

STUDENT D.O. UPDATE!

NEWSLETTER DATE

AACOM Capitol Hill Day 2005!

by Travis Brown OSUCOM



Pictured above are some of the executive officers of COSGP for 2004-2005. Left to right:: Staphanie Griffith, BJ Ho, Emily Hurst, David Keller, John Litell, Victoria Hutto, Brian Yee and Matthew Miller.

This year's AACOM Capitol Hill Day is set for Wednesday, June 22, 2005. The Capitol Hill day is an annual event where both students and teachers of osteopathic medicine can come to the beautiful city of Washington, DC to speak to their representatives about issues related to medical education. Students will first receive a briefing on the issues of importance, and will then meet with members of Congress and their staff to discuss their concerns.

This year's June Capitol Hill Day is later than last year's April date. This is because AACOM has their annual meeting in June. Moving the date to June allows COSGP to participate in the meetings, and also allows for a larger portion of AACOM's constituency group to participate in Capitol Hill Day.

Reauthorization of the Higher Education Act of 1965 will likely be the focus of the lobbying efforts. Title IV of the Act provides for William D. Ford Direct Loan, the Federal Stafford Loan and Federal Perkins Loan programs. These are three of the most used financial aid loans utilized by osteopathic medical students. According to the AACOM website, "more than 86% of osteopathic students have subsidized loans under the Direct or Federal Stafford Loan programs and approximately 83% have borrowed funds through the unsubsidized program". The Higher Education Act expired on September 30, 2002.



NBOME Update !

by John Cromwell, WVSOM

During the spring meeting in Ft Lauderdale, Dr. Boyd Buser Chairman of NBOME (National Board of Osteopathic Medical Examiners) gave a presentation on some of the new things that were happening with the Osteopathic Boards. Here is the news that he gave us. First of all the final paper and pencil Level I exam will be given in June. After this starting in July - Level 2, August - Level 3, and in September Level - 1 will all go on line as computer based exams. The new exam will be 400 items approximately and be only 1 day of testing. Before giving the exam the testing center will give the candidates a brief orientation to their system. The exam fees will be increasing to \$445 for Level 1, \$445 for Level 2, and \$595 for Level 3. Each exam will be delivered at least once per month and up to 40 times per year. Thompson Prometric will be providing the sites for the exam and you can check online at www.2test.com to find the closest site to you. A FAQ sheet should be available soon pertaining to these changes at the NBOME website - www.nbome.org. Moving on to the Level 2 PE exam, Dr. Buser said that scores should start to be released beginning on March 10th. From then on the PE scores should be mailed to the candidates after 10-12 weeks. Concerning the Level 2 CE exam, registration will be available on April 1st. You will be able to schedule the exam up to 6 months ahead of time. These scores will be available after 4 weeks and will be mailed out to the candidates. The scores will be in 3 and 2 digit standard scores and there will not be any percentile scores given anymore.

The Combined Match Issue Addressed by COSGP by Leslie Reddell Houston

A Combined AOA- NRMP (National Residency Matching Program) Match has remained a hot topic at all the colleges of osteopathic medicine (COMs) over the past few years. With the closing of more community-based osteopathic hospitals and with the growth of the osteopathic profession through the opening of new COMs, opportunities in osteopathic graduate medical education (GME) appear to be dwindling or at the very least, limited. Especially when statistics have demonstrated that the majority of AOA-accredited GME programs are located within 6 states and geography remains a major influencing factor affecting a graduate's preference for residency programs, a combined match would help facilitate the training opportunities available for all osteopathic medical graduates.

