Of all osteopathic colleges, MSUCOM has the highest success rate in obtaining support through the National Institutes of Health (NIH). Our faculty include world-class researchers such as Justin McCormick and Veronica Maher, co-directors of the Carcinogenesis Laboratory, both of whom have been recognized by NIH as being among the top 5% of all their grant recipients in history.

In studies that include cerebral malaria, hypertension, Parkinson’s disease, bone density, joint function, epilepsy and many more, MSUCOM’s scientists are doing exemplary work.

We are proud of the research leadership in our college, but it’s important that their success not blind us to our own opportunities. As osteopathic physicians, our principles encourage us to deliver the benefits of laboratory research from bench to bedside. It should be our mission to ensure that MSUCOM’s clinical research portfolio experiences the same phenomenal growth that we have produced in our laboratory-based endeavors.

To establish a true research culture, we need to all, at some level, accept our role as physician/scientists. I encourage you to participate in discovering new knowledge day by day:

- Read, read, read, but read critically. Be the doc others turn to for credible and up-to-date information.
- Be alert to clinical anomalies or trends in your practices and check literature and the experience of other physicians to address them.
- Get familiar with the incredible array of medical literature on the Internet—peer-reviewed journals, abstracts, citations, full-text articles. Journal Watch (http://www.jwatch.org) is a great place to start your quest.
- Get some training to add to your research armamentarium. That education could be as simple as a single grantmanship class, or as elaborate as getting an additional degree.
- Network. Find out who is studying what you value, and see if there’s a role for you as a clinician in their research.
- Learn how to become the principal investigator on a clinical project and become a sparkplug to ignite your colleagues.
- Be a role model for osteopathic students, and urge them to follow their own inclinations for discovery.

Our Statewide Campus System, 26 hospitals joined at the hip for osteopathic education, is a nearly perfect infrastructure for clinical research. We’re already organized by discipline. This network could also host the conversations vital to scientific endeavor.

Let’s plant more of these seeds and nurture them into a fully blossoming research culture for MSUCOM. Let’s start now.

William D. Strampel, D.O., Dean
INTRODUCING MSUCOM'S SENIOR ASSOCIATE DEAN

Donald Sefcik

The extensive search for a new senior associate dean is over, with the appointment of Dr. Donald Sefcik to the position effective December 1. The appointment was approved by the Michigan State University Board of Trustees at their October meeting. Sefcik comes to us from Midwestern University’s Chicago College of Osteopathic Medicine (MWU/CCOM) where he has held a variety of leadership positions as the chairperson of their family medicine department, assistant dean for clinical sciences as well associate dean.

“I really take pleasure in academia,” commented Sefcik. “When you are involved in teaching, you’re not only immersed in educating future physicians, you’re also helping make a difference in the care of all the patients they will encounter when they graduate and establish their practices.”

As an ’85 graduate from the Chicago College of Osteopathic Medicine, Sefcik comes with a diverse background. “I’ve been a staff pharmacist, and taught in pharmacy, nursing and physician assistant programs,” said Sefcik. “My diverse background has been very helpful, allowing me to see the connections between the various elements of health care delivery and to foster a better understanding of the big picture. I’ve also been a strong supporter of leadership within the student body. At MWU/CCOM, I designed and lectured in elective courses to cultivate leadership.

“I was drawn to MSUCOM because of your reputation,” continued Sefcik. “My college. I want to get to know the students, faculty and staff that have made this college such a leader in the osteopathic community. I’m excited to be a part of your team and look forward to the challenges of this position.”

“I am quite happy to have Dr. Sefcik on board,” said Dean William Strampel. “His arrival comes at a time when we need additional quality leadership within the college as we work toward expanding into southeast Michigan and reviewing the college’s business plan. He comes to us with a variety of experiences in family medicine and emergency medicine, and is familiar with similar leadership positions. He is a good choice for the college.”

By Craig Reed

D.O. from Chicago College of Osteopathic Medicine in 1985
M.S. in pharmacology from Butler University in 1994
M.B.A. from Purdue University in 2004

NOTED ORGANIZATION AFFILIATIONS:
- American Osteopathic Association
- American College of Osteopathic Family Physicians
- American College of Osteopathic Emergency Physicians
- Illinois Osteopathic Medical Association
- National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants

NOTED AWARDS AND HONORS:
- Student Choice Award (MWU)
- Mentor Hall of Fame Award (AOA)
- Golden Apple Recipient (MWU)

MOST RECENT PREVIOUS JOB:
- Associate Dean for Chicago College of Osteopathic Medicine of Midwestern University

FAMILY:
- Married to Jo Ann Sefcik with one daughter

SNAPSHOT OF DONALD SEFCIK

Associate Deans Selected for Southeast Sites

KARI HORTOS, a 1982 graduate of MSUCOM, served Mt. Clemens General Hospital as vice president of medical education from 1993-2003, and as medical director of Integrated Health and Research from 2003-05. Most recently, she has developed and implemented PATHS for Health, outpatient education and management for healthy weight solutions. “I’ve been involved for many years with medical students in their third and fourth years as well as teaching residents,” said Hortos. “I’m looking forward to working with students during their first two years of medical school at Macomb.” Hortos is a fellow of the American College of Osteopathic Internists and a fellow of the Association of Osteopathic Directors and Medical Educators. She took a Harvard Fellowship in Clinical Nutrition in 1989-90. She has been involved in a number of research programs, particularly assessing the effectiveness of osteopathic manipulative medicine.

