

UNIVERSITY of NORTH TEXAS HEALTH SCIENCE CENTER at Fort Worth

RAD Keynote: Research should be catalyst for policy changes

Using research as a catalyst for changes in public policy should be the goal of students' research efforts, according to David Kaufman, DO, a leading multiple sclerosis researcher who gave the keynote address for the health science center's 12th annual Research Appreciation Day April 2.

"Research Appreciation Day and other events like it are crucial to researchers because it helps people realize they are not working in isolation," said Dr. Kaufman, professor and chair of the department of neurology and ophthalmology at the College of Osteopathic Medicine and College of Human Medicine at Michigan State University.

Dr. Kaufman said students should become and remain aware that the ultimate goal of their research, no matter the subject, should be to influence changes in public policy.

Dr. Kaufman used the example of optic nerve studies and his own past research on multiple sclerosis (MS), the debilitating neurological disorder that affects nearly 2.5 million people worldwide, to illustrate the impact that research can and often does have on public policy and on the health of a larger public. "MS is my holy grail," he said. "Understanding and treating it is my chief goal."

Dr. Kaufman's research focuses on the relationship between ophthalmology and pathology. A frequent source of

investigation is optic neuritis, or the inflammation of the optic nerve, which is often seen in many patients that later develop MS.

In studying the optic nerve, researchers were able to make some significant deductions with regard to the treatment of patients with MS, he said.

As part of a 30-year, 15-center MS clinical trials study to better understand the disease, researchers recruited 457 people with acute optic neuritis, only a few of whom showed early signs of developing MS. Participants were given one of two different drugs, either the high-dose steroid methylprednisolone, or prednisone, a lower-dose steroid. Others were given placebos.

Results showed that there was little difference in patient response between those who received prednisone and the placebo, Dr. Kaufman said, but patients who received the methylprednisolone healed from optic neuritis attacks quicker than the other patients.

Of the patients who later had another optic neuritis attack, 80 percent



David Kaufman, DO, a leading multiple sclerosis researcher, gave the keynote address for the health science center's 12th annual Research Appreciation Day.

had been given prednisone as treatment. Not only did the prednisone not help patients recover from optic neuritis attacks, it appeared to make the attacks worse, the study concluded.

Before the study, prednisone was regularly prescribed as the standard treatment for optic neuritis; now, more than eight years from the first discovery of the actual effect of prednisone on optic neuritis, Dr. Kaufman said few doctors prescribe prednisone as treatment for optic neuritis and its neurological counterpart, multiple sclerosis.

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RAD

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“It took 15 years, from the first discussion about starting this research to this discovery, to change public policy,” Dr. Kaufman said. The lesson to students in research endeavors is to be patient, he said.

Dr. Kaufman recalled two other studies to further illustrate how research can lead to public policy change. One found that patients with optic neuritis who received steroid treatment were 47 percent less likely to later develop MS than those who did not receive steroid treatment.

This result dramatically changed the way that MS is treated by medical professionals by giving them the mechanism to provide early therapeutic treatment for the disease, Dr. Kaufman said.

“Once you start a research study, not only do you hopefully answer the questions you began the study with, but you also develop new questions,” he said.

In the third study, patients with a high risk of developing MS were recruited to test the effects of the drug Avonex on MS. Results of the study indicated that the earlier the drug was administered to patients after their first MS attack, the more slowly the disease progressed.

Dr. Kaufman said that public policy now reflects these findings in that an anti-MS drug, such as Avonex, is administered immediately when a patient begins to show symptoms of MS, rather than waiting until after the patient has a confirmed case of MS.

While MS therapies are changing almost daily, physicians are no longer waiting for the devastating effects of MS to take hold before administering anti-MS medications to patients. This is significantly reducing the toll of the disease on some MS patients, he said.

“Fifteen years of research has resulted in three major public policy changes, which in turn has had a signif-

icant impact on the treatment of multiple sclerosis,” Dr. Kaufman said. He recommended students keep this long-term goal in mind for their research.

Dr. Kaufman concluded his address by emphasizing the importance of developing and fostering a research culture within an osteopathic academic institution.

“Our vision for the future of research should be one of vibrant and robust integrated osteopathic medicine research throughout the profession,” he said.

Osteopathic research has a long way to go to achieve that vision, he said, and recommended changing the culture of colleges of osteopathic medicine hire by hire.

“Researcher attitudes are changing from ‘Why bother?’ to ‘How do we do it?’” Dr. Kaufman said. “The future of osteopathic research depends on developing meaningful research in techniques that have an impact both on the patient’s prognosis and treatment and on public policy issues.”

Dr. Kaufman encouraged faculty to set an example for their students by being enthusiastic researchers, which is essential because it will foster a culture of vigor and determination in a new generation of researchers, he said. “Vigorous research makes you a better physician, a better educator.”

Dr. Kaufman offered his final words of advice to administrators and researchers alike. “The future of research needs to be led by the basic science departments. Clinical departments must follow by recruiting clinicians who don’t break into a sweat when they see a flask,” he said.

More than 150 faculty and students participated in this year’s RAD event, an annual showcase of research projects from health science center faculty, staff and students. Nineteen winners from the three schools were awarded cash prizes and plaques for their efforts. ★

Best Practices

Each year, the health science center honors programs that use planning and evaluation to continuously improve their operations with the President’s Award for Best Practices. Any unit, division, department or program in the health science center is eligible to submit a Best Practice for consideration and to receive the award. Submissions must be turned in by Friday, May 28.

Nominations for Best Practices awards must include a summary, list team members and state the goal of the Best Practice and its link to institutional and unit missions. They must also show how the nominated Best Practice was implemented, evaluated and improved based on evaluation results. They should also include what was learned from the process.

