



SGA Rounds

Student Government Association

Newsletter

March-April 2015
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Letter from the Editor in Chief

OMS-II Saamia Shaikh



First and foremost, I want to thank all the students who have contributed their ideas, articles, event recaps, and—most importantly—time to make this newsletter happen. While it is easy to get lost in the books and become emerged in all the lectures or Tegrity recordings we must watch to stay afloat, you all still make the time to stay involved and make a difference. Every day, I am amazed and inspired by each and every one of you. As the editor in chief of *SGA Rounds*, I will continue to make this newsletter a platform for recognizing and celebrating the talents and accomplishments of the students.

In this issue of *SGA Rounds*, we have many of the same subsections as the inaugural issue, such as the COSGP updates, an update from the peer mentors, and highlights of current activities from the various clubs. New in this issue are exciting updates from D.O. Day, the India medical outreach trip, and helpful advice from an OMS-III. Many second-year students have been confronted with the issue of balancing studying for classes and studying for boards. For many of us if you study for one, you fall behind in the other. I know I have been struggling with this myself. OMS-III Dorin Deitch has provided some helpful advice on this topic, which you

will find in this issue. In the next issue, upperclassmen will discuss how to make the transition from second-year classes to third-year clinical rotations and how to apply knowledge and skills learned in the first two years of medical school during rotations.

We recently experienced a state of transition at NSU-COM due to us having a new dean. As a result, there has been some restructuring in terms of administration. Dr. Anthony Silvagni, who served as NSU-COM dean for over 16 years, has served as a mentor for many, a father for some, and an exceptional role model for everyone. We are very excited for Dr. Silvagni to take the next steps in his career and are extremely grateful for his service to not only NSU-COM but to the osteopathic profession at large. While we are sad to see Dr. Silvagni step down as dean, we are very excited to welcome our new leader, Dr. Elaine Wallace, who has been a significant force at NSU-COM for over 15 years. I can truly say, on behalf of all of the students at NSU-COM, that we are looking forward to her establishing her legendary mark as dean.

NSU-COM students continue to excel and succeed. In fact, many of them were elected to national board positions. OMS-III Kelly Thibert was elected national AMSA president elect for the incoming year, while OMS-II Terry Parsons was elected national vice president of the ACOFP. I will be serving as the national membership chair for Omega Beta Iota—the National Osteopathic Political Action Honor Society. Additionally, NSU-COM has received three NSU Student Life Achievement (STUEY) Award nominations. Dr. Joseph De Gaetano was nominated for executive of the year, OMS-IV Elyse Julian was nominated for student of the year, and SOMA was nominated for organization of the year. We look forward to the announcement of the winners on March 31.

It is truly an amazing time to be a student at NSU-COM. The hard work of all of our students is shining bright. Before I conclude, I just want to give a shout out to Scott Colton and Debra Gibbs from the Office of Medical Communications and Public Relations, without whom this publication would not be a reality. I hope you enjoy this issue of *SGA Rounds* and consider contributing to the next edition.

Sincerely,

Saamia Shaikh



COSGP UPDATE

By OMS-II Lauren Boudreau, Executive SGA President Elect

Earlier this January, Saamia Shaikh, executive SGA administrator of public affairs, and I had the opportunity to attend the winter quarterly meeting of the Council of Osteopathic Student Government Presidents (COSGP) at Campbell University School of Osteopathic Medicine (CU-SOM) in North Carolina. CU-SOM is one of the newer osteopathic medical schools and is currently filling its third class of students. The facilities were beautiful, and all the students were very energetic and welcoming to all of the student leaders. One of the meeting's highlights

was the leadership series, which encompassed presentations on topics such as getting your message across and leading intentionally. Each year at the winter quarterly meeting, the COSGP participates in a DO4U service project. This year the group held a fund-raiser and awareness event called Reps for Vets at CrossFit007, with all proceeds benefitting the Wounded Warrior Project. The NSU-COM student leadership looks forward to the COSGP Spring Quarterly Meeting, which will take place April 24-26 in Fort Lauderdale, Florida.