“Macomb is a county I know very well, having lived in the area for most of my career. One key element about this expansion is the unique resources available in Macomb County and the Macomb University Center,” said Hortos. “Macomb County has a very community-based system of medicine so we’ll be able to combine quality academic teaching and with practical application of these lessons – giving our students a comprehensive education.”

By Craig Reed

GARY WILLYERD has served as director of medical education at POH Medical Center in Pontiac for 17 years, and as osteopathic director of medical education at St. Joseph Mercy Oakland, Pontiac, since 1999. “MSUCOM has a world-class system for training medical students,” said Willyerd. “It’s a place where students and faculty can connect, and thanks to the Statewide Campus System, it has the capacity to grow so we can expand the class into the Detroit area, and have all of our students continue to learn in Michigan hospitals. Having a site in Detroit will encourage graduates to establish their practices here.”

As a recognized leader in osteopathic education nationally, Willyerd has served as president of the Association of Osteopathic Directors and Medical Educators from 2005 to 2007, and has held numerous offices within osteopathic organizations at local, state and national levels. A 1978 graduate of MSUCOM, he is board certified in emergency medicine, a professor of internal medicine at MSUCOM, and a fellow of the American College of Osteopathic Emergency Physicians and the Association of Osteopathic Directors and Medical Educators.

“Establishing a site at the DMC to train our medical students for the first two years is not going to be without problems, but I’m excited to accept the challenge,” said Willyerd. “One of the biggest challenges I see is ensuring our students have a robust medical school experience. We don’t want them to feel like they are alone despite the use of some distance learning technology. We want them to understand their connection to MSUCOM and to the larger osteopathic community.”

The leadership for both expansion sites in southeast Michigan has been selected. Gary L. Willyerd, D.O., has been appointed as MSUCOM’s interim associate dean for Detroit Medical Center (DMC) and Kari Hortos, D.O., has been named interim associate dean for Macomb University Center (Macomb).
McCabe explores bone development at the cellular level.

**No Bones About It**
Laura McCabe - Osteogenesis Guru

by Craig Reed

When it comes to bone loss, growth and development, Laura McCabe, Ph.D., is an expert in the field.

“I started studying bone formation during my postgraduate work and have been working in the field ever since,” said McCabe. “Bone loss is something we need to be concerned about. About 10 million people in this country have osteoporosis and another 34 million have a milder condition called osteopenia. These numbers are expected to go up. We have a large, aging population, who are not exercising and have chronic diseases which can contribute to bone loss.

“Bone loss makes one more susceptible to debilitating fractures,” explained McCabe. “Over 1.5 million fractures each year occur due to osteoporosis. Twenty percent of elderly who have a hip fracture end up in a nursing home within one year, and 50% never regain full function which can affect their quality of life – being active and doing all the things they want to do.”

McCabe’s research revolves around bone stem cells which, as they develop, can turn into osteoblasts – bone creating cells – or they can become fat cells which play no role in bone development. “As we get older, more of these bone stem cells turn into fat cells rather than osteoblasts,” said McCabe. “So the question we’re trying to answer is whether there is a way to force more of these stem cells to become osteoblasts and make bone.”

McCabe. “We’re currently working on a study comparing the bone density of normal patients with patients with Type I diabetes and so far it looks like, across the board, regardless of age, those with diabetes have a lower bone density than their counterparts.”

Studying the reasons for premature bone loss in Type I diabetics has presented a number of challenges for McCabe. “One of the questions we have asked ourselves is whether bone loss is possibly connected to insulin levels or to the higher glucose levels in their system. This is a challenging question to answer, since insulin levels and glucose levels are interrelated to one another. Fortunately we were able to find special laboratory mice that allowed us to study this problem. Our findings suggest that low insulin levels alone do not cause bone loss and that the consequences of low insulin levels, possibly high blood glucose, are involved in causing the bone pathology.

“With this type of research,” continued McCabe, “you feel a lot like a detective looking at different pieces of the puzzle. We’ve performed experiments to see if stopping bone stem cells from becoming fat cells would increase bone density, and whether the location of the bone in the body and the amount of weight it bears are factors of bone loss. We’ve even studied gender differences in bone loss as well as trying to make osteoblasts live longer so they create more bone during the lifetime. Once we understand which mechanisms are involved, the answer could have wide application for a variety of different diseases and conditions. We’re following several more leads now, studying this at the cellular level all the way up to the patient level. It’s fascinating what we’ve learned already and there’s plenty more for us to uncover.”

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**Spotlight: MSUCOM Extramural Grant Funding**

"Normally your bone is under constant remodeling where there is bone formation and bone resorption (loss of bone due to osteoclasts). To maintain bone density, the formation rate has to be in balance with resorption. However, with aging and diseases, this balance can ‘go out of whack’, resulting in too little formation and/or too much resorption."

