

# News from

# The Osteopathic Research Center

Located at the University of North Texas Health Science Center, Fort Worth, Texas

## From the Executive Director

Dear Friends,

This fall provided great opportunities to communicate with our sponsors, leaders within the osteopathic profession, and our osteopathic constituency



Licciardone

about the research being conducted at The Osteopathic Research Center (ORC).

I was pleased to have the opportunity to present to the Board of Deans of the American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine on October 4 during their meeting in Phoenix, Ariz. Later that month, we had the opportunity to present ORC research updates to our External Board of Scientific Counselors during a teleconference on October 8, and to our External Advisory Committee during their ORC site visit on October 14 and 15. In both settings, we received useful feedback as well as very favorable comments about the accomplishments and future direction of the ORC.

Our ORC administration and faculty gave eight presentations during the first day of the Research Conference at the American Osteopathic Association's Annual Convention and Scientific Seminar in Las Vegas, Nev.

Additionally, I presented research updates at the Osteopathic Heritage Foundation's Research/Education Conclave and at the meeting of the National Association of Osteopathic Foundations during the convention. Cathleen Kearns and I both gave ORC presentations to the American

See *DIRECTOR*, Page 2



## ORC Receives First R01 Grant

Lisa Hodge, PhD, the Osteopathic Heritage basic science research chair at The Osteopathic Research Center, received notification November 24 that her \$1.4 million R01 proposal on Mechanisms of Lymphatic Pump - Enhancement of Immune Function was funded. The award starts January 1, 2009 and ends December 31, 2012. This is the first R01 for the ORC. Congratulations Dr. Hodge!

## A Conversation with UNTHSC President Scott B. Ransom, DO, MBA, MPH

In a recent interview with Cathleen Kearns, administrative director for The Osteopathic Research Center, Scott B. Ransom, DO, MBA, MPH, reflected on the role of the ORC on the University of North Texas Health Science Center campus, the role of the ORC in the osteopathic profession, and the role of research in advancing the profession. Excerpts from that interview are included below:

**Q:** *Dr. Ransom, can you share your thoughts with us about The Osteopathic Research Center and its importance on the University of North Texas Health Science Center campus?*

**A:** The University of North Texas Health Science Center is honored to be the home to the profession-wide Osteopathic Research Center. As you know, one of the reasons the profession initially awarded The Osteopathic Research Center to UNTHSC was because of our strong research infrastructure that afforded the ORC opportunities to develop in a way that maximized

See *PRESIDENT*, Page 3

# *Happy Holidays and Best Wishes for a Happy, Healthy and Prosperous New Year*



## *Your Friends at The Osteopathic Research Center*

### **DIRECTOR** ——— *Continued from Page 1* ———

College of Osteopathic Family Physicians during their convention program.

During my many encounters with our osteopathic family this fall, I cannot overstate the support for the research being conducted at the ORC and the enthusiasm for our many activities and new initiatives rolled out this year. Some of the most frequent comments involved our new website, newsletter, and annual report formats; scientific publications; presentations at national and international conferences; and hosting of the international research symposium on somato-visceral interactions and autonomic mechanisms of manual therapy.

I am pleased to announce that Lisa Hodge PhD, our Osteopathic Heritage basic science research chair was recently awarded a R01 grant for \$1.4 million from the National Institutes of Health to study the relation between lymphatic pump treatment and immune function. We will provide additional details on this exciting line of research in future newsletters.

Further, I am happy to announce that the Osteopathic Heritage Foundation has funded a project as part of our emerging health services and policy research initiative at the ORC. See page 6 for details.

I am proud of the many notable achievements of the ORC during 2008. These are attributable in large measure to the support provided by our sponsors and the dedicated efforts of our faculty and staff. However, it is important to also acknowledge our institutional support and the research culture at the University of North Texas Health Science Center. See page 1 for related comments by our president, Dr. Scott Ransom. Finally, I wish you a joyous Holiday Season and a Happy New Year. We look forward to seeing you in 2009.

The Osteopathic Research Center Newsletter is published in electronic format by The Osteopathic Research Center at the University of North Texas Health Science Center, Fort Worth, Texas.

### *ORC Executive Committee*

**John C. Licciardone, DO, MS, MBA**  
*Executive Director and Osteopathic  
Heritage Clinical Research Chair*

**Scott T. Stoll, DO, PhD**  
*Founding Executive Director*

**Hollis H. King, DO, PhD**  
*Associate Executive Director*

**Cathleen M. Kearns**  
*Administrative Director*

**Michael L. Smith, PhD**  
*Research Director*

**des Angles Crusier, PhD, MPA**  
*Research Education Director*

**Karan P. Singh, PhD**  
*Biostatistics Core Director*

**Lisa M. Hodge, PhD**  
*Osteopathic Heritage Basic Science Research Chair*

**H. Fred Downey, PhD**  
*Regents Professor*

**Kendi L. Hensel, DO**  
*OMM Residency Director*

### *Sponsors*

Osteopathic Heritage Foundation  
American Osteopathic Foundation  
American Association of Colleges of  
Osteopathic Medicine  
American Osteopathic Association

interactions between physician researchers and basic science researchers. I think the ORC has been able to build on a strong research foundation at UNTHSC, which has helped the center grow. The ORC has been able to create opportunities for research funding from the National Institutes of Health because of the relationships its leaders have fostered between faculty in the Texas College of Osteopathic Medicine and faculty in the Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences.