D.O. Snow Day 2015

By OMS-II Saamia Shaikh, Executive SGA Administrator of Public Affairs



On March 5, 11 NSU-COM students, along with students from the other osteopathic medical schools around the nation, arrived in Washington, D.C., to participate in D.O. Day on Capitol Hill. The snowy weather managed to cause a few cancellations, but the American Osteopathic Association (AOA) ensured that every student had a productive and worthwhile trip. For the first time ever, AOA Board of Trustees' members were available for invaluable mentoring sessions where osteopathic medical students could ask questions regarding anything they desired. Additionally, the AOA coordinated a very informative panel discussion on the ACGME single accreditation system followed by a question-and-answer session. This session provided essential information for students as we prepare to go through the Match process.

Even though we were not able to make it to the hill, each student was able to deliver a message to our respective senators and congressional representatives using creative videos to address key issues affecting medical students today. NSU-COM worked with Dr. Richard Thacker, who is an AOA Board of Trustees member, Dr. William Stager, FOMA president, and our very own Dr. James Howell, to produce a video containing a message about student debt, which was one of the key issues being discussed at D.O. Day on Capitol Hill. In the videos, students stressed the burden that student loans create on their lives and futures.

The medical career path is so unique that we are the only profession with a mandated residency after graduation. Interestingly, you can go to law school or business school and get a job upon



D.O. Snow Day 2015

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NSU-COM and LECOM-Bradenton gather in Washington, D.C.

graduating, but this is not the case in the medical profession. Furthermore, medical school in and of itself is a full-time job. We are not allowed to work in any capacity during medical school, so it is very unlikely that students can pay the interest on their loans as they go. The very concept behind medical student loans is flawed. Consequently, medical student loans should be held to the same standards as subsidized undergraduate loans in that interest should not begin to accrue until after graduation.

Other important topics discussed included increasing graduate medical education (GME) residency slots and the sustainable growth rate (SGR) formula. These key issues were chosen in part to show the continuum of concerns in medical practice during the various stages of medical training. The issue regarding GME is a very crucial one, especially as an increasing number of new medical schools open to meet the demand for physicians. Unfortunately, the

number of residency spots has not increased, leading to the possibility that students may not place in a residency program after training.

Attaining admission into medical school, successfully completing medical school, and taking multiple board exams are feats not easily accomplished that require sacrifices at every level. As a result, it should be maintained that there will be a spot for all residency program graduates as long as they qualify. The SGR formula (Medicare physician payment reform issue) is one that has tormented physicians since its inception. Every year, Congress creates a temporary patch rather than coming to a definitive solution. Last year, a permanent solution seemed very attainable through a bipartisan, bicameral act; however, we are still pushing to make this a reality so physicians can be compensated using a method that more accurately reflect the cost of health care today and can work without the added stress of possibly facing significant pay cuts.

Peer Mentors and Phlebotomy

By OMS-II Lucy Kahn, Executive Peer Mentor

As part of the academic portion of the Excellence in Peer Mentoring Program, the peer mentors had the privilege of participating in a live phlebotomy skills lab. While OMS-IIs partake in a phlebotomy lab during the PCM Procedures Week, the training they receive is on a mannequin arm. As a trained phlebotomist, I found the mannequin-arm experience to be vastly different than the live experience. Piercing through a plastic arm through a plastic vein did not require the finesse and care I felt was required to draw blood of a live patient. I wanted to give the peer mentors this chance before they entered their core rotations.

To accomplish this, I gave a brief presentation, providing the peer mentors with some advice and tips from my experience as a working phlebotomist. We then split up into smaller groups with a physician preceptor, who oversaw all of our draws.

Overall, the peer mentors had an incredible time. Many of them commented that the skills lab increased their phlebotomy confidence to the point that they felt comfortable performing the skill in the hospital.



NSU-COM IPOF Medical Outreach Trip to India

By Siddarth Goyal, IPOF President

NSU's first student-organized health outreach trip to India, which took place December 21-27, 2014, teamed 13 students from NSU's College of Osteopathic Medicine and College of Dental Medicine. The effort to serve the medically underserved tribal population of Dang, Gujarat, India, was led by Anthony J. Silvagni, D.O., Pharm.D., M.Sc., Lalit K. Goyal, M.D., Ashok Patel, D.M.D., and OMS-II Siddarth Goyal.