One group that suffers a significant amount of bone loss issues are those with Type I diabetes. “In our models of Type I diabetes, we see a lot of fat cell deposits in the bone and a lower amount of bone formation,” noted McCabe.

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**Highlights**
Epilepsy & AIDS: A deadly combination in resource-poor countries

by Gretchen Birbeck
Mazabuka, Zambia

Like most physicians working in Africa, I looked forward to the day that antiretroviral medications would be available to my patients. But I spend much of my time in Zambia caring for people with epilepsy, and paradoxically, the medications available for treating epilepsy here should not be used in combination with the only AIDS treatments available. Who could have anticipated the difficult choices that these life-saving drugs would bring?

I struggle with this reality as I watch Loveness Mwinga exit the HIV Clinic pharmacy and cross the road to enter my sparsely furnished office. She is tired, but seems to be in better spirits than when I first met her. She has been on phenobarbitone for the past year, but recently began to experience seizures again. She was admitted to the Burn Unit, but didn’t help. Before the phenobarbitone, Loveness lived in constant fear of seizure-related injury and public shame.

When the seizures continued, Loveness’ husband relocated her to an older dwelling some distance from her village. She took her meals alone. She prayed for the fits to stop. It was only after she had a seizure while cooking and was admitted to the hospital’s burn unit that someone told her there was a medication that could stop the fits. Since beginning treatment, the seizures rarely occur. Her life has transformed. She has been able to move back into the family home. The other villagers smile and laugh with her again. She and her husband are expecting their first child after the harvest.

As part of her antenatal care, Loveness discovered that she carries the HIV virus. She considers herself fortunate that we have an HIV Clinic here. Loveness’ husband, though not willing to come for testing himself, allows her to come for treatment. She now prays that both the seizure medication and the HIV medication, Triomune, will be in stock when she travels to the clinic for her appointments.

What I contemplate as Loveness sits down across from me is the reality that the two medications she has come to collect, phenobarbitone and Triomune, should not be prescribed together. When taken with phenobarbitone, one of the three anti-AIDS drugs contained in Triomune is maintained at too low a concentration in the body to effectively suppress the HIV virus. This provides the virus an opportunity to develop resistance to this protease inhibitor. In fact, the nevirapine-resistant HIV virus is resistant to all protease inhibitors. So the phenobarbitone-Triomune combination isn’t ideal for Loveness, but protease inhibitors are an important component of many AIDS regimens in use. Our global armamentarium of antiretroviral agents is limited even when cost is not an issue. The public health implications of this combination reach far beyond the borders of Zambia.

At less than $5 per person per year, phenobarbitone is the only anticonvulsant that the Zambian public health sector can afford. Triomune is substantially more expensive at approximately $198 annually, but the second line antiretroviral agent that could be used with phenobarbitone is almost $500/year and a newer antiretroviral medication that would not interact with the AIDS medication is even more expensive. Loveness is not unique. There are 4.6 million people who require antiretroviral treatment in Africa and although exact figures are not available, approximately 42.5 million people in the developing world suffer from epilepsy. The overlap between these groups is not trivial. We see them almost daily in our Epilepsy Clinic.

As part of my future, hypothetical patients who will find themselves with a form of HIV that won’t respond to key treatments.

Dr. Greenman, D.O., was recognized at the American Osteopathic Association’s annual convention in San Diego, California, with the prestigious American Osteopathic Foundation (AOF) Lifetime Achievement Award. The AOF Lifetime Achievement Award is a rarely given award recognizing a recipient’s sustained commitment to the osteopathic profession. Greenman is only the second person to receive such an award.

Greenman came to MSUCOM in 1972 and served more than 25 years in the college in a variety of roles: as the chairperson for the Department of Biomechanics, associate dean, senior associate dean, and professor for the departments of osteopathic manipulative medicine and physical medicine and rehabilitation. He retired in 1998, but has continued to serve as professor emeritus and as chairperson for several continuing medical education courses.

Greenman’s accomplishments have not only influenced MSUCOM, but the osteopathic community as a whole. He was among the first to develop a complete, comprehensive video series on OMT instruction, wrote four books, 10 book chapters, 11 educational modules and innumerable articles, papers and presentations on OMT. He has been recognized worldwide for his expertise in osteopathic medicine, regularly receiving referrals across the globe.
A few years ago, some MSUCOM students approached Prokop with their own question. “A few students were experiencing very high levels of stress – to the point where they were unable to study for their exams – and asked me for help. They were wondering if I knew of a way to take the edge off their stress levels so they could focus on their studies once more. Acupuncture can be used for stress-related conditions. I picked five easily accessible acupuncture points that are traditionally used for stress relief, received permission to use the OMM Lab and started treating volunteers. I also started collecting feedback from hundreds of subjects who have gone through the procedure,” Prokop said. “Thanks to this preliminary information, we can seek funding from NCCAM and start this research.”