It is a privilege to have our physician researchers and basic science researchers working hand-in-hand to develop the evidence base for osteopathic manipulative medicine, which has been a pillar of the profession since it was founded more than a century ago. The ORC is conducting the largest NIH-funded clinical trials in the profession. They are also conducting groundbreaking mechanisms of action research that looks at how and why manipulation works, and they are enhancing the body of knowledge of how osteopathic physicians practice differently than other physicians through health services and policy research. Finally, the ORC collaborates with biomedical engineers in the Osteopathic Heritage Foundation Physical Medicine Core Research Facility to assess the impact of osteopathic manipulation on function and motion.

**Q:** *Can you share some thoughts with us about the role of the ORC in the profession?*

**A:** Three of the profession's leading organizations – the American Osteopathic Foundation, the American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine and the American Osteopathic Association have been strong supporters of The Osteopathic Research Center. These professional organizations have been joined by the Osteopathic Heritage Foundation to build a national center of excellence here on the UNTHSC campus that focuses on uniquely osteopathic research.

The ORC serves as the flagship research center for the osteopathic profession, and it is fitting that the center is housed on the UNTHSC campus because of our strong commitment to



**Scott B. Ransom, DO, MBA, MPH,  
President of the University of North Texas  
Health Science Center**

---

research growth and excellence.

As I heard John Licciardone, the executive director of the ORC, speak to several groups this Fall, he indicated that more than half of the visits to osteopathic physicians for osteopathic manipulative treatment (OMT) are for low back pain. By the time the ORC completes the current clinical trial it is conducting on

*See PRESIDENT, Page 4*

low back pain in 2011, it expects to be able to demonstrate that for these visits, D.O.s can offer uniquely osteopathic care that has been proven to be effective across a number of smaller studies, in a meta-analysis, and now, in a definitive clinical trial. Could the profession have imagined being able to validate treatments for a majority of its OMT visits seven years ago when the ORC was founded? This is an amazing amount of progress in a relatively short timeframe in the research world, and the research has been conducted with a modest amount of money compared to other research centers across the country, and according to NIH standards for a viable research center.

As a profession, we always tout the D.O. difference. By employing a broad-based approach to evaluating the efficacy of osteopathic manipulation, the mechanisms of action of osteopathic manipulation, and other distinctive aspects of osteopathic medical practice, the ORC is advancing the entire osteopathic profession, and is helping to build a strong foundation for our students to stand on in the future. It is exciting to lead a health science center where a growing body of research is being conducted to document these differences in the osteopathic approach to health that helps improve patient care throughout the State of Texas and across the United States.

**Q:** *Dr. Ransom, can you talk for a moment about the emphasis on research at UNTHSC and why you feel that research is critical to an osteopathic medical school and its mission to provide primary care for people across the State of Texas and the United States? Would you also provide comments on why you feel an osteopathic medical school with a strong research program advances the entire profession?*

**A:** In the two years I have been the president of UNTHSC, I have supported the research enterprise on campus to make the Texas College of Osteopathic Medicine the strongest osteopathic medical school in the nation. One of the institutional goals is for UNTHSC to become a Top 10 Health Science Center, and you just cannot get there without a dedication

to scientific exploration and a spirit of discovery. The commitment of our researchers to excellence is a key step in reaching our goals.

When we are successful and we are ranked as one of the Top 10 Health Science Centers in the country for primary care, the entire osteopathic profession will benefit. To have a health science center whose flagship institution is a college of osteopathic medicine ranked next to other top-notch medical schools would be a tremendous boost to the entire profession. Being ranked in this way would cut to the heart of the visibility issues that the profession has worked for years to overcome.

As we implement the strategies and enhance the infrastructure that will help us reach Top 10 status, it is critically important that we develop a well-rounded research enterprise. When Top 10 schools focused on primary care are covered in the news media, it is usually for a research discovery, not a clinical care scenario. Does this mean we abandon our mission of training top quality osteopathic physicians to serve the State of Texas and the United States? No. What it means is we have already invested a significant amount of time, energy and money bringing our osteopathic medical students to the top of the profession. While we cannot afford to rest on our laurels in terms of academics, or in terms of the number of primary care physicians we produce for Texas, we can afford to support an equally important endeavor of developing a strong research enterprise that will help carry the osteopathic profession and osteopathic medical education to new heights. UNTHSC is unique in its research mission and vision because of the strength of our basic science researchers, because of the willingness of our physicians to learn about and conduct research, and because of our emphasis on uniquely osteopathic research that is conducted through The Osteopathic Research Center.

Producing excellent doctors and having a strong, vibrant research enterprise are not mutually exclusive goals for an osteopathic medical school. We can and must do both. Anything less shortchanges the public and the profession.