To submit your Best Practice or to receive the Submission Guidelines for submitting a Best Practice nomination, please contact Gayanne Clemens (EAD-856A) via GroupWise or at ext. 2029. Additional information on the program is available through the home page of the UNTHSC Intranet site. ★

CAMPUS Connection

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Department Spotlight: Audiology

Nestled among the other medical clinics in the Patient Care Center, the Department of Audiology has quietly existed for over 10 years. Audiologist Angela Anderson and Randall Phillips, DO, an ear, nose and throat specialist, collaborate on a number of diagnostic and therapeutic cases each day while caring for patients through the Ear, Nose and Throat Clinic.

Anderson, who has been with the clinic since 1997, said the audiology department was established “not only to provide quality diagnostics for disorders such as otitis media, noise loss related to recreation or occupation, nerve deafness, and balance disorders, but also to provide a quality comprehensive hearing aid program as an effective treatment strategy for permanent hearing loss, both in children and adults.”

A subunit of the surgery department, audiology consists of six employees, including Anderson and Dr. Phillips, a 1984 TCOM graduate. Sandy Frost, LVN, is the ENT nurse and handles cerumen management and scheduling for the surgery department, and Sherry Bolton, MA, is the test coordinator for radiology studies.

Christy Grooms, client services representative II, and Terry Perry, client services representative II, take care of scheduling patient appointments for Dr. Phillips and Anderson and keep patient files and information current.

“We are a complete team in the Surgery Department, and our hats also go off to our billing team, medical records and receptionists for helping us keep this department running,” Anderson said.



The Audiology team (left to right): Terry Perry, client services representative; Christy Grooms, client services representative; Sherry Bolton, test coordinator; Angela Anderson (seated), audiologist; Sandy Frost (seated), LVN; and Randall Phillips, DO.

Anderson said the relationship between surgery and audiology is often complementary. “Often, it is the outcome of various diagnostic procedures that determines whether surgery will be performed,” she said. “Other times, patients will have more than one complaint, and if hearing needs to be addressed, they will be sent to our department.”

Audiology’s primary focus is the patient. “The department’s goal has always been to provide quality medical care in an environment that is conducive to both healing and learning,” Anderson said.

Research and education are priorities as well. The department recently completed a study with Alcon Laboratories involving ear drops used in cerumen management, the management of the build up of ear wax.

While audiology does not offer a formal program for training medical students, many medical students have

a rotation with the Ear, Nose and Throat Clinic and receive exposure to basic audiological concepts, she said.

In addition, Anderson provides guest lectures on hearing loss and other related disorders for the Physician Assistant Studies Program.

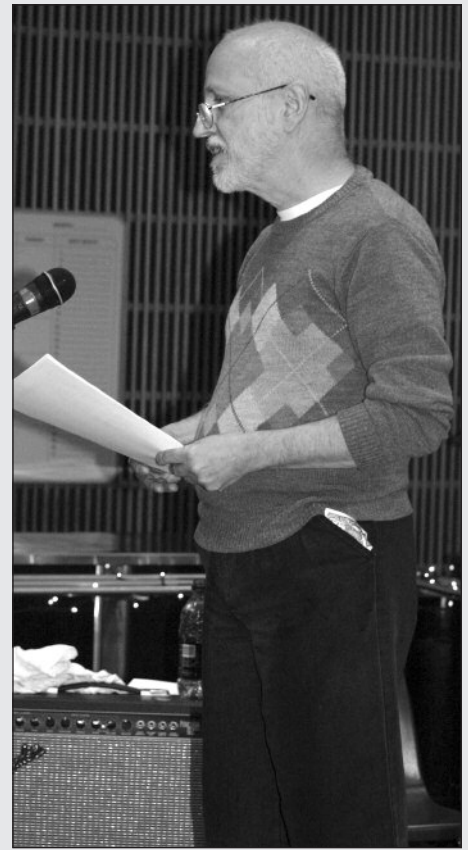
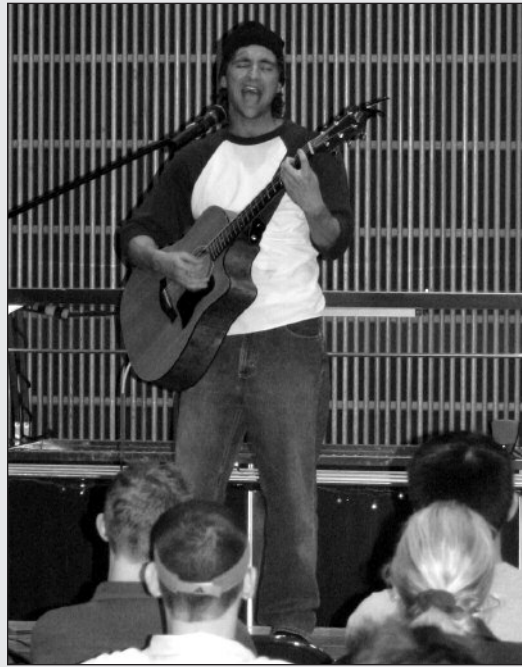
Anderson said she would like to see an increase in the department’s interaction with students in the future, especially those who will go on to become surgical residents. “The relationship between audiology and surgeons is extremely important,” Anderson said.

What does the future hold for Audiology? According to Anderson, it will include searching for applicable and innovative research projects and continuing to strive to provide quality service to the patient population they serve.

“We endeavor to have superior service delivery with cutting-edge technology and knowledge in our field.” ★

Open Mic Night

Employees and students showed off their creative side at Open Mic Night April 14. Kimi Harnage, TCOM 2007, and Devin Flaherty, TCOM 2007, kicked off the entertainment with a great set of music. Jim Banks (right photo), computer user support specialist in ITS, surprised and amused the crowd with his witty poetry readings, and TCOM student Geoff Giordano's humorous political satire entertained and enlightened. Huy Luu, TCOM 2007, and Chris Etheredge, TCOM 2007, captivated the audience with poetry, jokes and a song. John Drexler (left photo), TCOM 2005, a phenomenal one-man band, belted out songs while the students sang along. The event was organized by Bobbie Ann Adair, student development coordinator. "Open Mic Night was a great success!" she said. "Many thanks to everyone who participated."