“Acupuncture is becoming more a part of mainstream Western medicine,” continued Prokop. “It has been used for thousands of years in some areas of the world, but we don’t understand how it works. We’re involved in level three drug trials, said Williams, “which is where drugs are looked at for side-effects and to ensure they are as effective as other drugs already on the market. Once Carol finds a good candidate, I ask them if they would be interested being part of a trial. A lot of our patients want to help further research in this field and sign up. Some join the trials because all traditional options have been exhausted and their condition is declining. We’ve put some people into these trials and have witnessed miraculous recoveries — bringing them back from death’s door. It’s an amazing thing to witness. We’re very careful with our patients in these trials. At the first sign patients are not doing as well as they should, we pull them out.”

“Thanks to our involvement in research,” said Gulick, “we have access to three categories of drugs that are unavailable to other clinics. This gives us a tremendous advantage when treating patients with strains of HIV that have developed drug resistance. We’re also working with Massachusetts General to study the genetics of HIV-positive patients whom we know have the virus, but their bodies have been able to fight the virus without the assistance of medications. “This clinic is unique for the mid-Michigan area,” continued Gulick. “We have the knowledge needed to manage the health of those with HIV and/or hepatitis. We’re the only clinic in the area that has the experience to comfortably treat co-infected patients. We make a difference in the lives of people in mid-Michigan, giving them a second lease on life, and thanks to our research, we make a difference beyond the borders of Michigan as well.”
Backgrounds in Research

Research is an activity not limited just to those in Ph.D. programs. Many of the first-year students at MSUCOM had considerable experience in the field before they came through the doors of Fee Hall.

COOKING UP BIOFUELS

When you think of “biofuels,” you often think about corn being turned into ethanol, a substance that can be used to fuel our cars and other machinery. But did you ever wonder what goes on behind the scenes? That’s what Zubair Ahammad had an opportunity to see.

“I worked two years at the National Corn Ethanol Research Center in Edwardsville, Illinois,” said Zubair. “They have what’s called a ‘pilot plant,’ a facility that acts as an intermediate step for processes designed in the laboratory that are being upscaled to be used on an industrial level. The facility and its team works on optimizing processes for industrial use, testing different ideas and concepts, and working out the bugs.”

Starting out as a plant operator, Zubair, whose undergraduate studies focused on engineering, was eventually given the opportunity to be a project manager. “When you process corn, there are more possible byproducts than just ethanol. You can also produce things like cattle food, oils, fibers as well as corn syrup. If you optimize the process to produce as much ethanol as you possibly can, you reduce the amount and quality of the other products you are able to produce. If you go the other way and optimize the process to create a wider variety of products, you gain the security of having a more diverse number of products, but the process is overall more expensive.”

“Working with biofuels was great,” continued Zubair. “It was a wonderful experience, but I always saw myself going to medical school. I’ve worked and volunteered in the ER and the OR at Ingham Regional Medical Center for a while now. It’s been exciting for me so far. Working in medicine is where I see myself staying for the long term.”

GETTING YOUR “A”

Imagine for a moment that you accept a job in Bangladesh working on a research project focused on women and child health. When you arrive, they assign you the task of organizing all 250,000 patient records for their multi-year study. That was a challenge Adam Hunt faced during one of his research adventures.

“The research was looking at the effects of vitamin A supplements on the infant and maternal mortality rates,” said Adam. Bangladesh has maternal and infant death rates that are manyfold higher than in the United States. “This was quite a large study. Each woman in the study had on average seven interview forms that were filled out while they were pregnant as part of the research. My job was to organize all of this. It was crazy. In the end, I decided to organize it all just like you would at a doctor’s office, including bar codes, patient numbers, etc. It took me a year and a half to complete the process.

“The experience was like nothing else I have ever done,” continued Adam. “I am certainly glad that I chose to go over there. However, if I were faced with a similar proposal, I am not sure I would be able to do it again. The hours were grueling, the work was tough, and there was really nowhere to go to get away from it. The capital, Dhaka, had a Pizza Hut and even a bowling alley, but it was a seven-hour drive. I am very happy to have had the opportunity, though.”

Back in the United States, Adam found other adventures working in operating rooms. “I worked at St. John Hospital. My job was to make certain there were neutral responses in the legs and arms while the surgeon was working usually somewhere near the spine. When a surgeon was getting too close to a nerve during the surgery, it was my job to let the surgeon know when I started seeing indications of this on my end. I was involved in more than 100 surgeries. I’m probably going into internal medicine rather than surgery, but experiencing the OR was a great opportunity.”

FIELD RESEARCH

With MSU being a major agricultural university, it should be no surprise to find students who completed their undergraduate degree here while testing out their green thumbs, as Sara Lutz did.

“I saw a job posting online for a research assistant position working with wheat. Until then, I had been involved in swimming, training and coaching swim teams as well as playing water polo myself. I wanted to do something different and working with wheat in greenhouses and out in the field was something I wanted to give a try.”

Wheat, like many crops, has a number of fungi and other pests that will attack the crop if given the opportunity. Sara’s job involved looking for which strains of wheat they had planted were the most resistant to these invaders.

“I meticulously measured each plant, its height, the size of the wheat heads it produced as well as checked for signs of different infestations, and taking care of the wheat,” said Sara. “The research was in two phases. The first phase involved using the greenhouses where we’d aggressively expose the wheat to various pests at far higher levels than what is normal. In the second phase we would plant the wheat out in the fields where it was subject to more natural levels of pests.

