



Student D.O. Update

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Getting Involved in Research

Chris Newey, KCOM

Why should medical students participate in research while matriculating at a *medical* school? This question is one that many medical students ask at the mention of the word "research." Although it may not be immediately apparent, involvement in biomedical research offers numerous benefits for students already pursuing a professional degree in medicine.

The most obvious benefits are development of new, technical skills and the possibility of publishing research in peer-reviewed journals. Through the process of developing and performing research protocols, students also enhance their critical reading, thinking, and writing skills. By collaborating with their colleagues and doctoral mentors, students that participate in research become knowledgeable in the latest advances in medicine and the biosciences. Even while under the stressful schedule of medical school, students often find a growing interest in their research field and may continue to pursue their investigations upon finishing their clinical degree.

If you are interested in basic science research but have little idea as what is out there and how to get

involved, here are some of my suggestions.

1. At your institution, look on your school website and identify faculty members who have research projects that interest you. Once you identify these researchers, contact them to discuss the possibility of working on a project. From my experience, most faculty members LOVE to talk about their projects. (Beware, the love for a project is contagious!) One thing to remember though is that money drives research. Many faculty members will not have money set-aside for a student. However, your school might allow you to work in a lab as a work study student, which is a win-win for you and the faculty member. You can find out about this from your financial advisor.

2. For those wishing to take a one-year leave of absence from medical school, the National Institute of Health and the Howard Hughes Medical Institute offer a Research Scholars Program for "outstanding students at U.S. medical schools." This program is at the NIH Bethesda campus. The application for this program can be found at www.hhmi.org/cloister/rsp, and applications are due by January 10. Another program through the NIH-HHMI is the Research Training Fellowship. This award allows the student

to participate in research at any academic or non-profit research institute in the U.S. excluding the NIH. Applications for this program can be found at www.hhmi.org/medfellowships/viewbook. The deadline for this application is January 6. Both of these programs offer a generous stipend and other benefits.

Lastly, your school may have research money set aside for student-driven projects.

This article provides just a few examples of how to get involved in research. There are many other programs out there. For example, if you are interested in epidemiology, the Center for Disease Control has two one-year programs that would allow you to either study abroad or in Atlanta, Georgia, or if you are interested in clinical research, your school may have ongoing trials.

Remember, research is FUN!!! Good luck!!!



NBOME Update

Christina Peters, OUCOM

On Friday afternoon, October 21, 2005, the National Board of Osteopathic Medical Examiners (NBOME) presented important information regarding the COMLEX-PE, as well as the COMLEX-CE, to COSGP. For the COMLEX-PE, NBOME's president, Dr. Fredrick Meoli, DO, FACOS, reported a 3.8% fail rate, which is comparable to other physical examination fail rates. For example, the USMLE fail rate for the PE is 4%, while the Canadian exam has a 14% fail rate. In addition, rest assured, your success on the PE is not dependent on what month or what time of day you take the exam! After statistical analysis of the results from the PE, the NBOME reports that there is no

statistically significant difference in fail rates from month to month throughout the year. In addition, they found no statistically significant difference in fail rates between the day versus night time testing.

Beginning May 2006, COMLEX-CE Level I will officially be computerized, while the Level II exam has already begun administration in computerized format. Many COSGPs raised concerns about computer glitches that could interfere with the testing process. In August, approximately 200 third year students taking the COMLEX-CE Level II experienced significant trouble with the exam due to corruption of files. However, the NBOME ensured that while the

chances of something similar happening again in the future are not impossible, they are very slim. In addition, they reported that most computer issues can be repaired or handled without data loss. In the event that something irreparable occurs, students will have the opportunity to retake the exam at a later time. Keep in mind that students taking the computerized CE exams have two opportunities to give the NBOME feedback about the testing experience. Students can make comments on each individual test item and/or at the end of the exam. Finally, the NBOME re-emphasized that students should schedule both the CE and the PE early in order to ensure they get the testing date they desire.

“Beginning May 2006, COMLEX—CE Level I will officially be computerized....”

Perspectives on Diversity— Insights from William Anderson, D.O.

What is diversity? The idea of diversity is often kicked around without presenting a solution. Racism and inequality is a problem in America. Discrimination may not be in the open for everyone to see, but exists as an undercurrent in our minds and daily action, hidden from the surface. But there is hope to conquer these problems facing people today. Children, peers, and even professionals often look at the problems concerning diversity and feel powerless to end a problem so large.

Through a series of personal stories and history, Dr. Anderson asks the students to look at the problem and consider,

“What can I do?” Not all ethnicity is treated equally in the clinical setting. The answer from congress to this problem involves bringing more minority physicians into practice to identify with the patient population. Now that the numbers of minority physicians are increasing, these doctors can desensitize people to the differences that separate ethnic populations.

