

From the Assistant Dean for Rural Medicine

It is difficult to believe that the inaugural year of the Rural Osteopathic Medicine of Texas (ROME) curriculum is over. We had a strong group of 12 students in this initial class. Some of the highlights of the year have included visits from several of our rural faculty. **Dr. Russell Thomas** (Eagle Lake) sparked the students' interest in the rural environment with a dynamic portrayal of a physician's life in a rural community. **Dr. Steve Ellerbe** (Liberty) and **Dr. Jeffrey Rettig** (Groesbeck) led hands-on skills workshop sessions.

Understanding other cultures is a major emphasis in the ROME curriculum. We were extremely fortunate to have **Dr. Mary Shaw**, from the University of Indiana, facilitate two sessions dealing with this very important aspect of clinical practice. Another very important part of clinical practice is cancer prevention and early detection. Realizing this, our plan is to have a thread of cancer education run throughout the four years. **Dr. Billy Phillips**, a world expert in cancer epidemiology, led two sessions to start this sequence. Basic epidemiologic facts were presented and students were tasked to locate county demographics about their assigned continuity site, with a special focus on cancer epidemiology. In addition, problem-based cases were presented relative to the systems course and with a focus on specific issues with which the rural population may be confronted. All these were in addition to the students' regular systems-oriented curricular studies.

The year ended with the Objective Standardized Clinical Examination (OSCE) during which the students had to demonstrate the following skills: starting an IV; inserting a Foley catheter; colonoscopy; performing an EKG; performing a pelvic exam; and suturing a laceration. These skills were all demonstrated on simulated models and served as their rural final examination for the year. It has, indeed, been a landmark year for the Division of Rural Medicine, at the Texas College of Osteopathic Medicine (TCOM). We are very proud of the accomplishments of this first class, and we are eagerly anticipating the next cohort of students.

I have been very busy visiting several remote places in Texas to explore the development of other clinical rotation sites. Gainesville, Cuero, Goliad, La Grange, Alamo, Brenham, Brownwood, Seymour, Crockett, Mission, Katy, and Laredo — "I've been everywhere, man!" Everywhere I go, I am received with typical Texas hospitality. This is greatly appreciated. As we move forward with the planning, there are excellent prospects for additional core rotation sites. I have been truly fortunate to meet several physicians across the state who are eager to participate in the education of future rural physicians.

Another exciting development has been the introduction of Senate Bill 31 by Sen. Jane Nelson. This Bill would provide scholarships for students enrolled in a rural medical or dental program but would not require the student to have a sponsoring community. When this Bill passes the legislature, we will have an opportunity to provide scholarships for our ROME students.

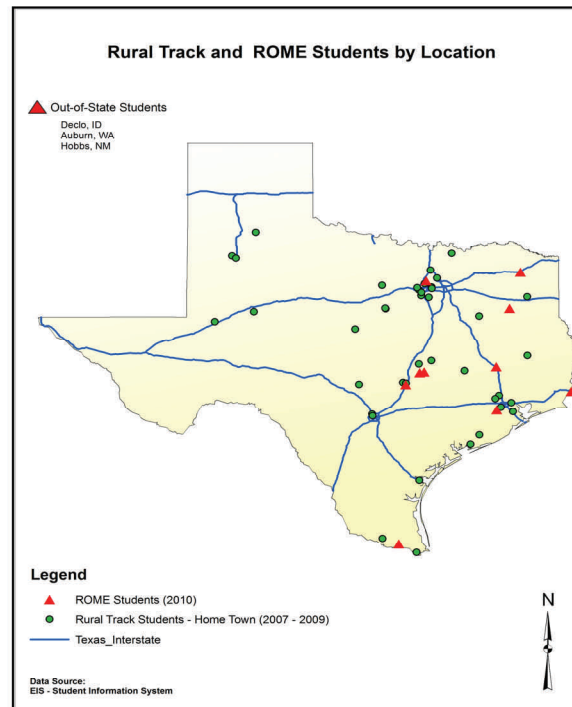
During the past year, we have literally shared our new curriculum with medical educators from around the world. Educators from Finland, who are long-time friends of Dr. and Mrs. T. Eugene Zachary, are extremely interested in our rural educational curriculum, especially its emphasis on the students' involvement in the community.

It has, indeed, been an exciting year, and we look ahead to continued growth as we move forward. I must say that without the loyal support of our osteopathic physicians across the state and their dedication to training future rural physicians, this program would not and could not exist. We in the Division of Rural Medicine are extremely grateful and thankful for their participation.

John R. Bowling, DO, FACP
Assistant Dean for Rural Medicine

RURAL TRACK AND ROME: WHERE ARE THEY FROM?

Presently, there are 52 Class of 2007-2009 medical students participating in the elective Rural Family Medicine Track and 12 Class of 2010 students in Rural Osteopathic Medical Education of Texas (ROME), the new, expanded four-year rural medicine curriculum. Mapping from the Texas College of Osteopathic Medicine Admissions Office indicate students' hometowns. There is a distinction, however, between the information available for Rural Track enrollees and the ROME enrollees. The **circles** on the map below show the pre-admission address location for the Rural Track participants, while the **triangles** show the actual hometown for those in the ROME curriculum. An interesting mix of urban and rural roots...



CLASS OF 2007 RURAL TRACK ENROLLEES: WHERE ARE THEY GOING?

Where are the 14 students graduating in May, who have completed the Rural Family Medicine Track, going? Their future training plans include residency matches in family practice for six of the graduates. Of the remaining eight, five have chosen residencies in primary care specialties (IM/Peds, Ob/Gyn and Peds). One graduate will train in emergency medicine; one in psychiatry; and one plans to do a rotating internship before choosing a specialty. **In short, 78.5% have selected a career in primary care.**

Name	Residency Match	Residency Name	Location
Matthew Blackburn	Family Med	McLennan County Family Practice	Waco, TX
Didi Ebert- Blackburn	Family Med	McLennan County Family Practice	Waco, TX
Lieu Chau	Family Med	Christus Santa Rosa	San Antonio, TX
Jennifer Kovaric-Hendrix	Family Med	MWU-CCOM/Bromenn	Normal, IL
Paula Lansford-Seabaugh	Family Med	Brazos Family Medicine	Bryan, TX
Linda Sullivan	Family Med	McLennan County Family Practice	Waco, TX
Glena Davis	Ob/Gyn	Texas Tech HSC	Odessa, TX
Melissa Downs	Ob/Gyn	John Peter Smith Hospital	Ft. Worth, TX
Elizabeth George	Pediatrics	UTMB	Galveston, TX
Christine Lam	Pediatrics	UTMB	Galveston, TX
Matthew Jones	IM-Peds	Univ of Minnesota Med School	Minneapolis, MN
Melissa Poole	Psychiatry	Texas A&M-Scott & White	Temple, TX
Damien Kinzler	E. Medicine	Albert Einstein Medical Ctr	Philadelphia, PA
Matthew Walton	Transitional	LECOM/Washington Hospital	Washington, PA