“I’ve found myself involved in more than just wheat research over the years,” continued Sara. “I was a guinea pig for some brain function research where they would put me inside an MRI for hours while asking me to push different buttons. I love signing up to be a test subject. I like keeping really busy and trying a lot of different things is one of the ways I do this.”
Future Leaders of Research

For some medical students, research is a passion to which they dedicate themselves as soon as they arrive on the MSU campus. MSUCOM’s D.O./Ph.D. program offers an opportunity for such individuals to hone their skills in the realms of medicine and research simultaneously—producing highly-trained graduates who will become the future leaders in medical research.

INTERNATIONAL IMPACT

While still working on his first year in the D.O./Ph.D program, Youssef Kousa is hardly a stranger to research and exploration. “I spent time exploring different urban parks, examining biodiversity in people’s backyards,” explained Youssef. “I was part of a team that was responsible for identifying all the different types of bees, ants and wasps found in local parks and recreational areas. In addition to the thrill of discovery and the scientific process, the counties we worked in then presented our findings to the local community as a way to spawn interest in preserving urban landscapes important to these creatures’ survival.”

Working on another diversity research endeavor, Youssef has also had the opportunity to explore plant-microbe symbiotic relationships. “Research has often focused on pathogenic organisms, but there are many that are actually helpful to the plant. We found a host of bacteria and fungi that live in mutual benefit with the plants we studied.”

Youssef has also had an opportunity to do some paleontology investigation before coming to MSUCOM. “I worked at a fossil site in China during one summer,” he said. “Uncovering fossils is very tedious work. You have to be careful not to accidentally damage fossils in the process of trying to find them. I wasn’t really expecting to find anything, but before the summer was over, I found a nearly complete fish fossil that was estimated to be 125 million years old. It was incredible!”

As part of MSUCOM, Youssef is planning on working closely with Dr. Andrea Amalitano exploring possible vaccines for malaria. “This project is something I am really hoping to work on over the next four or five years. The idea is to explore whether methods can be developed that can help the body establish a defense to the organisms that cause malaria. If this can be done effectively, it could help the body’s immune system recognize and respond to the malaria parasite itself. Malaria kills so many people every year. I know I’ve got a lot of work ahead of me, but if we develop something effective, this could make a positive impact on millions of people across the globe for a very long time to come. Dr. Amalitano has been a tremendous asset to my education and a real mentor, and I am really looking forward to learning more about malaria and following his outstanding example.”

GENETIC CONNECTIONS

During the first three years in the D.O./Ph.D. program, students focus primarily on classes and academics. Once they hit their fourth year, as Eric Schauberger has, the focus of their studies begins to shift.

“I’m spending a lot more time on my own in the lab now. It’s quite different from last year when I was hanging out and studying with the other medical students,” said Eric.

Eric’s research is looking at possible connections between asthma and genetics. “We’re working with people from Isle Wight, which is an island off the south tip of the United Kingdom. It’s a small, but not so isolated island where we’re collecting our data. Since we’re looking into the genes involved in asthma and not environment, it was important for us to find a population that was living in an area that doesn’t have a lot of smog or pollution.

“Asthma is essentially a great chain reaction where the immune system goes overboard. We’re comparing the genetics of people who have asthma on the island with those who do not show any signs of asthma,” said Eric. “This comparison should show us where those differences are located in the genome. So far, there are indications that multiple genes may be involved. The challenge for us is to find out which genes are the main culprits.”

This asthma research is unique in that all participants have been enrolled in the study before they were born. “The children were enrolled prenatally and are now 17 years old,” explained Eric. “This has given us a huge amount of longitudinal data to work with – to look at when they developed asthma as they were growing up.”

When not in his laboratory, Eric is actively involved in the promotion of research. “Every five years or so, curricula like the D.O./Ph.D. program have to be evaluated. I’m working with administrators on how to make our program stronger. I’m also involved in the American Physician Scientist Association, a newly formed national student group for those students across the country involved in medical research. I just recently became the national policy chair for the organization. It’s a lot of work. All of us are busy with our own things, but being an advocate for research is important.”

MIGRATION OF THOUGHT

Jayme Mancini is at an exciting point in her life. She will be graduating this year with her D.O. degree and her Ph.D. “I finished up my Ph.D. last summer, and I’m now finishing up my rotations for my D.O. degree,” explained Jayme. “I’ll actually have my last required rotation completed a little earlier than most.”

As Jayme prepares to graduate, she leaves MSUCOM with several years of experience in neuroscience. “I’ve been studying development of the cerebellum – specifically the granule cells inside. These cells are supposed to migrate and then mature into neurons, but frequent prenatal exposure to methylmercury from seafood, for example, can affect these granule cell’s ability to move in the brain, creating problems. What I have been doing is looking at how methylmercury changes molecular and ionic dynamics within the cell during migration.”

Despite the intense demands of the program, Jayme has been able to find balance in her life. “I like to do a lot of outdoor sports – go biking, traveling, hiking or anything that gets me outside. I’ve been doing these things throughout the program, often with the Wilderness Medical Club. It’s helped me relax and deal with whatever comes up.”