Fortunately, there is something that people can do to stem the problem of inequality and racism. People cannot change the way they think, but physicians can recognize the differences, and realize how much people have in common. Once

these similarities are recognized, physicians can understand each other with differences.

To answer the question, “What can I do,” Dr. Anderson tells students to start with one individual. Someone out there is waiting for our help to close the gap of inequality. It is our choice to take the opportunity to solve the undercurrent of discrimination.

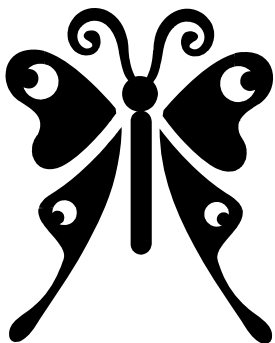
Mat Rose, OUCOM

What's the Buzz? ... Social Butterfly Reporting for Duty!

Greetings, lovely gents and ladybugs! Social Butterfly spreading her wings here, reporting the most recent trip to incredible Orlando, Florida from the past COSGP meeting October 20-23, 2005. Can I say, what a blast! And, I'm not talking about Hurricane Wilma; although, even she decided to touch down for some super-fly COSGP sass. It is always a fabulous time. Want to breeze through the scoop? Thought you'd never ask.

Thursday night launched the beginning of our mission at the Rosen Plaza's nightclub, "Backstage." Catching up with long lost friends, we fellow student DOs celebrated the reunion with an array of brilliant smiles, a colorful cascade of "short beverages" (courtesy of Miss Kristin), and a dance floor invasion led by our stunning Queen Bee Ms. Stephanie. Those dear Floridians were simply stunned by our O.P.P., Osteopathic Pride and Pizzazz that is, and realized these beautiful medical students were here for business and pleasure! COSGP in the House, Baby! But wait a second, our Queen Bee and her workin' hunnie bee Jim were in the house at one point, too, and then disappeared into the darkness of Backstage. Hmmm, did you, too, see those fireworks? I wonder ... who's down with O.P.P., yeah you know me.

Our Friday meeting entailed a powerful day of productivity with our hive busily working their little stingers off. As the night grew closer, the excitement escalated to what the evening events would bring. You may ask, where we were headed? Oh a Hint -- your Pleasure or mine? It was Mr. Mickey Mouse himself



who set our COSGP rock stars free to swarm Downtown Disney for dinner, dancing and pleasures on his out-of-this-world island. Oh Mickey, you're so fine, you're so fine you blow our mind! Thanks, Mickey!

First stop, magnificent Planet Hollywood. A question: Did the Planet know which creatures had landed? COSGP worker bees soon transformed into hip-hopping, toe tapping jitterbugs of the night. One performance was a breathtaking beat bedazzled by our Usher-jivin' B.J. How do you top that? Well, maybe a tie could be said for our perfect Ten scoring COSGP-Village People grooving out the YMCA on the tabletops of the Planet. Who would do such a thing? Ah, ha, you guessed it, our famous COSGP table dancers: Steph, Christina, Erin, Julie and Mr. Sarb... oh yeah! One might think that could have been enough fun to last the whole trip. You are, however, referring to our nation's COSGP, where the night does not end until coffee is served at our next morning's meeting. Simply remember that we are no slugs, just happenin' hot bugs. As such, off we flew!

Within the many hours of night, the crew flooded each new scene with incredible style and, in the process, unearthed many more talents that could only be dreamt of on the grounds of Pleasure Island. A few sparkling fireflies proved to include: Hula-hoopin' Jane, Hula-not-so-hoopin', more-like-droopin' Nate, Bowling Bomber Christina, Moon-walking Brad, All-Nite Bucket Slammin' Council Boys, 8-Track Girls Just Wanna Have Fun Suzy, Betsy, Mel, Karen and Kathy, BET-Stage Struttin' Almost Arrested by the Disney Police--oops Andy, Tootsie Rollin' King M. Byington!

In the words of a famous bird, "COSGP plays as hard as it works; Holy Dancin' Shoes, Batman!" Never a doubt and that's a promise, Boy Wonder.

Together, team COSGP gets the job done in every task at hand. With no exception, Satur-

day's daylight was filled with energetic accomplishment and the night guided by a strategically amazing mission to crash the national SOMA reception. Oh, no, sorry, meant to say delightfully enjoy our bugging SOMA brethren at the Embassy Suites Luau. As always, it was a simply smashing SOMA good time and for all the laughter and lays we give thanks.

