school, dedication to ensuring that the Alumni Board represented the wishes of their constituency, and pride in being D.O.’s and graduates of MSUCOM. I now practice in Las Vegas, and I will be forever grateful for the opportunities this wonderful school afforded me.

Mary Hunt, D.O.

Robert Piccinini, D.O., Class of 1992
Serving on the Alumni Board has been a remarkable experience and given me many chances to stay involved with MSUCOM and education. Currently, I am a clinical psychologist in Clinton Township, where I am a regional coordinator for the Oakland County Psychiatric Clinic. My education not only allowed me the opportunity to realize my dream of becoming a doctor, it made me a strong, well-rounded person. Giving back to the college not only improves education for future physicians, it honors all the alumni who came from such a well-respected school.

Myrrl Robbins, D.O., Class of 1976
Medicine has been my ambition since the influence of a female pediatrician in my early childhood, and MSUCOM has allowed me to achieve my lifelong goal. I have been in private clinical practice and administrative medicine, and have had the privilege of guiding osteopathic medical students and residents. Transitioning into academic medicine has provided me with the dual reward of training competent physicians and keeping me at the top of my skills. Presently I am osteopathic program director of family residency training at the Kalamazoo Center for Medical Sciences. I am now able to use my expertise in medical education, health policy, and patient advocacy in my role as an associate professor of family medicine. I have also enjoyed a long and happy marriage to Gerald Robbins, D.O., and we have two college-age sons, Lane and Jared.

Ali Saad, D.O., Class of 2002
I am currently in the last year of my emergency medicine residency at Mount Clemens General Hospital and graduate from the four-year program in June of 2006. I am also serving in the Michigan Army National Guard as a medical officer. I enjoy teaching and training the medics and medical personnel in my unit, which is being mobilized in September 2003 for deployment to Iraq. Being on the Alumni Board is an honor and a privilege for me because it allows me to give back to the college that allowed me to pursue my lifelong goal of becoming a physician.

Ali Saad, D.O.

Robert Piccinini, D.O.

Myrrl Robbins, D.O.

Michael Weiss, D.O., Class of 1978
Since graduation from MSUCOM, I have always made an effort to stay involved with my alma mater. I currently have a private OB/GYN practice in Clinton Township, and have served as residency program director at Mt. Clemens General Hospital. I am in my second term on the Alumni Association Board, and consider it an honor and a great opportunity to support the profession. It’s necessary for physicians to speak out on the issues that are important to them, and I would like to see more physicians in Congress and state legislatures to be a voice for our interests.

Michael Weiss, D.O.

Mary Jo K. Voelpel, D.O., Class of 1975
I have been in a private hem-oncology practice since 1981, and I was the first certified female hematologist in our profession. I am active in many fundraising activities for the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society and the American Cancer Society, and encourage an active healthy lifestyle through my example by competing in marathons and triathlons. As a D.O., I feel privileged to be part of the profession and be able to impact so many people in a positive way. Serving on the Alumni Board at MSUCOM is a tremendous honor. I am so grateful to be a part of planning and assisting the profession at this level. It is one way I can show my support to the college that has showered me so richly with opportunities for a better life for me and every life I touch with my hands, presence and words. Thank you, MSUCOM, for believing in me.

Mary Jo K. Voelpel, D.O.
Alumni Awards Nominations

The MSUCOM Alumni Office is seeking nominations for the Alumnus of the Year Award and the Dean’s Award for Meritorious Contribution. Both awards recognize individuals who have made notable achievements in the field of osteopathic medicine and will be awarded at the Alumni Luncheon at the AOA Convention in November. Applications can be found on the MSUCOM Web site at http://www.com.msu.edu/alumni or by calling (877) 853-3448.

Alumnus of the Year Criteria

- Commitment to the osteopathic profession exemplified by the practice, teaching or research of osteopathic principles and techniques
- Commitment to public service demonstrated by active leadership in the community
- Outstanding achievement including those leading to better understanding of key clinical issues in the practice of medicine

Dean’s Award Criteria

- Should be an alumna or alumnus of MSUCOM
- Should be nominated by MSUCOM alumni, faculty, staff or students and selected by the dean
- Should have exemplary positive achievements, either in professional or personal life
- Should be recognized as either a personal or professional role model for others

Alumni Awards Criteria

- Should be nominated by MSUCOM alumni, faculty, staff or students and selected by the dean
- Should have exemplary positive achievements, either in professional or personal life
- Should be recognized as either a personal or professional role model for others

Alumni Awards Nominations

Please help us find those MSUCOM graduates with whom we have lost touch. If you or someone you know is on this list, drop us a line and let us know where you are!

Efraim A. Azzearte
Sheila K. Bahr
Gregory J. Baker
James H. Berry
Gautam J. Desai
J. Stacy Dickens
Randy E. Drum
Martin K. Erickson
Joel E. Freedland
Tony A. Gale-Burto
Anette M. Gavello
Kathy Grace
Marc B. Grant
Donnelle L. Green
Tristan Guevara
John A. Hughes-Papsidero
Christine Johnson
F. Andrew Knecht
Kerry L. Kole
Barton M. Lev
Jason C. Lindsey
Grant J. Linnell
Chad W. Mayer
R. Steven McDonald
Kimberly A. McRae
Thomas C. Merrill
Thomas R. Miller
Hua V. Nguyen
Thang V. Nguyen
Paricia A. Nicolato
Wojciech Nowak
Asha J. Palazzolo
Louis N. Radden
Elizabeth Rezel
Delenis J. Riddlesprigger
Elissa R. Ryman
Barbara L. Saul
Katherine J. Schrage
Vicky M. Scott
Anuj Sharma
Daniel R. Smalley
Arlene F. Smith
Cynthia D. Owens Stewart
Gabriela B. Szmyczak
Kimberley N. Tarum
Robert D. Trepp
Jamie L. Vanoveren
Elizabeth S. Wireman