AMA Honors TCOM's Lancaster

Brad Lancaster, SPH/TCOM 2005, is one of 20 medical students in the country recently honored by the American Medical Association Foundation for their leadership abilities.

Lancaster received a Leadership Award in recognition of his work with the AMA Medical Student Section and as president of the AMA-MSS chapter at the Texas College of Osteopathic Medicine.

Among his many activities, Lancaster served on the executive planning committee for the AMA-MSS Region III conference, held on campus last October. The conference brought medical students from around the Southwest to Fort Worth for training in leadership, advocacy and community involvement.

"Through our AMA activities, we have the opportunity to demonstrate the high caliber of physicians and physician-leaders that TCOM pro-

duces," Lancaster said. "Our involvement also serves as an opportunity to build greater awareness of our unique osteopathic training among our allopathic colleagues."

Lancaster is currently completing an eight-week internship in Washington, D.C., with the American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine and the American Osteopathic Association through their Osteopathic Health Policy Internship. In 2001, he completed a similar six-week internship in the AMA's Washington office through its Government Relations Internship Program.

"I think it's essential that physicians, medical students and other health professionals take a very active role in the issues that affect their profession and patients," he said. "If we don't stand up for our profession and the patients we serve and don't voice our perspective for a better health

care system, no one else will on our behalf."

The Leadership Awards are presented annually to medical students, residents/fellows and young physicians. The program recognizes the contributions of bright and energetic individuals who show strong non-clinical leadership skills in advocacy, community service and/or education. The goal of the program is to help encourage leadership development and involvement in organized medicine.

The Leadership Awards are presented as part of the AMA Foundation's Excellence in Medicine Awards.

The Excellence in Medicine Awards, presented in association with Pfizer Medical Humanities Initiative, were created in 2003 to combine the Leadership Awards and the Pride in the Profession Awards. The awards were presented at a banquet March 28 in Washington, D.C. ★

School of Public Health

An evening of Celebration and Recognition

The Main Street Arts Festival was not the only fun event in downtown Fort Worth April 16. The School of Public Health hosted its annual Awards Banquet at the beautiful City Club ballroom. The festival's bands even unknowingly served as background music for the ceremony.

Fernando Treviño, MPH, PhD, SPH dean, opened the evening with welcoming remarks, and was followed by an encouraging message from Ronald Blanck, DO, president.

Kathryn Cardarelli, MPH, PhD, the first graduate-turned-faculty member for the school, served as master of ceremonies.

Joining SPH students, faculty and staff were several honored guests, including Thomas Yorio, PhD, GSBS dean, and Elena Yorio; Stephen Oeffner and Lee Oeffner; Greg McQueen, PhD; and Warren Anderson, EdD, and Jane Anderson.

Thomas Moorman and Melissa Moorman also showed their continued support for the school by attending.

Many public health students expressed pleasant surprise as their

names were called. The student awardees were:

Chris Manuel, MPH

Outstanding MPH Student in Biostatistics

Kim Fulda, MPH

Outstanding DrPH Student in Biostatistics

Sreeram Maddipatla, MPH

Outstanding MPH Student in Environmental and Occupational Health

Ankur Sheth, MPH

Outstanding MPH Student in Epidemiology

Marco Marruffo, MD

Outstanding DrPH Student in Epidemiology

Jessica Hickey, MPH

Outstanding MPH Student in Health Management and Policy

Christine Sammer, MPH

Outstanding DrPH Student in Health Management and Policy

Sara Hossman, MPH

Outstanding MPH Student in Social and Behavioral Sciences,

Leon Brachman Community Service Award

Michele Rorie, DrPH, MPA

Outstanding DrPH Student in Social and Behavioral Sciences

Amruth Palla, MPH

Kenneth Cooper Research Award

Alisa Sawka

Bob Crow Outstanding MPH Graduate Award

This year was an exciting year for the School of Public Health, as the first group of doctoral students graduated from the DrPH program. The first presentation of the Outstanding Doctoral Graduate Award went to Rosa Rosario-Rosado, DrPH.

Eighteen students qualified for the School of Public Health Dean's List: Rosa Rosario-Rosado, MS, DrPH; Carolina Alvarez-Garriga, MD; Alberto Coustasse, MD, DrPH; Ronald Marcisin, DDS, MPH; Baqiyyah Conway, MA, MPH; Maria Guadalupe Bayona, MD, MPH; Thaddeus Miller, MPH; Stephen Baum, MPH; Amanda Medina, MA, MPH; Kyla Hagan, MPH; Jessica Hickey, MPH; Eloise Broughton, MPH

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Current PHSA officers, Neda Moayad, MA; Sara Hossman, MPH; Kim McGee, and new PHSA officers, Kim Fulda, MPH; Shimona Bhatia; Nadia Moayyad; Patrick Moonan, MPH; Bill McCune, MPH; Nicole Bereolos.

School of Public Health

Medicine and Public Health Initiative

The 79th Annual Education Conference of the Texas Public Health Association was held April 18-20 in Houston. Co-presented by Harris County Public Health and Environmental Services, the conference's theme was Collaboration Between Public Health and Medicine: the Key to Preparedness.

The focus of the conference was to describe concepts of the Medicine and Public Health Initiative through discussions of collaborative projects and evaluative tools of those projects, with hopes of providing a forum to facilitate future planning of disaster management in Texas communities.

Fort Worth, Tarrant County and the health science center had a very strong presence at the conference. A lively Sunday night reception hosted

by the School of Public Health in the Marriott's Presidential Suite allowed all conference participants to mingle with TPHA board members and other key public health experts in the state.