On Sunday, our final day of the weekend, COSGP gathered to complete the meeting bright eyed and buzzing --take that as you will. Whether in our wondrous work or our social sessions, on this trip COSGP continued to light up each moment of the day and night with its O.P.P. Perhaps we out dazzled Miss Hurricane Wilma for I do not expect to see her in Arizona at our next sensational meeting in January. I do look forward to you joining either in beautiful body or spirit with this Social Butterfly. Let it snow or shine, at AZCOM it will be, cannot wait for you to come, and brilliantly fly with me. Peace!

Julie Sees, CCOM

Check out the updated COSGP website! You will be able to find:

- **COSGP Contacts**
- **Osteopathic Schools**
- **Local SGA Presidents**
- **Meeting Minutes**
- **PDA Resources**
- **COMLEX Updates**
- **Medical Links**
- **Research Interests**
- **ETC...**



Thanks to Christina Peters and all the SGA Presidents for their contribution to the updates. For any additional resource requests or website updates, please contact Christina Peters at cp239703@ohio.edu.



Nathan J. Neufeld, TUNCOM

We have all attended meetings at which there seemed to be very little order and what appeared to be no preliminary thought or discussion of the motions or topics brought to the floor. This spontaneous style of conducting business, which globally plagues our board rooms and micro-democratic systems, lends itself to a highly inefficient use of council members' time in meetings. Meetings are a place of decision making not useless debate over minutia that no one really can back up as being true. The Council of Osteopathic Student Government Presidents (COSGP) meets four times a year,

and in order to preserve an air of efficiency the organization has for years utilized the format of writing resolutions; which is dictated by Robert's Rules of Order, 10th edition. Chris Hill, COSGP's National Parliamentarian, gave the council a thorough refresher and overview of what resolutions can do for us. He very clearly explained that a resolution packages the important supporting arguments for a specific action or request, as well as then resolving as to what action is being decided, requested, or desired. The supporting arguments are stated as "WHEREAS" clauses; in addition, the conclusion and anticipated action portion of the resolution is appropriately

deemed the "RESOLUTION." The "WHEREAS" statements state the premise for the foreshadowed discussion and the "RESOLUTION" is the proposed resolution to the issue. This system of debate and presentation of issues is thorough and succinct in its approach to stating accompanying information that is supportive and necessary to the conclusion. This format allows us to ideally know all the background necessary in order to do what we as a council do...make a fully informed democratic decisions on behalf of our osteopathic medical students nationally.

The Student D.O. of the Year Award 2006

It's that time of the year again where we plan to select the Student D.O. of the Year at each of our campuses! This year, we not only select local winners but we begin a new tradition with the selection of a national Student D.O. of the Year! As this will be the first year we transition from a purely local award process to the selection of a national Student D.O. of the Year, your planning, publicity, and feedback for this year's award is vital to the success of this project!

Who is eligible for the Student D.O. of the Year Award?

Any osteopathic medical student, year 1 through year 4, that has demonstrated dedication to the profession, service to his/her community, and leadership within his/her local campus is eligible for this award. While academics represent an important component of this award, the Student D.O. of the Year award is not purely an academic award. Each SDOY candidate will submit an application consisting of a standardized coversheet, a copy of his/her curriculum vitae, and an essay question response.

The Local Selection Process

On each osteopathic medical school campus, the student government president will organize a selection committee and solicit nominations for candidates. Through COSGP, standardized guidelines have been established to ensure that each COM campus carries out the local award process in the same manner to assure the validity of the national award. Each COM campus is to have the name of their local award winner into the COSGP National First Vice-Chair no later than March 1, 2006 at 5PM eastern standard time.

National Selection Process

A national selection committee will select one award winner out of the individual COM candidates. The selection committee will consist of one student government president from the Student Services Committee of COSGP (randomly selected), the Board of Deans COSGP Liaison, the AOA Board of Trustees Student Trustee, the AACOM Student Services Council Chair, the AACOM Society of Osteopathic Medical Educators Chair, and the COSGP National First Vice-Chair. The National Student D.O. of the Year award winner will receive a \$500 monetary award and be recognized nationally at the AACOM Annual Meeting in June 2006 and the AOA House of Delegates hosted in July 2006.

Please watch for updates from your local student government president. For any additional questions, comments, or concerns regarding the 2006 Student D.O. of the Year Award, please contact Matthew Miller at mmiller@lecom.edu!

During the Council of Osteopathic Student Government Presidents (COSGP) meeting at the AOA Unified Convention in Orlando, Florida, Michael Dyer, Vice President of Government Relations for American Associations of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine (AACOM) conducted a discussion on the importance of physicians and student physicians advocating the physician-patient relationship as well as becoming more knowledgeable about the medical liability crisis and creating possible solutions.