“Looking back on my career as a student,” continued Jayme, “it was a great experience for me. I was drawn to the program because I believe strongly in the holistic approach D.O.s take with their patients, and that focus made a significant difference for me.”

As for her future plans, Jayme already has a clear goal. “I want to specialize in pediatric neurology. I had the opportunity to do a rotation with a pediatric neurologist to see what my life could look like,” said Jayme. “When the rotation was complete, I thought ‘this is going to be great.’”

Jayme investigates the relationship between mercury and the development of the cerebellum.

Eric hopes his research can explain the connection between asthma and genetics.
For nearly 30 years, Suzanne Kohler has been working diligently in the labs of researchers, helping in her own way to make each discovery possible. “I’m the laboratory manager at MSUCOM’s Carcinogenesis Lab,” explained Kohler. “I am responsible for organizing all the laboratory’s resources which include supplies, space, people, equipment and funding. I work with Dr. Justin McCormick and Dr. Veronica Maher – both of whom are wonderful and a privilege to work for. Every day, I’m involved in research that makes a difference in the lives of everyday people.”

Married with three teenage children, Kohler still finds time between work and family to pursue one passion in her life: creating video productions. “At the end of each sport season at Okemos High School, I create videos for the athletes and their parents,” she explained. “It’s a labor of love for me.”

Kohler has another pursuit she’s quite enthusiastic about – recycling. “At home, we recycle and compost everything we can. Our family produces only one or two kitchen-size trash cans of waste each week,” she said. “I’ve even taken our efforts one step further by including the other laboratories in our building. It feels really worthwhile to take responsibility and recycle as much as possible.”

Where are they now?

Dr. Lynn Brumm

The name “Lynn Brumm” is one that is familiar to most students, faculty and staff who are a part of MSUCOM. There is a plaque outside of the OMM lab honoring him for “his compassion and professional care” from Jason and Danica Woolley, who funded the lab in appreciation for the time Brumm spent treating Mr. Woolley while he was a professional hockey player for the Detroit Red Wings.

You’ll see him in his office on the second floor of West Fee, in campus training rooms treating student athletes, teaching medical students and frequently attending MSUCOM events with his wife, Amelia, who is a retired social worker and an MSU graduate. What you may not realize is that Brumm has been retired since 1997.

“I was an osteopathic family physician for 24 years in my hometown of Sharon, Pennsylvania,” said Brumm. “In 1977, Dr. Philip Greenman, then the associate dean for MSUCOM, recruited me to become the chairperson for the Department of Family Medicine.”

So what keeps a gentleman like Brumm actively involved with MSUCOM well into his retirement years? It dates back to 1978 when he, along with Drs. Lon Hoover and Greenman began treating MSU athletes. Brumm acquired an international reputation by using osteopathic manual medicine to assist elite athletes. “When I retired from my academic duties, the athletic department asked me to continue as an osteopathic consultant for the Department of Intercollegiate Athletics, which I have continued doing to this day,” said Brumm.

It was during this time that Brumm began to question if somatic structure restrictions contribute to the high incidence of stress fractures. “Four years ago, Dr. Steven Dupuis and I began a clinical study of structural abnormalities and their relation to stress fractures in cross-country runners and women’s basketball athletes,” said Brumm. “During this time, MSUCOM students from the Undergraduate American Academy of Osteopathy became active in the project by volunteering their time for hours of training in structural diagnosis and treatment, and spending hours in the training room examining and treating athletes under our direct supervision.”

Brumm says, “It is an absolute thrill watching our students interacting with the athletes and performing at such a high level. After observing them, I can assure you that the future of the osteopathic profession is in good hands.”

While Brumm continues to play a pivotal role is the stress fracture study, he and his wife have an active life together. Fifteen years ago they built their house and turned the backyard into a designated “Backyard Wildlife Habitat.” They enjoy watching the antics of the wildlife that visit.

Brumm has also spent the past three years publishing and promoting Amelia’s first book, The Voice of the Healer, which is a collection of her short writings. “We have been blessed with good health and good friends,” said Brumm. “We play golf together, are involved in the community and active in our church. We are most fortunate.”

Legislative Flu Shots

In November, Michigan legislators and their staff received their annual flu jab at MSUCOM’s Flu Shot at the Capitol. Students, under the watchful eyes of faculty, administered the shots to legislators while giving them a sample of the osteopathic touch.
Slavery to Freedom: An American Odyssey
The Eighth Annual Visiting Faculty Lecture Series
Thursdays, February 7 through 28, 2008

The award-winning series “Slavery to Freedom: An American Odyssey” highlights persons who have become icons of the American struggle for civil rights. This year we will honor the 40th anniversary of Dr. Martin Luther King’s death. We are pleased to host these notable scholars who, in addition to making these public presentations, will also dedicate time to teaching MSU students on campus. All presentations will be at 5 p.m. at the Kellogg Center, Michigan State University.

Sibling Rivalry and the Children of Abraham
February 7, 2008
The Rev. Dr. Jeremiah A. Wright Jr.
SENIOR PASTOR, TRINITY UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST, CHICAGO

Tensions among Muslims, Christians and Jews seem to be growing worldwide, polarizing some people of faith and leading others to believe religion is far more divisive than uniting. What can people of peace – regardless of creed or color – do to heal these wounds?