In attendance were several SPH faculty, administrators, staff and students, who took the opportunity to see old friends in the field and network with new contacts for future public health research.

Many of the concurrent day sessions were led by experts from our area, including Alex Hathaway, MD, and Carol Lee Hamilton, RN, JD, from the Tarrant County Public Health Department.

Mary Luna Hollen, PhD, SPH research assistant professor, held a session on the North Texas *Salud para su*

Corazón Outreach Initiative. It was the first distribution of the program's CD-ROMs, which were offered as prizes for the interactive discussion.

"The presentation of this project was a fantastic opportunity for us. Almost all session attendees expressed interest in becoming involved in our evaluative efforts, even staying afterward to ask questions about how we can sustain the initiative," Dr. Hollen said.

Educational materials and posters were also presented by SPH alumni Elizabeth Beel, MPH, and Jessie Martinez, MPH, from the City of Fort Worth Public Health Department, as well as Kim Fulda, MPH alumna and current DrPH student, and Jeremy Russell, TCOM 2005. ★

Research Appreciation Day 2004

Congratulations to the SPH student winners!

Godavari Patil, first place, Poster Presentation (plaque and \$500 check) for "Evaluating the Disparity of Female Breast Cancer Mortality Among Racial and Age-Specific Groups: A Spatiotemporal Analysis"

Patrick Moonan, second place, poster presentation (plaque and \$400 check), for "Tuberculosis Transmission Dynamics in an Urban Homeless Shelter"

Ella Nkhoma, first place, oral presentation (plaque and \$500 check), for "Spatiotemporal Analysis of Accidental Poisoning Mortality in Texas (1980-2001): Implications for Emergency Preparedness"

Thad Miller, second place, oral presentation (plaque and \$400 check), for "A Standardized Tool for Assessing TB Surveillance and Action Performance and Cost"

The Public Health Student Association sponsored all the awards.

Kudos to all the other SPH presenters for a fine job representing our school and exhibiting your research:
Neda Moayad

Kim Fulda

Anita Kurian

Nicole Bereolos

Carolina Alvarez-Garriga

Vinay Parameswara

Marco Marruffo

Ann Trombley

And a BIG thank you to the all-alumni Public Health judge's panel: Marcus Martin, Susie Ramisetty-Mikler, and Amy Raines, whose wise input and generous participation was much appreciated.

Thanks to everyone who helped out. It is a huge job that would be completely impossible without the generous help from other RAD staff, SPH students, especially Kim McGee, Susie Quintana and John Birmingham, and everyone else who offered assistance. Special thanks to the School of Public Health Office of Admissions and Student Services for handling the food for the day, including breakfast for all judges and RAD staff and lunch and snack for everyone. ★

Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences

GSBS students, faculty, staff share their work at RAD 2004

The health science center's 12th annual Research Appreciation Day, held April 2, provided an opportunity for students, faculty and staff to share their research efforts with the campus community and the public.

The program encourages the development of joint research projects and increases the community's awareness of the outstanding quality and range of research conducted at the health science center.

Poster and oral presentation competitions for students were featured events of the day's program, in addition to a poster competition for postdoctoral fellows and residents. Alcon Research Ltd., the Graduate Student Association and Travel Service Everywhere once again sponsored the oral presentation competitions.

In the Alcon Research Ltd. oral presentation competition, Eric Gonzales, doctoral candidate in pharmacology and neuroscience, received first place honors. His major professor is Glenn Dillon, PhD, associate professor of pharmacology and neuroscience.

Second place honors went to Athena Shepard, doctoral student in biochemistry and molecular biology. Her major professor is Julian Borejdo, PhD, professor of molecular biology and immunology.

First place in the GSA oral presentation competition was awarded to Chang Su, doctoral candidate in biomedical sciences. Joel Ellis, also a doctoral candidate in biomedical sciences, was awarded second place. Both students are mentored by Stephen Grant, PhD, associate professor of integrative physiology.

In the poster presentation category, also sponsored by GSA, top honors went to another of Dr. Grant's students, Rebecca Deaton, a doctoral candidate in biomedical sciences.

Second place was awarded to Janelle Hardisty, PA, doctoral candidate in integrative physiology. Her major professor is Michael Smith, PhD, professor and acting chair of integrative physiology.

Lorie Gonzales, doctoral student in pharmacology and neuroscience, received third place honors. Her major professor is Dr. Dillon.

Fourth place was awarded to Tushar Thakre, a doctoral student in integrative physiology also under the supervision of Dr. Smith.

Fifth place honors were given to Paramjit Kaur, doctoral candidate in pharmacology and neuroscience. Her major professor is Meharvan "Sonny" Singh, PhD, assistant professor of pharmacology and neuroscience.

Alcon Research Ltd. also sponsored the poster presentation competition for the postdoctoral research fellows. Mridula Rewal, PhD, postdoctoral research associate in pharmacology and neuroscience, was selected for the honor.

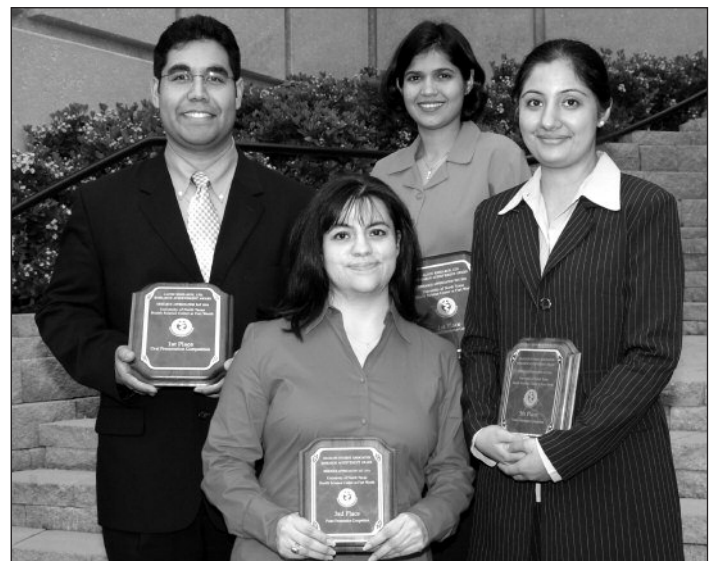
Each year, Tech Fort Worth sponsors the Innovation Award to recognize the poster presentation representing research with potential for economic and commercial success. This year's recipient was Nicole Schrock, a clinical research management student. ★