At this last COSGP General Council meeting, Brad Lancaster, a 2006 DO/MPH candidate at UNTHSC-Texas College of Osteopathic Medicine, presented statistically significant data regarding where past and current osteopathic graduates match for residency and factors affecting applications to AOA-accredited programs. Student Doctor Lancaster, having completed the Osteopathic Health Policy Internship and currently serving on the American Medical Association Council on Legislation, came before the council as a concerned student interested in the match process. He stated, "the current system creates the incentive for many osteopathic graduates to rank only ACGME programs (via NRMP) and not rank any AOA Programs" since students applying to both AOA and ACGME programs are withdrawn from the NRMP match once matching to an AOA program. The core principle of a combined match should be a "true" match, a match where students rank programs, both AOA and ACGME, in a single preference order reflecting the student's true desire to attend the listed programs. Student Doctor Lancaster continued to provide insight into the combined match issue as well as offered suggestions to advance the growth and development of the osteopathic profession throughout the council's meeting. In addition, an electronic copy of S/D Lancaster's presentation was supplied to all the Student Government President's to take back to their respective campuses.

COSGP, dedicated to representing all osteopathic medical students, authored a resolution in support of a combined match based on an informal student survey, information brought before the council from the individual COMs, and the presentation made by Student Doctor Lancaster. This resolution will be going before the 2005 AOA House of Delegates in July. While AOA Executives clearly voice their disapproval of a combined match and insist they will not be pursuing the issue, COSGP is dedicated to representing the student voice to the AOA throughout the years to come. While a combined

match process does not appear feasible for the Class of 2006, COSGP will continue to emphasize this issue as well as provide viable alternates through suggestions of more AOA-accredited/Dual-accredited programs in areas lacking significant osteopathic GME opportunities and osteopathic GME programs in specialty fields! As a united voice, students can make a difference as we truly represent the future of the osteopathic profession!

Resources regarding the combined match, courtesy of the research provided by Brad Lancaster, can be found at the following:

AOA Match Information

http://do-online.osteotech.org/index.cfm?PageID=sir_matchprotocol

AOA Match (NMS Website)

<http://www.natmatch.com/aoairp/>

NRMP Website

<http://www.nrmp.org/index.html>

San Francisco Match Website

<http://www.sfmatch.org/>

Urology Match (ACGME) Website

<http://www.auanet.org/residents/resmatch.cfm>

AOA Opportunities Database of AOA approved GME

http://do-online.osteotech.org/index.cfm?PageID=sir_oppmain

AMA FREIDA Database of ACGME approved GME

<http://www.ama-assn.org/ama/pub/category/2997.html>



AOA Focuses on Its Vision for the Future of Osteopathic Research

by Matthew Miller, LECOM

In December the AOA's first Research Task Force gathered to formulate a directional plan for the future of osteopathic research. The task force came to be following Dr. George Thomas' appointment of its members at the AOA Research Forum during the AOA Convention in November. The group met in December to formulate a directional plan which would outline the profession's role in osteopathic medical research. Included in this group were medical school deans, research administrators, and a student.

In the task force's plan, there are three focus points which help to concentrate the AOA's intention to help promote osteopathic research. The first and largest focus point is the direct funding of research projects, training and research centers. The second point, most important to students, focuses on the advocacy for appropriate research training at all levels of medical education. Finally, research leadership and political advocacy round out the priorities for the AOA's future of osteopathic research.

One of the important points the AOA wants to focus on is the allocation of funding to various research projects. The task force stresses in its plan that any money allocated from the AOA will be used only for the purpose of the promotion of osteopathic medicine. Topics included in this broad realm include mechanisms of action of osteopathic manipulative medicine (OMM), efficacy of OMM, physician/patient interactions, cost effectiveness of OMM, and methods of teaching. Any money allocated from AOA is intended to be used as seed money for start-up research projects. It is expected that once the project has utilized this initial funding, it will seek other resources for project maintenance. The AOA has

agreed to observe the selected projects and provide support for their auxiliary staff to ensure that the work is fulfilled to completion. In its new emphasis on research, the AOA has also set a goal to investigate funding for advanced student, resident and junior faculty clinical research training.