Social Change and Student Power
February 14, 2008
The Rev. Charles Sherrod
CO-FOUNDER AND FIELD SECRETARY OF THE STUDENT NONVIOLENT COORDINATING COMMITTEE

Young people were powerful motivators for positive change during the beginning of America’s Civil Rights Movement. What forces enslave students today, and how can they break free to help shape a healthy future for themselves and their children?

From Campus to Choir: Finding Reunio
February 21, 2008
The Rev. Dr. Frederick D. Haynes III
SENIOR PASTOR, FRIENDSHIP-WEST BAPTIST CHURCH, DALLAS

The planet today is full of competing voices of self-interest, creating worldwide peril. How can we develop a generation of leaders who can create harmony out of discord, organizing our different pitches and rhythms into a chorus of enlightened mutual interest?

Embracing Africa: The Cultural Pang
February 28, 2008
Bishop Vashti Murphy McKenzie
PRESIDING PRELATE, THIRTEENTH EPISCOPAL DISTRICT, AFRICAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH

Just as Africa was at the center of the ancient land mass of Pangaea, it also is at the center of much of American culture. How can we, in the twenty-first century, build bridges both to ease Africa’s burdens and to learn again its strengths of community, faith, resilience and respect for nature?

SILVERFEST TAILGATE: MSUCOM alumni bound for the MSU vs. Pittsburgh football game started off the day right with the Silverfest Tailgate, enjoying brunch with their fellow alumni. Above Photo: Ken Stringer, Jim Cook, Ruth Worthington, Sparty, Randy DeArment, Penny Cook, Shirley Harding, Stan Miller

Where are you?

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AOA LUNCHEON:
Alumni took a break from the conference to join us for the MSUCOM alumni luncheon at the AOA convention in October. Right Photo: Back row: Larry Endres, Susan Sevensma, Gary Willyerd, Edward Haughn, Risty Kollivas, Dave Levine, Front row: Tony Duker, Ken Richter, Craig Magnatta
Among the osteopathic colleges in the nation, MSUCOM is a leader in research. The progressive expansion of our D.O./Ph.D. program, the increasing number of endowed research chairs at the college have all contributed to our steady growth in this arena. We have renowned physician scientists such as alumnus Andrea Amalfi-tano who are bringing the principles of osteopathic medicine to the study of genetics and pediatrics. In a realm where the art of preventive care can provide new insights and the potential to see connections between two or more seemingly unrelated conditions.

Amalfi-tano has a favorite saying about his investigations into genetically-related diseases. He says that through his genetic research, he is able to get the holistic view of an entire family, going back several generations or more. This mind frame fits well into our preventive approach to medicine — looking for possible problems before they become a full-blown illness — and takes the concept of “treating the whole person” to a new level.

Among all the medical colleges involved in research, osteopathic colleges currently lag behind their M.D. counterparts in terms of funding and the number of MSU researchers involved, but each year, that gap continues to shrink. It is critical that our contribution continues to grow – giving a voice to research focused on the art of preventive, osteopathic care.

Research is helping to improve office-based medical practice as it has uncovered the benefits of the Patient Centered Medical Home (PCMH). Conceived by physicians in 1967, PCMH is the latest iteration of a concept to improve health care delivery in the physician office and is the newest tool in the physician’s arsenal to improve patient care and satisfaction. With third-party payers now expressing interest in the concept – the Blue Cross Blue Shield Association signed on in fall 2007 – success feels closer than ever.

The PCMH is a comprehensive approach to patient care, focusing on the process by which health care is delivered in the physician office as well as the clinical care to be provided to the patient. It creates greater responsibility for both the physician and the patient and adopts “population-based care,” so the role of the physician is no longer to wait for the patient to present with symptoms, but rather to reach out to the patient to assure periodic monitoring of health status. It examines how advances in information technology can be used to improve patient care and it reestablishes the role of the physician as the patient’s advocate and organizer of health care regardless of the care setting.

It will be a long road to achieve PCMH-based physician practices. The Michigan Osteopathic Association (MOA) has established the MOA Center for Practice Transformation to assist members along that road. One major obstacle is financial recognition by third-party payers. The PCMH concept paper is clear that physicians must be adequately compensated for their investment in improved patient care. This is an obstacle that the MOA will take on and has already initiated discussions with BCBSM and other major payers. BCBSM has made strides toward the PCMH through their Physicians Group Incentive Plan (PGIP). Thus far, this initiative has only been extended to physicians coalesced in Physician Organizations (POs). MOA is working to extend this program to all Michigan physicians.

In any social organization, the period of greatest chaos is when the old rules break down and the new rules are not yet in place. This is the position in which the health care system currently finds itself. The old system is unsustainable and the new system is not yet in place. The PCMH offers promise as that new system. It reasserts the physician-patient relationship as the focal point of care and reestablishes health promotion and disease management as the tools of cost containment.