Dr. Patel, who is the visionary behind the new clinic being built in Ahwa, helped ensure our success abroad. Local authorities and government officials welcomed the team, and hospital-appointed doctors helped host a free medical and dental camp at the general hospital in Ahwa, Dang. The KJ Patel Charitable Trust, which is constructing a state-of-the-art health care facility for the area, assisted with local arrangements. Several doctors also traveled from nearby cities to help. Our activities were featured in the *Times of India* newspaper as 1,500 patients ranging from infants to elders were served in the course of our stay.

In the span of one week, NSU medical and dental students aided patients with illnesses ranging from leprosy and scabies to scaled skin syndrome and severely malnourished children. Sickle cell anemia and multiple other forms were present, particularly among the women. We also saw skin lesions and generalized poor health. Severe eye problems

included advanced staged cataracts. Dental issues ranged from precancerous lesions of leukoplakia and oral submucous fibrosis to buccal space infections and extractions.

Throughout the week, about 1,500 patients benefited from the camp. Some examples of student involvement included assisting with a live birth, witnessing cataract surgeries, and caring for a woman who had breast cancer. In addition, several students proved invaluable as they served as the main translators who ensured that the patients understood the medical aspect of what we were doing. Dianna Silvagni, J.D., NSU-COM clinical assistant professor of medical education, served in a crucial role as the hospital staff trainer and leader who brought great joy to the children by bringing them gifts. In addition, Shivani Goyal conducted important nutrition surveys with student doctor Anu Nair with all the patients being seen in order to provide continuous care and address the nutrition deficiencies that are particular to this area. This hospital was in desperate need of assistance because it did not even have its own permanent staff. Consequently, several doctors traveled from nearby cities in order to help, while some villagers traveled up to three hours to come to the medical camp.

Drs. Silvagni and Goyal, who is an emergency medicine physician, were excellent mentors who helped many patients.



Medical Outreach

NSU-COM IPOF Medical Outreach Trip to India

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They also both held lectures during lunch hour to integrate the cases being seen. The group as a whole agreed that both Dr. Silvagni and Dr. Goyal are doctors we aspire to be one day because they embody the humanistic aspect of medicine that NSU-COM strives for. We also felt that the facility being built by KJ Patel Trust will serve as a model for the national mandate in India to uplift the tribal population, especially within the health care sector. In addition to providing free medical and dental care to the region's 50,000 schoolchildren, and to adults at a subsidized cost, the facility will be used to train 25 to 30 female tribal high school graduates every year as medical and dental assistants/auxiliaries.

Without the guidance and experience of Dr. Silvagni, this trip would not have been possible. He is a great leader and physician, and everyone we met looked up to him. He will be conducting more trips in the future and growing the NSU-



COM International Medical Outreach Program, which will offer wonderful opportunities for more students to work alongside Dr. Silvagni in the future. It was truly a blessing to have him join the trip, which was a huge success. Trips like this bring health awareness and a sense of relief to local residents, which is why many future trips will be needed to bridge the gap between this particular area and other urban cities.

Following are the students who participated in the medical outreach trip to India:

OMS-II: Siddarth Goyal, Stephanie Tamayo, Anu Nair, Aroba Sadaf, and Varun Goyal

OMS-I: Nishant Patel, Sunny Parekh, Banshi Patel, Rohin Chand, and Christy Vadakkan

Dental: Natasha Patel, Nimish Maniar, and Radha Patel



Interprofessional Participation at Chinese Health Fair

By OMS-II Adrienne Law, Event Organizer



In January, 35 NSU-COM students and 8 students from NSU's College of Optometry participated in an educational health fair for the Chinese population of South Florida that took place at the Chinese Baptist Church of Coral Springs.