Athena Detrick



Joel Ellis, Chang Su and Rebecca Deaton



Eric Gonzales, Lorie Gonzalez, Mridula Rewal and Paramjit Kaur

Institutional Advancement

Mentors for Life: TCOM alumni share wisdom, advice

Although he is just finishing his first year at TCOM, medical student Mike Stratton is already stressing about what to choose for his specialty.

“I’ve talked to some people who are further along in school and they still have no idea what they are going to do,” Stratton said. “They haven’t had the opportunity to sit down and talk to a doctor one-on-one and answer all their questions.”

Stratton, who is 25, married, and expecting his second child, worries about choosing a career field that will allow him to balance work and family life.

“One guy I know did general surgery at L.A. County Hospital, and he said there would be times when he would be in the hospital for three days straight and his wife would bring him clothes and bring him food and he never saw his son,” Stratton said.

To find out what life is really like for a practicing osteopathic physician, Stratton brought a list of questions to the Texas College of Osteopathic Medicine’s fourth annual Specialty Round Table Night March 26 to ask 24 physicians representing over a dozen specialties – including 18 TCOM alumni – about choosing a field of specialization, how to secure a residency and how to balance career and family life.

The event, popular with TCOM students and mentor physicians, was coordinated by the TCOM Alumni Association in collaboration with institutional advancement and student affairs.

The night began with a buffet dinner and an official welcome by Marc Hahn, DO, dean of TCOM, who stressed to the students that this event was only a stepping stone to a career that involves life-long learning.

Alumni association resident director Niraj Mehta, DO, TCOM 2001,

and alumni association president Daniel Saylak, DO, TCOM 1983, then introduced the question-and-answer panel seated at the front of the auditorium, which included Eric Groce, DO, TCOM 2000; Sarah Matches, DO, TCOM 1989; Al Mathé, DO, TCOM 1989; Shelly VanScoyk, DO, TCOM 2002; Keith Vasenius, DO, TCOM 1986; and Antonio Prado-Gutierrez, MPH, a public health administrator.

Stratton and about 30 other medical students listened attentively as the panel and other visiting physicians dispensed their wisdom.

“If you don’t take care of your patients, someone else will,” said Dr. Groce, a family medicine doctor. To do that, he said, practicing physicians must treat themselves as their most important patient. When they put their own health second, the mentors agreed, doctors cannot take care of anyone else, and their practices suffer.

Dr. Matches said part of taking care of yourself is making time for what is important to you. For example, she works as a part-time pediatrician for an elementary school from 8:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. so she can spend more time at home with her children.

Texas has an overwhelming geographical area that is medically underserved, and many doctors used the evening’s event to urge students to explore options that are off the beaten path. Dr. Saylak, an emergency medicine physician, said, “It is important to go to a place that needs you.”

He said that serving as a physician in a smaller town – such as his experience in Bremond, Texas, population 1,000 – provides a different type of training because you become a staple

The Office of Institutional Advancement would like to thank all of these experts who helped mentor future DOs at the TCOM fourth annual Specialty Round Table Night!

Mark Baker, DO, TCOM '76, Radiology
Kevin Blanton, DO, TCOM '02, Family Medicine

Robert Clark, DO, TCOM '98, Anesthesiology

Christine Cote, DO, Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation

William Cothorn, DO, TCOM '81, Dermatology

Michael Coy, DO, TCOM '00, Family Medicine

Scott Ewing, DO, TCOM '01, Internal Medicine

Greg Friess, DO, TCOM '79, Hematology/Oncology

Eric Groce, DO, TCOM '00, Family Medicine

Marc Hahn, DO, Anesthesiology
Long Hoang, DO, TCOM '96, Gastroenterology

George Khammar, MD, Cardiology
Lazerus Loeb, MD, Allergy

Sarah Matches, DO, TCOM '89, Pediatrics

Al Mathé, DO, TCOM '89, Hospitalist/Hospice Care

Niraj Mehta, DO, TCOM '01, Internal Medicine

Elizabeth Palmarozzi, DO, TCOM '84, Family Medicine

Antonio Prado-Gutierrez, MPH, Family Medicine

Capt. Christopher Restad, DO, TCOM '01, Family Medicine

Manny Rodriguez, Rural Community Affairs

Daniel Saylack, DO, TCOM '83, Emergency Medicine

Capt. Levi Sundermeyer, MD, Family Medicine

Robert Suter, DO, TCOM '01, Family Medicine

Shelly VanScoyk, DO, TCOM '02, Radiology

Keith Vasenius, DO, TCOM '86, Cardiology/Internal Medicine

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Institutional Advancement

Contracts and doctors and jobs, oh my! PA alumni assuage students' anxieties about first jobs

"You're hired!" When 20 million Americans were listening to Donald Trump utter his new catchphrase on the finale of his NBC hit show "The Apprentice" April 15, twenty-two physician assistant studies students were learning how to hear those magic words upon graduation from a panel of alumni starring in PA Career Night at the health science center.

The panel, which included David Gonzales, PA 2000; Stan Kotara, PA 2001; Brian Pendleton, PA 2001; Jana Peretti, PA 2001; Judi Thompson, PA 1999; and Josh Williford, PA 1999, gave advice to PA students worried about the realities of life after school, including how to search for a job, how to negotiate a contract and what it is like to work with physicians.