Alumni of the Year

R. Steven McDonald
Chad W. Mayer
Grant J. Linnell
Jason C. Lindsey
Barton M. Lev
Kerry L. Kole
F. Andrew Knecht
Kathy Grace
Anette M. Gavello
Kimberly A. McRae
Thomas C. Merrill
Thomas R. Miller
Hua V. Nguyen
Thang V. Nguyen
Paricia A. Nicolato
Wojciech Nowak
Asha J. Palazzolo
Louis N. Radden
Elizabeth Rezel
Delenis J. Riddlesprigger
Elissa R. Ryman
Barbara L. Saul
Katherine J. Schrage
Vicky M. Scott
Anuj Sharma
Daniel R. Smalley
Arlene F. Smith
Cynthia D. Owens Stewart
Gabriela B. Szmyczak
Kimberley N. Tarum
Robert D. Trepp
Jamie L. Vanoveren
Elizabeth S. Wireman

Missing Alumni

Myral R. Robbins, D.O.
Elizabeth S. Wireman
Jamie L. Vanoveren
Robert D. Trepp
Anuj Sharma
Vicky M. Scott
Anuj Sharma
Daniel R. Smalley
Arlene F. Smith
Cynthia D. Owens Stewart
Gabriela B. Szmyczak
Kimberley N. Tarum
Robert D. Trepp
Jamie L. Vanoveren
Elizabeth S. Wireman

REACHING OUR GOALS TOGETHER

As students, each one of us came to MSUCOM with our own set of dreams and goals. Thanks to this college and the help of our wonderful teachers and classmates, we achieved those goals and graduated to become talented physicians. As life continues, we must set new goals that challenge ourselves to become better caregivers. From deciding to start a new practice, giving back to your community, or becoming more active in professional organizations, your alma mater and your fellow alumni can support you in your work.

The college is also setting new goals for itself, not only in terms of educating new physicians and conducting new research, but also in growing to meet the needs of hospitals and patients all across the country. At the Alumni Association, we’ve made it our goal to keep you informed about all that MSUCOM does and to provide as many opportunities as possible for you to get involved. If you have goals that you want to accomplish in your professional life, or would like to see the college reach a new level of excellence, talk to us. Together we can find new ways to improve our education and make MSUCOM stronger than ever.

Myral R. Robbins, D.O.
President, MSUCOM Alumni Association

2005 Calendar of Events

JUNE

3-5
CME: Functional Indirect Technique. Fee Hall; East Lansing. 24 hours of Category IA credit. Tuition is $750; $450 for residents and interns. Course chairperson is Harriet Shaw, D.O. Contact the Office of CME: (800) 437-0001, or (517) 353-9714, cme@com.msu.edu; http://www.com.msu.edu/cme

8-12
CME: Principles of Manual Medicine. East Lansing Marriott; East Lansing. 40 hours of Category IA credit. Tuition is $1,250; $900 for residents and interns. Course chairperson is Lisa Vredevoogd, D.O. Contact the Office of CME: (800) 437-0001, or (517) 353-9714, cme@com.msu.edu; http://www.com.msu.edu/cme

24-26
CME: Integrated Neuromuscular and Myofascial Release. Fee Hall; East Lansing. 24 hours of Category IA credit. Tuition is $750; $450 for residents and interns. Course chairperson is Lisa Vredevoogd, D.O. Contact the Office of CME: (800) 437-0001, or (517) 353-9714, cme@com.msu.edu; http://www.com.msu.edu/cme

JULY

25
MSUCOM Alumni Reception, in conjunction with MAOPF Conference. Amway Grand Hotel, Grand Rapids.

26
Convocation and White Coat Ceremony. Wharton Center, East Lansing.

AUGUST

14-18
CME: Muscle Energy. Level I; East Lansing Marriott; East Lansing. 40 hours of Category IA credit. Tuition is $1,250; $900 for residents and interns. Course chairperson is Carl Steele, D.O., M.S., P.T. Contact the Office of CME: (800) 437-0001, or (517) 353-9714, cme@com.msu.edu; http://www.com.msu.edu/cme

9-10

SEPTEMBER

28
Mini Medical School. Fee Hall, East Lansing. Tuesday evenings from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. beginning September 27 and running through November 1. MSUCOM faculty deliver two-hour presentations for the general public, on health topics such as heart health, diabetes, nutrition, exercise, allergies and asthma, and more. Sessions are free to the public. Sponsored by a grant from Pfizer. For more information, contact Pat Grauer, grauer@msu.edu, (517) 353-0616.

OCTOBER

19-23
CME: Craniosacral Technique. Level II; East Lansing Marriott; East Lansing. 40 hours of Category IA credit. Tuition is $1,250, $900 for residents and interns. Course chairperson is Barbara Nimer, D.O. Contact the Office of CME: (800) 437-0001, or (517) 353-9714, cme@com.msu.edu; http://www.com.msu.edu/cme

Calendar of Events

For a complete listing of MSUCOM events, check out our Web calendar: www.com.msu.edu/calendar
Silverfest 2005
Alumni Weekend

Friday, September 9 and
Saturday, September 10, 2005

featuring:
Osteopathic Open
Golf Outing

“Fall Kaleidoscope:
CME for Osteopathic Physicians”

Sponsored by:
Fifth Third Bank
Ingham Regional Medical Center
Metropolitan Hospital
Michigan Osteopathic Association
MSU Federal Credit Union

For further information, please contact Kim Camp, toll free at 877-853-3448 or e-mail camp@msu.edu

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