Soling Li, D.O., M.P.H., a 2000 NSU-COM alumna, spearheaded the Third Annual Chinese Health Fair, which included screenings for HIV, hepatitis, hypertension, diabetes, dermatological issues, and visual acuity. In addition to providing health screenings, Dr. Li gave an informative talk about hepatitis B while other invited speakers discussed a range of topics.

Zhifeng Huo, M.D., a dermatopathologist, and Ran Huo, M.D., a dermatologist, were a father-son team that headed a dermatology screening room that allowed several medical students interested in pursuing dermatology to observe the physicians'



physical examinations. Kevin Mei, Pharm.D., educated the audience about the importance of medications, while optometrist Michael Au, O.D., who is an NSU alumnus, gave a lecture on dry eyes, floaters, and diabetes.

"These are people who need help," said OMS-II Jonathan Grossman, who enjoyed participating in the event because it served as an opportunity for NSU Health Professions Division students to hone their physical diagnosis skills and provide screenings and information to at-risk populations. "We need more of these community health informational events because I believe people do not seek these things out on their own."



According to Dr. Li, the risk of hepatitis B increases if patients have parents from Asia, Latin America, the Middle East, and other parts of the world, which is why she encouraged the health fair attendees to be aware of hepatitis B testing and treatment. She also refuted the myth that there exists a healthy carrier stage of hepatitis B, explaining that the virus could start hurting a person's liver even though the individual is asymptomatic.

To learn more about participating in next year's Chinese health fair, please contact OMS-I Jennifer Wong at jw1192@nova.edu.

Clubs and Organizations Updates

Inaugural SAACOPF Chili Cook-Off

By OMS-II Terry Parsons, ACOFP President – NSU-COM Student Chapter

This was the inaugural year for our Chili Cook-Off event, which proved to be a big hit with the students and faculty members. Our goal was to provide a light-hearted and interactive way for students to mingle with faculty members as well as family physician residents and highlight how much fun we like to have as an organization—ACOF family style.

We had an impressive lineup for our competition, with over 13 students entering their favorite chili concoctions that ranged from bison to vegetarian chili and everything in between. Our honored faculty judges this year included Drs. Joe and Hilda De Gaetano, Traci-Lyn Eisenberg, and David Boesler, who needed iron stomachs to sample all the chili. In the end, Jesse Grieb was named the winner for his masterpiece entitled Jesse's Southwestern Chili. I'd like to extend a big thank you to all our contestants for sharing their delicious chili with us and to our judges for their hard work.

Not to be outdone, we allowed the faculty judges to enter their own dessert bakeoff. Our student judges

for this event included Lauren Boudreau, Ravi Uppal, Jarryd Reed, and Stephanie Tamayo. Our beloved Dr. Boesler took top honors for his yummy peanut butter fudge entry.

To top off the evening of fun competition, we held a hot-dog-eating contest and cheered on our favorite contestants as they gorged themselves toward glory. There could

be only one winner, however, and by a slight margin the champion was Francis Lomanta. All the winning contestants took home first-place prizes and will hold on to their esteemed titles until next year's Second Annual Chili Cook-Off.

This year's event was so much fun that we had multiple requests from both students and faculty members to make this an annual event on campus, and we are happy to oblige. Many attendees walked away with wonderful door prizes, raffle items, full bellies, and cherished memories of a night filled with laughter.



Clubs and Organizations Updates

A Beautiful Mind: Neuro-Psych's Growing Success

By OMS-II Ariel Lee, Neuro-Psych President

Neuro-Psych, which began this year as a small academic club, has taken the opportunity to expand and play a much larger role within the NSU-COM student community. With the membership roster more than doubled from the previous year, Neuro-Psych is now offering continuing opportunities for volunteer work, internships, conferences, and speakers who discuss material regarding neurology and psychiatry.

The ability of Neuro-Psych to blossom into a much more dynamic and multifaceted club hinged in part on its new official partnerships with the American Association of Neurology and PsychSIGN. Neuro-Psych was proud to announce itself an official student chapter of both national organizations in 2014 after the dual deal was sealed by research fellow Mike Carranza and I. Both organizations have offers such as online learning courses, conferences, and summer research opportunities for members.