"We're so focused on school right now," said Laurie Channer, PA 2005, "and this event shows what life is like after school."

The panel of six alumni proved that there is no such thing as a "typical" PA job. Gonzales, Pendleton and Peretti specialize in family medicine and work 40-50 hours per week with varying call schedules, while Kotara works more than 55 hours a week because he is required to attend Texas Rangers and Fort Worth Cats baseball games and Fort Worth Brahmas hockey events — just one of the perks of working with the teams' orthopedist.

Although his job at Osteopathic Specialty Associates in Fort Worth has unique and exciting responsibilities, Kotara told students that it is more important to him that he works well with his doctor. He said one of the most important things to keep in mind during a job search is finding a physician you like because of the long hours spent working together.

"I spend more time with my physician than with my family," he said.

Fortunately, Kotara has such a good working relationship with his physician, Steve Singleton, MD, that he is moving from Fort Worth to South Carolina this summer to continue working with him at Steadman Hawkins Clinic of the Carolinas in Spartanburg.

And Kotara was not the only alumnus to warn students that their career paths may take an unexpected turn.

"I never dreamed I'd be doing nephrology," said Thompson, who has worked as a nephrology PA for Dialysis Associates in Fort Worth for the past two years.

Right after finishing school, Thompson was "tricked" into interviewing for a nephrology position that was described as internal medicine in a job posting written by Victor Meltzer, MD. When Dr. Meltzer revealed that the position was actually for nephrology during her interview, he quickly promised that he would teach her everything she needed to know.

Thompson took the job, and three years later she had learned so much about nephrology that she moved on to her current position with Dialysis Associates.

In addition to Career Night, Thompson shares her knowledge and experience with students by helping teach the Physical Diagnosis class for the health science center.

Williford, who specializes in neurosurgery, also comes back to campus to give guest lectures. When asked by students at Career Night about how to decide what specialty to pursue, he emphasized that only time will truly dictate the students' direction.

Thank you to the alumni who shared their wisdom with future PAs!

David Gonzales, PA 2000
Stan Kotara, PA 2001
Brian Pendleton, PA 2001
Jana Peretti, PA 2001
Judi Thompson, PA 1999
Josh Williford, PA 1999

"You find what you enjoy," Williford said. "You have to figure it out as you go."

The panelists agreed that it takes about a year to get into the full swing of things and start taking care of patients independently — and that it is very important to stay within your comfort zone.

"The key is to know your limitations," Peretti said.

In addition to wanting to feel competent when they graduate, the students at Career Night were concerned about how to find a job in a field that is in demand but is not often advertised. Gonzales, president of the physician assistant alumni society, reminded students to use their alumni contacts to find jobs when they graduate.

"Let us do the hard work," Gonzales said. "We've seen it. We've been there. Use us to help you find a job."

Trish Holmes, PA 2006, said she thought Career Night was extremely helpful and is ready to take Gonzales up on his offer.

"I thought it was helpful advice even if you are a first-year," Holmes said. "For the alumni to offer to let us use them as contacts was great." ★

Texas College of Osteopathic Medicine/Physician Assistant Studies

Thank you, faculty, staff and students!

Research Appreciation Day was a huge success. I would like to thank everyone who participated in this event.

The keynote address by David Kaufman, DO, a leading multiple sclerosis researcher at Michigan State University, was extremely well received by all who attended.

There were more than 150 participants in all — 20 in student/resident competition for TCOM. Congratulations go to Craig Ferrara, DO, TCOM 1999, for his first place poster, “Focalseal-L Absorbable Sealant Reduces Air Leaks Incurred During Pulmonary Resections,” and to Bharat Mittal, TCOM 2005, for his second place poster, “Stroke and its Relationship to Hypertensive Disorders of Pregnancy.”

Congratulations also to Patrick Moonan, DrPH student, who won two awards, including the Pre-doctoral Research Achievement Award, which includes competitors from all three schools. Moonan also won second place in the SPH poster competition.

Additional thanks go to our four judges: Rhett Fredric, MD, from Plaza Medical Center; Mark Laney, MD, from Cooks Children’s Hospital system; Thomas O’Shea, DO, from Osteopathic Medical Center of Texas; and Wayne Williams, MD, from JPS Health Network.

Lastly, I would like to thank Kathleen Harris and Dennis Shingleton for all their assistance in making the 2004 RAD a success.

Sincerely,

Michael Clearfield, DO, Associate Dean for Clinical Research



TCOM winners in the RAD competition included first place winner Craig Ferrara (not pictured), DO, and second place winner Bharat Mittal, TCOM 2005, pictured here, second from right, with Marc Hahn (far left), DO, TCOM dean; Meeta Patel, TCOM 2005; and Michael Clearfield, DO, associate dean for clinical research.

Medical group honors employees

The Physicians & Surgeons Medical Group has named two Saginaw Family Practice Clinic employees as March Employees of the Month.

Rosalyn Turner, medical assistant, was named in the clinical support category, and Stacie Thompson, clinical services representative II, was selected in the business support category.

“I was very pleased when I got the call that Stacie and Rosalyn both got employee of

the month,” said Janice Misner, LVN, nursing services supervisor at Saginaw. “Everyone here is very proud of them.”

Turner has worked at the clinic for more than three years. She is primarily responsible for coordinating patient referrals to specialists and other providers but regularly helps other staff members with answering phones, filing records and preparing samples for the lab, Misner said.

“Rosalyn has been a great asset to this clinic,” Misner said. “She’s willing to help in any area where she’s needed.”

Thompson joined the health science center in 2001 as a medical assistant in the Westside clinic before trans-

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Rosalyn Turner



Stacie Thompson

TCOM mentors

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of the small, close-knit community.

The physicians stressed one important theme to the medical students throughout the night: you have to love what you do. "People ask when I am going to retire and I say, NEVER!" said Lazerus Loeb, MD, an allergy specialist.