Much work remains to be done to reach the PCMH. It is a concept that is old fashioned and thoroughly modern. Patients, physicians and third-party payers will all have to undergo a cultural change to reach that goal. But there are major social forces that will continue to push all the participants toward that goal: it is better for the patients and the third-party payers. Not coincidentally, it is also in harmony with the principles of osteopathic medicine.
Give and Take: The Cycle of Giving and Receiving

By Amanda Maas and Craig Reed

Scholarships are a mechanism for supporting the osteopathic community – whether one is a recipient using the funds for medical education or the generous donor providing the much needed support. The image of a “donor” has changed over the years with the recent creation of the Student Osteopathic Medical Association (SOMA) endowed scholarship – a scholarship created by current medical students. “We knew that we had extra funds available and wanted to find the best way to use them,” said Tim Long, a third-year student and former SOMA treasurer who was involved in the scholarship’s creation. “We looked at different options, and with the assistance and support of MSUCOM faculty, including Dr. William Falls and our advisor, Dr. Mark Gugel, we decided to create an endowed scholarship.”

The SOMA endowed scholarship is the first MSUCOM scholarship ever created by a student organization and the first established by a SOMA chapter anywhere in the country. “Part of the national SOMA mission is to promote osteopathic ideals and to educate future osteopathic physicians,” said Amanda Minich, a third-year student and former SOMA president who also helped create the scholarship. “We felt that an endowed scholarship, which can be given each year to MSUCOM students for tuition, was the best way to use our funds to support what our organization stands for. This scholarship will be here forever as a mark we have left on the college.”

Scholarships are also a chance to link donors with recipients with similar interests. Take the Allen W. Jacobs Memorial Scholarship, which is awarded to students pursuing careers in sports medicine. “Al was always the happiest when he was helping other people succeed,” said Kris Jacobs, who established the scholarship in her late husband’s name. “He was a visionary and very involved in sports medicine. It was important to him to be more than just a physician, but to be a teacher and involved in the community. He would have wanted a scholarship so he could continue to help students.”

“I love playing sports and I really enjoy interacting with athletes,” said Shannon Camp, a fourth-year student and this year’s recipient of the scholarship. “I know that we at MSUCOM support what our organization stands for. This scholarship will be here forever as a mark we have left on the college.”

The cycle of giving and receiving is an important part of supporting the osteopathic community. Donors reaching out to recipients, who strengthen the profession and become donors themselves to support the D.O.s of the future.

Kris Jacobs (left) with Shannon Camp, 2008 recipient of the Allen W. Jacobs Memorial Scholarship

For a complete listing of MSUCOM events check out our Web calendar: www.com.msu.edu/calendar

FEBRUARY

7, 14, 21, 28 “Slavery to Freedom: An American Odyssey” – Kellogg Hotel and Conference Center, East Lansing. Every Thursday in February, distinguished educators visit MSU to discuss African-American history and culture. See page 16 for more information.

MARCH

13 CME: “Manual Medicine Related to Sports & Occupational Injuries to the Extremities” – 24 hours of Category 1A credit. Early bird tuition is $700; full tuition is $900. Chairpersons are Philip Greenman, D.O., F.A.A.O., and Jennifer Gilmore, D.O.; Windmill Inn, Tucson AZ. Contact Jan Falls or Meghan Tappy at (517) 353-9714, or fallsj@msu.edu.

18 CME: Seminar in the Sun – “Healthy Lifestyle and Preventive Care: Future Directions” – 20 hours of Category 1A credit. Punta Cana, Dominican Republic. General topics include vaccination recommendations, update, cancer prevention update, geriatrics, malabsorption. For more information, visit www.com.msu.edu.

APRIL

1-3 CME: “Craniosacral Technique Part I” – 36 hours of Category 1A credit. Windmill Inn, Tucson, AZ. Early bird tuition is $1200; full tuition is $1400. Chairperson is Barbara Briner, D.O. Contact Jan Falls or Meghan Tappy at (517) 353-9714, or fallsj@msu.edu.

18 CME: “Principles of Manual Medicine” – 36 hours of category 1A credit. Marriott, East Lansing, MI. Early bird tuition is $950; full tuition is $1150. Chairperson is Sherman Gorbis, D.O. Contact Jan Falls or Meghan Tappy at (517) 353-9714, or fallsj@msu.edu.

MAY

1 MSUCOM Hooding and Commencement Ceremony – 11:00 a.m. – Wharton Center, MSU campus.

9 CME: “Sports Medicine 2008” – 8 hours of category 1A credit. Radisson Hotel, Lansing, MI. Tuition TBA. Chairperson is Larry Nassar, D.O. Contact Jan Falls or Meghan Tappy at (517) 353-9714, or fallsj@msu.edu.
2008 MOCF BALL

Puttin’ on the Glitz

Saturday, February 23, 2008
Six O’Clock p.m.
Ritz-Carlton, Dearborn

$200 per person - $2,000 per table of ten

RSVP due February 1, 2008.
Overnight accommodations at the Ritz-Carlton, Dearborn are available by contacting (800) 241-3333 no later than January 23, 2008. Request the “MSU/MOCF Ball” reservation block in order to reserve the discounted group rate.

If you desire further information please contact MSUCOM at (517) 355-9616.