Some of the highlights of Neuro-Psych's new ventures include a free comprehensive midterm

review for the OMS-Is Neuroanatomy course that was successfully arranged for the first time by Trevor Barton, Neuro vice president. Current members are also granted access to a Google Drive, which is packed with helpful materials regarding neurology and psychiatry, and offered the famous Broward Psych Tour to see the locked wards in Broward Health. This year, Neuro-Psych was also able to hold its inaugural Healthy Mind, Healthy Body health screening event, which was organized by Garrett Van Ostran, vice president of Psych.

Neuro-Psych has also made a meaningful impact on our local community. Events benefitting the autism community, the Special Olympics, Parkinson's, and Alzheimer's were promoted and attended this year. If you are interested in joining a club that offers many facets of two fascinating medical fields, please contact neuropsych.nsucom@gmail.com. Membership is \$20 for first-, second-, and third-year students and includes a free mint-green American Apparel screen printed T-shirt and the 2018 White Coat Ceremony DVD.



Pediatrics Club Honors Dr. Emily Schmitt Lavin

By OMS-II Patricia Camino, Pediatrics Club President



On November 10, the college's Pediatrics Club honored Emily Schmitt Lavin, Ph.D., a professor and associate director of math, science, and technology at the NSU Farquhar College of Arts and Sciences, with the Arnold Melnick Child Advocacy Award. Her areas of academic focus include gene expression, genetics, and genealogy in the areas of research in biology and cellular molecular biology.

In her free time, Dr. Schmitt Lavin is a strong advocate for children with A-T (Ataxia Telangiectasia) and spends her weekends preparing for marathons to raise money for children afflicted with the disease.

More specifically, she sponsors a girl afflicted with A-T and works diligently to arrange fund-raisers for all children with A-T.

Five years ago, Dr. Schmitt Lavin sparked a movement to incorporate more science in elementary schools by having Science Alive nights, which is a collaboration between elementary and NSU students that demonstrates simple and fun science experiments aimed at increasing the love of science. The project has expanded to include many schools and involved approximately 50 undergraduate and graduate students.

Clubs and Organizations Updates

SOMA Convention Recap

By OMS-II Catalina Rodriguez, SOMA President

Directly following the AOA's D.O. Day on Capitol Hill, the National Spring Student Osteopathic Medical Association (SOMA) Convention was held on March 7-8. Chapter presidents and national liaison officers (NLO) from schools all over the country came together to initiate the formal transition into the new SOMA leadership as well as to discuss and vote on resolutions submitted from members. Chapters met with their respective region trustees to discuss local progress in the context of the greater national goal.

I, along with Sundeep Bajwa, who serves as our chapter's national liaison officer, represented NSU-COM SOMA. Our incoming chapter president Michelle Hojnicky and NLO Aadil Vora were also part of the transition meeting by tuning in electronically. Each chapter discussed its successes and failures from events held throughout the year while the other chapters took note, while the national SOMA provided numerous workshops on professional growth as well as how to develop several clinical skills.

One of the most important goals of this convention was to discuss the resolutions that were submitted in committees and to vote on them so they could be presented to the AOA House of Delegates in Chicago. Twenty-two resolutions, which were heavily discussed for hours, were submitted. It was truly remarkable to see the passion for change and advocacy among the students. During the House of Delegates, the resolutions were once again discussed, and comments were open to the attendees to share their insights. Upon closure of discussion, each school had two voting delegates that would vote in favor or against each resolution. The closing reception concluded with one of our very own SOMA members, Kristi Ray, winning the Internal Medical Relief/Medical Missions Scholarship.

This has been a phenomenal year of growth for the SOMA, and while we are proud of what has been accomplished thus far, there is a strong foundation in place to continue the progress in the years to come.