The passion for your specialty is what drives you to succeed, keeps you happy, and helps the important people in your life help create a supportive environment, they said.

After the panel discussion, the students had the opportunity for one-on-one discussions with specialists in their fields of interest. Because he is considering anesthesiology, Stratton spoke with Robert Clark, DO, TCOM 1998, during the round table portion of the event.

"It was good because I had a bunch of questions about lifestyle and about his family," Stratton said. "It was good just to find out what life is like for him and what I can do."

After talking with Dr. Clark, Stratton said he felt less anxious about choosing a specialty.

"For me it was great because I actually got to sit down [with a practicing physician]. I've been thinking about anesthesia, but who knows," he said. "Sitting down and talking with them one-on-one was really insightful." ★

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ferring to the Saginaw clinic in February 2003 to work as a clinical services representative II.

Misner said Thompson was eager to learn about working in the clinic's front office. "She has worked very hard to learn 'our way' of doing things and has made some excellent suggestions to improve them," she said.

"Stacie is very friendly, the patients like her, and she gets along very well with the physicians and staff," Misner said. ★

SPH awards

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Rekha Garadi, PhD, MPH
Linda Liewer, MPH
Otuonye Onyewuchi
Suzanne Tolbert, MD, MPH
Sandi Cleveland, MPH
Laura LaFontaine, MBA, MPH

The Alpha Sigma Chapter of Delta Omega, the premier National Honor Society for Public Health Professionals, inducted its first honorary member: Stephen Weis, DO, professor of internal medicine.

The faculty member inductees were Adela Gonzalez, MPA, PhD, assistant professor and acting chair of health management and policy, and Thomas Fairchild, PhD, associate professor of health management and policy.

Six students were inducted: Rosa Rosario-Rosado, MS, DrPH; Christopher Manuel, MPH; Michele Rorie, MBA, DrPH; David Barnett, PhD, MPH; Jessica Hickey, MPH; Amanda Medina, MA, MPH; Benjamin Brackett, MPH; and Linda Liewer, MPH.

Alumni inductees included: Naveed Ahmad, MD, MPH; Daryhl Johnson, MPH; Samira Meymand, DDS, MPH; Lt. Robert Martinez, MPH; Amy Raines, MPH; Vanessa Williams, MPH; Sherwin Daryani, MPH; and Bob Galvan, MPH.

Every year, School of Public Health students nominate and vote on several key awards to recognize special contributors to their success. This year, Manuel Bayona, PhD, professor of epidemiology, was chosen as Outstanding Faculty Member; Daisha Cipher, PhD, assistant professor of biostatistics, was

awarded Outstanding Advisor; and Jenny Cureton received Outstanding Staff Member.

PHSA student awardees included Carolina Alvarez-Garriga, MD, for Outstanding Student; Kimberly McGee for Outstanding Service to the



Rosa Rosario-Rosado, MS, DrPH, Outstanding Doctoral Graduate, and Fernando Treviño, PhD, MPH, SPH dean.

Public Health Student Association; and Sara Hossman, MPH, for Outstanding Contributions to PHSA-Sponsored Events.

During the final portion of the evening, current officers, acting president Kimberly McGee; MPH representative Sara Hossman, MPH; and DrPH representative Neda Moayad, MA, were recognized for their service to the student body, and in turn, welcomed the new student government into office: Kim Fulda, MPH, president; Patrick Moonan, MPH, vice president; Shimona Bhatia, secretary; Nadia Moayyad, treasurer; Nicole Bereolos, MPH representative; and Bill McCune, MPH, DrPH representative.

A surprise recognition was given to Kimberly McGee, of the Dean's Office, the SPH student services and the current PHSA board, for her exemplary service during the past academic year. ★

Faculty Advances

Neeraj Agarwal, PhD, associate professor of cell biology/genetics, organized the fifth International Symposium of Ocular Pharmacology and Therapeutics held in Monte Carlo, Monaco, March 11-14. He also chaired a session about ocular diseases and apoptosis at the symposium.

Peggy Smith-Barbaro, PhD, assistant professor and director of research and collaborative ventures in professional and continuing education, is first author of the paper "A divisional approach to enhancing research among osteopathic family practice residents," published in the April issue of the *Journal of American Osteopathic Association*. **Kim Fulda, MPH**, program/project coordinator in professional and continuing education, and **Samuel "Tim" Coleridge, DO**, professor of family medicine and director of medical education at JPS, are co-authors.

Sharon Clark, DO, MPH, adjunct assistant professor in the School of Public Health, has been named a fellow of the American College of Occupational and Environmental Medicine. She will accept the fellow medal at the ACOEM's annual spring conference this month.

Christopher de Fiebre, PhD, assistant professor of pharmacology/neuroscience, is first author of the paper "Comparison of the actions of gamma-butyrolactone and 1,4-butanediol in Swiss-Webster mice," published in the April issue of *Pharmacology, Biochemistry and Behavior*. **NancyEllen de Fiebre**, senior research associate; **Scott Coleman, PhD**, postdoctoral research associate; and **Michael Forster, PhD**, professor, all of pharmacology/neuroscience, are co-authors.

Michael Gatch, PhD, research assistant professor of pharmacology/neuroscience, chaired a session on the effects of environmental enrichment, drugs and age on prenatal mercury toxicity at the Texas Association of Behavior Analysis annual meeting in Dallas March 6.

Terrance Gratton, DrPH, assistant professor of environmental/occupational health, presented the poster "2004 NEHA Survey: What's in a Name" at the annual Educational Conference of the National Environmental Health Association in Anchorage, Ala., May 12. **Sejong Bae, PhD**, assistant professor of biostatistics, and Isabel Espinosa, graduate student in environmental health, are co-authors. **Dr. Gratton** is also first author of the paper "A Review of Health and Environmental Lead Data from a Neighbor-

hood Exposed to Smelter Emissions," published in the May issue of *Children's Health*. **Norman Trieff, PhD**, professor of environmental/occupational health, **Shondra Abuspin, MPH**, SPH 2003, and **Dolores Juarez, MPH**, SPH 2002, are co-authors.