The conversation was precipitated by the current status of health care in the United States and the questionable role of the physician. Previous generations of medical consumers have altered the patient care climate of health care by their litigious behavior. Physicians are being trained to provide medical care in a defensive mode; treating each patient as a potential plaintiff. Based upon these attitudes from patients, physicians are approaching specialty choices (i.e. obstetrics and gynecology, surgery) and type of practice decisions more cautiously. As of January 1, 2006, there will be a 4% reduction in payments with projected decline of 30% over the next decade. With Medicare imploding and the current payment struc-

ture eroding combined with the litigious environment, physicians are beginning to depart not only their state, but the profession itself. Mr. Dyer questioned, "Is there a solution? Where is the profession heading?"

The current health care work-force asks the question, "Is there a shortage of physicians across the nation or only in specific regions (i.e. underserved rural America)?" Health paraprofessionals like nurse practitioners and physician assistants have seen this argument provide them with opportunities in family practice, women's health, and multiple subspecialties, opening doors for their training, in theory, to fill the void. If this is the case, what is the role of the physicians in generations to come?

Graduate Medical Education is designed to prepare us as compassionate and competent physicians. We acknowledge the social good in training physicians in this format, allopathic or osteopathic, by providing hands on training with guidance and assistance. It is imperative that learning/teaching opportunities are provided for our graduates in communities because of the significance of residents for the future of healthcare in that area.

Mr. Dyer challenged us to become active

contributors to the solution by becoming involved in politically. Seven years ago there was no sustained effort for intern/extern advocacy. However, AOA/AACOM has been successful at creating national committees that have allowed osteopathic medical students the opportunity to be active participants in the political arena. By encouraging osteopathic students, faculty, and physicians to meet with their elected officials in Washington D.C., to promote and lobby for the necessary resources to improve and facilitate patient care delivery, changes are being made. Also, a noticeable effect has trickled down to the state and local offices nationwide.

D.O. Day on the Hill, scheduled for April 27, 2006, will anticipate as many as 1100 Osteopathic constituents; the number of people reached 2 April's ago. If you would like to go, Mr. Dyer requests you plan early. Topics such as student financial aid and medical liability will be the main headlines. This is a grand event for not only Osteopathy, but for the entire health care arena. We should recognize the importance of being politically active through creating awareness while at the same time comprehend the value and worth of preserving our oath to patient care. This is our future, its imperative for our voice to be heard.

George C Christensen III,
PC SOM



"D.O. Day on the Hill, schedules for April 27, 2006, will anticipate as many as 1100 Osteopathic constituents"

AACOM Student Ambassador Project

To increase awareness about osteopathic medicine, AACOM would like to have current osteopathic students act as ambassadors to recruit future osteopathic medical students. COSGP will be assisting AACOM with the creation of a database of student names of whom AACOM can contact nationwide for various events throughout the year.

This project is being spearheaded by Andrew Mapley, NYCOM. If you are interested in becoming a student ambassador for AACOM, please contact Andy at amapley@nyit.edu!

**Council of Osteopathic Student
Government Presidents**



*“Representing all Osteopathic
Medical Students”*

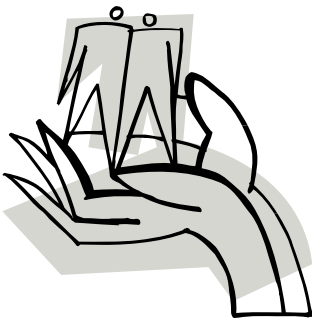


The information contained within this newsletter reflects the events and projects that resulted out of the October 21-23, 2005 Quarterly Conference of COSGP held in Orlando, Florida.

The “Student D.O. Update” is the newsletter of the Council of Osteopathic Student Government Presidents, an official council of the American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine. The elected student government association president from each college of osteopathic medicine serves as the official voting delegate at the council’s quarterly meetings. Upon conclusion of each meeting, COSGP would like to share with all osteopathic medical students the business conducted and issues discussed as your official elected representatives. This newsletter is a “for students, by students” publication. Should you have any questions regarding the information in this newsletter, please contact the student government president on your campus or Leslie Houston, MS IV, COSGP National 2nd Vice Chair at lreddell@hsc.unt.edu.

COSGP Mission and Objectives

COSGP strives to be the leading national representative and voting voice of all Osteopathic medical students by:



- ★ **Maintaining communication with and assisting in the dissemination of information between Osteopathic medical students and national osteopathic organizations including AACOM and the AOA.**
- ★ **Providing a mechanism for the exchange of ideas for Osteopathic medical students and others concerned with osteopathic medical education and the osteopathic profession; and by**
- ★ **Fostering student leadership and identity by providing a means for osteopathic medical student participation in the governance and operation of national osteopathic organizations including AACOM and the AOA.**