Cardio for Cupid

By OMS-I Aadil Vora, SOMA OMS-I Representative

On February 20, the Student Osteopathic Medical Association (SOMA) held its Second Annual Cardio for Cupid event, which is a Valentine's Day-themed cardiovascular health awareness day that focuses on fitness and healthy eating. The event, which was coordinated by OMS-II Catalina Rodriguez (SOMA president), OMS-I Aadil Vora, and OMS-I Michelle Hohnicki, was established to create a tie-in with February's Heart Health Month as designated by the American Heart Association and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

The participants, who wore red in support of heart health, included OMS-II Marco Casanova, who opened the event by talking about his personal connection to cardiovascular health issues, and OMS-II Siddarth Goyal and OMS-I Nishant Patel, who played up-tempo music to energize the attendees. Activities included a 45-minute cardio workout session coordinated by OMS-I Daniel Leary on the Terry Building patio that was open to all HPD students as well as a last-one-standing squat competition won by OMS-I Jared Ham-Ying.

Heart disease is the leading cause of death of men and women in the United States. Every year, 735,000 Americans suffer from heart attacks, many of which can be prevented by a healthier diet and

regular exercise. It is recommended to maintain a diet that is low in salt, fat, and cholesterol but rich in fresh fruits and vegetables. Simple exercises such as a brisk 10-minute walk three times a day and five times a week can truly make a difference. And if you smoke, quitting the unhealthy habit is also a huge step forward in your heart health.



Early action is also a key element as awareness of cardiovascular health disease is important not only to people who are at risk, but also the community that surrounds them. Although a 2005 study showed that 95 percent of Americans know that chest pain is major symptom of a heart attack, only 27 percent knew the other major symptoms of heart attacks, such as upper-body pain or discomfort in the arms, back, neck, jaw, or upper stomach, shortness of breath and nausea, lightheadedness, or cold sweats. Almost half of all sudden cardiac

deaths happen outside the hospital, out of reach of medical professionals, so knowing the major signs and reacting quickly by calling 911 can save lives.

"I make it a priority to get an hour of cardio or strength training in every day after class," said OMS-I Jamie Buldoc. "I'll do a spinning class in the NSU RecPlex or lift weights—anything to get my heart pumping." According to Leary, "Cardio is a positive stress to the body that builds it up,"

Clubs and Organizations Updates

Cardio for Cupid

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he stated. "I think cardio helps the body respond better to the stresses we face in medical school that are constantly threatening to break it down, such as sitting for long hours in class or staying up late to study."

The SOMA will be coordinating the Third Annual Cardio for Cupid event in February 2016 around Valentine's Day.



Study for Class or Prepare for Boards?

By OMS-III Dorin Deitch

This question has loomed large for all second-year medical students at one point or another: “Should I study for class or prepare for board exams?” There is never an easy answer. For many people, doing well in class is a priority, and maintaining their class rank is important. At the same time, results on board examinations can either put your foot in the door for a potential interview with a residency program or shut the door on that same potential. Here are some things you need to keep in mind:

Whatever You Do, Do Not Fail a Class

Do you think residencies are going to care more if you got a COMLEX of 590 instead of 550 or that you have a failed class on your transcript? Make sure that whatever your preparation is, you pass your classes, even if it means ignoring board studying. Also, by studying for a remediation, you delay board studying further.

Focus on Integration

For whatever classes you are studying, relate the info back to First Aid, Pathoma, etc. It will strengthen your knowledge by having more associations in different resources. Watching Pathoma’s cardiac congenital anomalies and looking in First Aid will augment whatever the lecture says about the same topics.

Try to Be Self-Aware

If you find yourself being less productive with a certain resource, change it up. First Aid can be bland, which means you can read the same passage 10 times and still forget what you read. Change it up. Watch Pathoma, view the lecture, or study with friends. Don’t forget to give yourself time to decompress by exercising, watching an occasional movie, or keeping in touch with family and friends.

Be Consistent

You are a successful student in medical school for a reason. You have gotten to this point by figuring out how you study best and executing. If you learn best by going to class, continue to make that effort. If you learn best by watching Tegrity, continue to work on that. If you are trying to save extra time by not going to class, try to remember which teachers you learn best from and cherry-pick those lectures.

If anyone has more specific questions about studying, feel free to contact me. Also, if you have any specific questions you would like answered in the next issue of *SGA Rounds*, please email them to me at dd1237@nova.edu.

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