Maria Perez-Lamigueiro, graduate student in biochemistry/molecular biology, has been selected to receive a FASEB/Minority Access to Research Careers travel award from the American Society for Biochemistry and Molecular Biology. She will present her research, "Polynucleosomal synthesis of poly(ADP-ribose) causes chromatin unfolding as determined by Micrococcal nuclease digestion kinetics," at the 2004 ASBMB Annual Meeting and Eighth IUBMB Conference in Boston, Mass., June 12-16. **Perez-Lamigueiro** is a graduate student in the laboratory of **Rafael Alvarez-Gonzalez, PhD**, associate professor of molecular biology/immunology.

Sue Gena Lurie, PhD, assistant professor of social/behavioral sciences, co-chaired the "Ethics and Advocacy in Health and Health Care" session at the Society for Applied Anthropology/Society for Medical Anthropology annual meeting in Dallas April 2. **Dr. Lurie** also presented a paper, "Distributing Access," with Lisa Henry, PhD, assistant professor of anthropology at UNT Denton, and Gordon Lurie, MA, adjunct instructor of anthropology at UNT Denton, at the meeting.

Thad Miller, MPH, research assistant in internal medicine, will present "Standardized Tool for Assessing Tuberculosis Surveillance and Action Performance and Cost" at the 100th International Conference of the American Thoracic Society in Orlando, Fla., May 23. **Peter Hilsenrath, PhD**, professor of health management/policy; Scott McNabb, PhD, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention - National Center for STD, HIV and TB Prevention; and **Patrick Moonan, MPH**, instructor, and **Stephen Weis, DO**, professor, both of internal medicine, are co-authors.

Patrick Moonan, MPH, instructor in internal medicine, will present "Developing a Standardized Evaluation Toolkit for Tuberculosis Control Programs" at the 100th International Conference of the American Thoracic Society, in Orlando, Fla., May 23. **Anita Kurian, MBBS, MPH**, research assistant in internal medicine; **Kristine Lykens, PhD**, assistant profes-

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Faculty Advances

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son of health management/policy; Scott McNabb, PhD, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention - National Center for STD, HIV and TB Prevention; and **Stephen Weis, DO**, professor of internal medicine, are co-authors.

John Podgore, DO, MPH, professor of pediatrics, presented "Pediatrics in Iraq-2004" at the American Academy of Pediatrics Seminar in Seattle Washington in March. **Dr. Podgore** discussed his participation in a delegation of U.S. physicians who traveled to Iraq in February to help Iraqi physicians create a national independent medical society. This project was featured in the May issue of the *American Academy of Pediatrics News*.

Ganesh Prasanna, PhD, research assistant professor of pharmacology/neuroscience, is corresponding author of "Hypoxia Augments TNF- α -Mediated Endothelin-1 Release and Cell Proliferation in Human Optic Nerve Head Astrocytes," published in the June issue of *Biochemical and Biophysical Research Communications*. **Devashish Desai, MS**, and **Shaoqing He, MS**, both graduate teaching assistants in pharmacology/neuroscience, and **Raghu Krishnamoorthy, PhD**, research assistant professor in pharmacology/neuroscience, and **Thomas Yorio, PhD**, dean of the Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences, are co-authors. **Dr. Prasanna** also presented the paper "Characterization of Endothelin Converting Enzyme Activities in Bovine Optic Nerve and Retina" at the annual meeting of the Association for Research in Vision and Ophthalmology in Ft. Lauderdale, Fla., April 24-29. **Dr. Yorio** and **Adnan Dibas, PhD**, research scientist in pharmacology/neuroscience, are co-authors. In addition, **Dr. Prasanna** moderated the paper session "Receptors and Second Messengers" at the meeting.

John Schetz, PhD, associate professor of pharmacology/neuroscience, was an invited plenary speaker at the annual

International Frontiers in Medicinal Chemistry meeting, a joint international meeting involving both industry and academic institutions, held in March at the Amil Fischer Center in Erlangen, Germany. **Dr. Schetz** was also invited to help select the best student posters at the meeting. In addition, he was appointed to summarize the consensus of the breakout group discussion on structural biology before the entire conference. **Dr. Schetz** is also author of the paper "FAUC 213, a highly selective dopamine D(4) receptor full antagonist, exhibits atypical antipsychotic properties in behavioral and neurochemical models of schizophrenia," published in the April issue of *Psychopharmacology*.

Xiangrong Shi, PhD, associate professor of integrative physiology, was invited by the NIH - National Cancer Institute to review the grants for Understanding Mechanisms of Physical Activity Behavior Change at Bethesda, Md., March 17-18.

Yi Wen, graduate teaching assistant in pharmacology/neuroscience, is first author of the paper "Transient cerebral ischemia induces aberrant neuronal cell cycle reentry and Alzheimer's disease-like tauopathy in female rats," published in the May/June issue of the *Journal of Biological Chemistry*. **Shaohua Yang**, graduate teaching assistant; **Ran Liu, MD**, senior research assistant; and **Peter Koulen, PhD**, assistant professor, all of pharmacology/neuroscience, and **Anne-Marie Brun-Zinkernagel**, research associate in cell biology/genetics, are co-authors.

Thomas Yorio, PhD, dean of the Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences, presented a paper, "Glucocorticoids and Ocular Hypertension: A special Case of Cross-Talk," in a symposium on the "Ins and Outs of Aqueous Humor" at the annual meeting of the Association for Research in Vision and Ophthalmology in Ft. Lauderdale, Fla., April 24-29. **Dr. Yorio** was also elected to serve as vice president for ARVO, an 11,000-member organization, for next year. ★