# Mark Your Calendar!!!

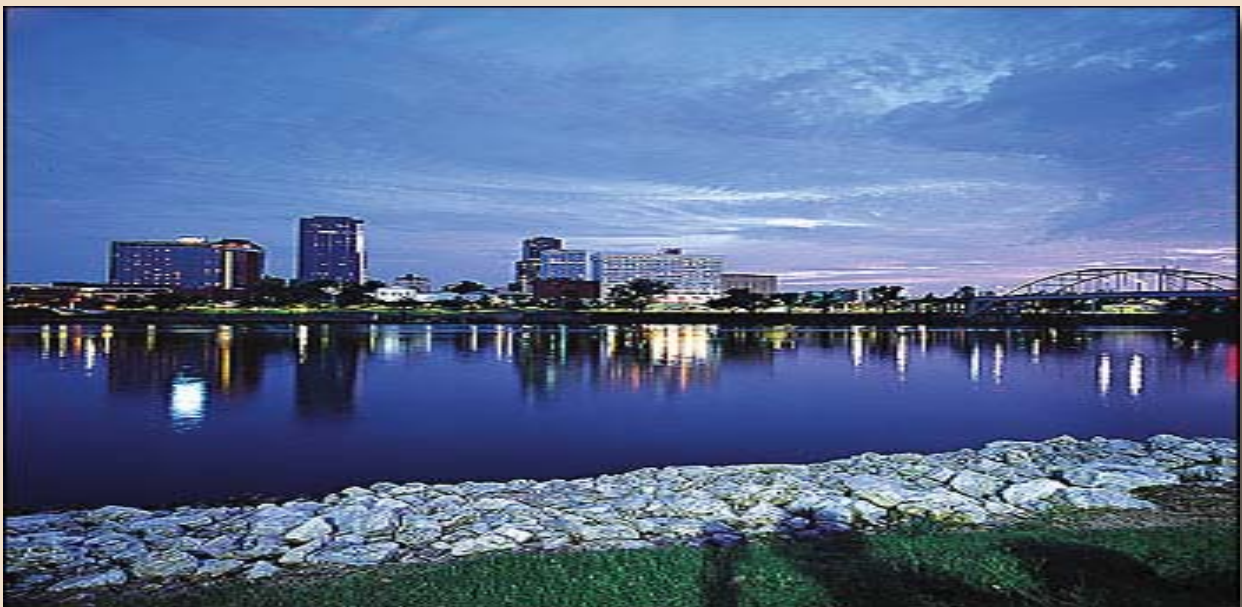
## *OCCTIC X:*

### **Training Researchers in Manual Medicine**

*March 23-24, 2009*

*Peabody Hotel in Little Rock, Arkansas*

*immediately preceding the  
American Academy of Osteopathy Convocation*



*This conference will focus on training students, interns, residents and junior faculty to conduct manual medicine research.*

*Co-Chairs: Michael Smith, PhD, ORC Research Director  
Kendi Hensel, DO, OMM Residency Director*

*Visit the ORC website at <http://www.hsc.unt.edu/orc/events.htm>  
for more information.*

## ***Licciardone Receives Osteopathic Health Services Grant***

John C. Licciardone, DO, MS, MBA, ORC executive director and Osteopathic Heritage clinical research chair, has received a grant from the Osteopathic Heritage Foundation to conduct a national study of ambulatory medical care provided by osteopathic physicians in the United States during the five-year period from 2002 through 2006. The project will be conducted under the ORC's emerging health services and policy research initiative.

The grant of \$152,610 is for the six-month period January 1, 2009 through June 30, 2009. This intensive research timetable relates to the project's purpose, which is to lay the groundwork for a major longitudinal study of ambulatory health care in the United States to assess the distinctive aspects of osteopathic medicine.

The research will involve analysis of data from

the National Ambulatory Medical Care Survey. More than 134,000 patient visits, providing a representative sample of more than 4.5 billion ambulatory medical care visits from 2002 through 2006, will be studied.

The research will focus on characterizing osteopathic medical care generally, and also in response to specific symptoms (low back problems, neck problems, headache, and depression) and diagnoses (hypertension, diabetes mellitus, and upper respiratory infection) commonly seen in primary care.

"This research is yet another example of how The Osteopathic Research Center is at the forefront of the profession's efforts to demonstrate and promote the distinctiveness of osteopathic medicine," Licciardone said. "We look forward to being involved in the long-term prospective study that may eventually define and shape the future of osteopathic medicine."

***Are you looking for an additional tax deduction for 2008?***

***Support uniquely osteopathic research with a donation to***

***The Osteopathic Research Center***

Your contribution helps us conduct clinical trials to look at the efficacy of osteopathic manipulative medicine, basic science research that explores the underlying mechanisms of action of OMM, and health services and policy research that helps highlight the distinctive ways in which osteopathic physicians provide patient care.

Checks should be made payable to UNTHSC-The Osteopathic Research Center. Please send any donations to The Osteopathic Research Center, UNTHSC, 3500 Camp Bowie Boulevard, Fort Worth, TX 76107.  
Attn. Cathleen Kearns