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November 7, 2007

Dear Friends and Colleagues,



I am pleased to have this initial opportunity to communicate with you after being appointed as the new Executive Director of the Osteopathic Research Center (ORC) on October 1, 2007. As I begin my tenure in this position I wish to reaffirm for all our constituents, both in the osteopathic profession and in the scientific community at large, the ORC's commitment to our mission of fostering nationwide collaborative osteopathic manipulative medicine research. Our efforts to date have been successful in garnering substantial extramural funding for basic mechanistic and patient-oriented research. Seed funding for the ORC from the osteopathic profession has earned an impressive return in terms of grant funding from the National Institutes of Health, Department of Defense, and private foundations. In the coming months and years we will be dedicated to disseminating our research findings and leveraging current funds and resources to further the osteopathic philosophy.

I would like to briefly describe two exciting new developments at the ORC. First, our campus will expand in 2008 with the scheduled completion of the Osteopathic Heritage Foundation Physical Medicine Core Research Facility. This state-of-the art facility, built through a \$1.5 million grant from the Osteopathic Heritage Foundation and a matching grant from the University of North Texas Health Science Center (UNTHSC) will facilitate collaborative research involving faculty within the ORC and other disciplines at UNTHSC. Key among these collaborators are Shrawan Kumar, PhD, and Rita Patterson, PhD, two new investigators recruited through President Ransom's Health Institutes of Texas initiative.

Second, the ORC is also collaborating with the North Texas Primary Care Practice-Based Research Network (NorTex PBRN) directed by Roberto Cardarelli, DO, MPH, to expand our patient-oriented research portfolio. In effect, NorTex will serve as a "laboratory" for studying osteopathic manipulative medicine as it is practiced in real life. Practice-based research networks such as NorTex hold tremendous potential for quickly integrating basic mechanistic research into practice using a "bench-to bedside" approach. The NorTex PBRN already serves as an integral component of the North Texas consortium, headquartered at the University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center, that recently acquired a multimillion dollar Clinical and Translational Science Award from the National Institutes of Health.

We also will be developing several other new initiatives at the ORC for roll out in 2008. Among these are a quarterly newsletter, an enhanced Web site, and continuing education opportunities. Please do not hesitate to contact me with additional ideas or suggestions on how we may better serve the osteopathic profession through our research efforts.

I wish to thank our faculty and staff for assisting me in the recent leadership transition, particularly Scott Stoll, DO, PhD (former Executive Director), Hollis King, DO, PhD (Associate Executive Director), Cathleen Kearns (Administrative Director), and Dayton Atwood (Operations Analyst).

Sincerely,



John C Licciardone, DO, MS, MBA