There are other points mentioned by the task force plan that specifically address student research. The AOA plans to endorse certain research competencies appropriate to each level of osteopathic medical education. Initial research on these minimal competencies has begun with the work at the Osteopathic Research Center (ORC) in Ft. Worth, TX, however great detail will need to be defined at a later time. To further its goal of implementing research into medical education, the AOA will address the incorporation of osteopathic research into the accreditation process, run by the commission on osteopathic college accreditation (COCA). Ultimately, research questions could show up on the COMLEX exams, however this likelihood is a long time off.

In its last main mission, the AOA intends to provide opportunities for leadership in osteopathic medical education. It would like to increase communication among colleges regarding research and provide updates to the profession on the successes of osteopathic research projects. The AOA will collaborate with other professional and educational groups, including AACOM, to provide continuity and collaboration in research topic areas. As has been done in the past, the AOA will continue to reward the efforts of those students and physicians who participate in osteopathic medical research.

It is clear that the profession is making a true commitment to enhancing the research behind the methodology of osteopathic practices. The next few years will prove to be a turning point for osteopathic medical research. To help in the efforts of the AOA, COSGP has created an ad hoc committee on medical education and research which will serve to further student contributions to osteopathic research. Students can anticipate exciting opportunities to come of the work of the AOA and COSGP.



Osteopathic Electronic Residency Application Service (ERAS) Update!

by Nathan J Neufeld, OMS I

The process of applying to residency or internship programs as an osteopath in the past was an arduous and meticulous process. In recent years the American Osteopathic Association has worked to address the need for a centralized streamlined way to better help medical school seniors apply for residencies and internships. As a result, in 2004 they decided to partner up with the Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC) and use their Electronic Residency Application Service (ERAS).

At the spring meeting of the Council of Osteopathic Student Government Presidents (COSGP) in Fort Lauderdale the Director of ERAS and the Assistant Vice President of the AAMC, Moira H. Edwards, presented to the council an update on how ERAS works for osteopathic students.

As the web based program incorporates osteopathic programs its goals remain the same: to provide a smooth implementation of residency or internship placement, to minimize changes, and to maximize the student's experience. ERAS presently accomplishes these goals by providing the applicant a means of applying to all programs with a single application, which is quickly and securely delivered to all programs. In addition, there is online tracking of all application components, direct communication with residency or internship programs, and easy integration of all documentation from schools and the National Board of Osteopathic Medical Examiners (NBOME).

All graduating seniors will receive from their schools an individual code of identification known as a "token" – commonly miss-understood to be an actual physical coin such as one used in casinos. Once a token has been acquired the applicant may log on to the web program as soon as July 1st and begin establishing their account profile. Each individual's ERAS account will contain personal data pertaining to COMLEX scores, AOA student number (if applicable), letters of recommendation, and other pertinent documentation; all in one place on the web. Most of the applicant's information can be continually updated and or changed throughout the application season.

The cost for this service is \$60 for the first 10 programs in one specialty; with varying rates for additional programs. The average osteopathic applicant applies to approximately 22 programs and spends approximately \$255 per application season. If you have any more questions please check out the ERAS website for more information <http://www.aamc.org/students/eras/start.htm>.

School updates

TCOM

Leslie Reddell - The closing of Osteopathic medical Center was a blow to osteopathic residencies in Texas. The facility was purchased by TCOM recently and doubled the campus size of the school. A master plan analysis instituted by the school will develop future plans for the property. Dustin Tauferner discussed the planning and execution of the preclinician ceremony which is a bridge ceremony between 2nd and 3rd year. Additional information was distributed for other schools to fund similar programs through the Arnold P. Gold foundation.

AZCOM

James Chung provided a synopsis of Team Osteopathic Physicals for Students (TOPS). The program originally developed 30 years ago by Dr. Paul Steingard is a network of physicians and students who provide pre-participation physicals for student athletes. This year's activity provided 1908 physicals for 60 schools that included physical exams to male and female patients. Further diagnostic testing including ECG and ECHO identified athletes in danger of hypertrophic cardiomyopathy, a cause of sudden death in this population.

WUCOM

Karrie Berg informed the council on changes at WUCOM. Clinton Adams was named dean of the school on January 3rd. A northwest health tract newly instituted includes students from Washington, Oregon, Idaho, Montana, Wyoming and Alaska. Students are

brought to the campus for two years of didactics and then return to their respective states for clinical rotations. WUCOM students will soon have housing consisting of a 100 unit dormitory located close to campus. Finally, curriculum changes include a 4 week and 8 week anatomy program which provides additional instruction for incoming freshmen.

KCUMB - COM

Matthew Bentley from KCUMB - COM previewed the new research facility set to open in the coming year that will provide level I and II facilities and new opportunities on campus. Score One for Health physicals for kids provided an excellent experience for medical students to hone physical exam skills. KCUMB now provides a masters' of biosciences program and will welcome 15 students into the program in the fall. Finally, the class size of 2005 will increase to 250 and be welcomed with the new Weaver auditorium which will house the library, student union, and new auditorium facilities.

UNECOM

UNECOM was given by Jodi Highland. Who detailed the recent development of the student research group which assists faculty with campus research on diabetes, cardiovascular disease, and OMT. The SYMMAN patient simulator was featured recently during a news program and pro-

vided information on the future of medicine.

CCOM

The CCOM update by Connor Sherman provided insight into recent curriculum changes due to COMLEX I scores. Current lecture format learning is under review by faculty and will include a revamping to include more diagnostic modalities. The school is working in the right direction make CCOM a leader in osteopathic education. Further updates included information on MS IV residency preparation course and free clinic participation by medical students. Finally, CCOM was recently chosen as the mentor program for an inner city highschool developing a premedical tract.

TUCOM

The final update was given by Nathan Neufeld president of the class of 2008 at the newest COM school; Turo University Nevada.. The school is located within an 80,000 square foot facility and includes new classrooms and. The medical school class size will enlarge to 109 for the class of 2009. The new students will experience the 1:4 mentor-student ratio, 24/7 virtual library, and the developing systems based curriculum. Soon, a physicians assistant, speech pathology, nursing, and PT/OT schools will be added to the university.

Fun in the Florida Sun!

by Susan Benz, AZCOM

February 2005 brought rain to Arizona and cold and/or snow pretty much everywhere else. With weather like this, Florida was the perfect destination for our February COSGP meeting. Although the sun wasn't out as much as we might have liked, the 70-degree temperatures were a nice change for most of the COSGP members. Even though the forecast called for rain, our luck held out and the showers occurred while we were tucked safely inside. When business was adjourned, David Keller (KCUMB-COM), Program Rep, once again outdid himself in finding unique places for us to dine and hang out. For lunch on Thursday, after a short walk toward the A1A (Beachfront Avenue!), Café Bluefish offered good food and souvenir leis and umbrellas in our drinks. That evening, after a leisurely cruise on the Water Taxi, where we dreamt of owning the multimillion dollar houses and sailing on the yachts, our group had a fabulous time at Taverna Opa. It was impossible to keep yourself from dancing and enjoying the atmosphere. Terrific Greek food, napkins raining down, and dancing on the tables made this a night to remember. To the chagrin of some, pictures and video recorded events for all to relive! On Friday, a charter bus chauffeured us south to Miami to eat at Bongo's, a restaurant owned by Gloria Estefan, and experience the night life of South Beach. And for our last night together as a council, Ft. Lauderdale Beach served as the backdrop for volleyball, swimming in the Atlantic (which was surprisingly not too cold), eating, drinking, and just hanging out. It was nice to let the sand run through our toes and be serenaded by BJ, John and their endless supply of back-up singers.

In addition to the tremendous amount of business that this Council accomplished this year, our fun times allowed us to visit and become friends. On a personal note, I realized how much everyone cares. After a misfortune on the volleyball court, everyone stepped up to lend a hand, an arm, a hip - whatever it took to help me move around and even float in the ocean. The year ended on a high note as we came together as friends to enjoy the sights and sounds of this wonderful city.

COSGP members posing for one last picture before meeting up at the beach for an evening of fun in Ft. Lauderdale, FL!

