

Student DO Update!

The Official Newsletter of the Council of Osteopathic Student Government Presidents

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Student DO Day on the Hill Is Fast Approaching

Contributed by UNECOM students David Salama, MSII and Kira Grant, MSII

Student DO Day on the Hill will be held in Washington, D.C. on Thursday, April 11, 2002. The American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine (AACOM) sponsors the annual event. This year promises to be a very exciting year for osteopathic medical student's political needs. If you are thinking of attending, you can register or learn more about the event at <http://www.aacom.org/news/hillday-register.html>. **The registration deadline is Feb 28th.** Once you have registered, AACOM will take care of setting up appointments with the congressional representatives for the state in which you are registered to vote. This is certainly an exciting opportunity to personally bring the concerns of osteopathic medical students to your national representatives.

Last year, Student D.O. Day on Capitol Hill was a great success. There were over 300 students who participated, with representation from all of the 19 colleges of osteopathic medicine. The

participants focused on two issues, Title VII funding under the Public Health Service Act and Student Loan Interest Deduction (SLID). On May 26th, just one month after Hill Day, Congress approved the \$1.3 trillion tax-cut package. Among the education related provisions in the package were key elements of SLID that students lobbied for. The legislation allows a deduction for higher education costs from 2002 to 2005. It increases the caps and the amount of deduction for both individuals and couples. The Congress also repealed the 60-month limitation on deductions for educational loans.

AACOM's 2002 Capitol Hill Day is devoted exclusively to student issues and osteopathic medical education. If you have any questions about the 2002 Capitol Hill Day, please contact Kari Vunk, Assistant Director for Government Relations by e-mail at kvunk@aacom.org or by phone at (301) 968-4153.

D.O. Bashing!

Contributed by CCOM student Aurabind Balagani, MSIV

An article in the December 2001 issue of Self Magazine, entitled "When to look for an M.D. Degree," attempts to differentiate the educational degrees of various health providers, including Osteopathic physicians. Unfortunately, this article misrepresents the Osteopathic profession, and states to its readers, that they should stick with an M.D. when they have complicated health problems, and not see a D.O. unless they are basically healthy. The author, Jill Hamburg-Coplan, called the AOA to get information on D.O.s. Despite being supplied with accurate information, she still misrepresented the facts.

In response, the Executive Director of the AOA, John Crosby J.D., wrote a strong letter to the editor of Self Magazine to set the record straight. Mr. Crosby detailed the educational merits of Osteopathic Medical Training, and included a list of D.O.s who have served in distinguished posts within our nation's government. Furthermore, the AOA is considering pulling its advertisements from Self Magazine.

To date, Self Magazine has not furnished a reply to Mr. Crosby. Such a misinformed article not only does a disservice to its readers by discrediting the work of D.O.s, but also wakes us up to the fact that there is still a lot of work to be done to educate our friends and neighbors about Osteopathic Medicine. While the AOA has made great strides with the "Unity Campaign," as Osteopathic Medical Students, and soon to be physicians, it is our responsibility to aid in this endeavor to make D.O.s a household name.

If you wish to write a response to the Self Magazine article, you can mail it to: Lucy Danziger, Editor-in-Chief, Self Magazine, 4 Times Square, New York, NY 10036-6522. Be sure to look for an update on this matter in the next COSGP newsletter.

Student D.O. of the Year Award

Contributed by CCOM student Nancy Wasserbauer, MSIII

Springtime is a very special and busy time at all of our schools. Many are involved in board reviews, graduation plans, community outreach, and much more. This is also a very special time as we, at all of the colleges nominate and select some outstanding osteopathic medical students. Since 1992, COSGP has honored such students with the Student D.O. of the Year Award. One recipient from each school is chosen based on service to their school, their community, and to the osteopathic profession. The names, pictures, and unique bullet statements will appear in upcoming issues of the "Student D.O.," and "D.O." magazines, and at a display during the July 2002 AOA House of Delegates. The winner's names will also be published in the next issue of "The Student D.O. Update".



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AACOM Takes Action on Bioterrorism

Contributed by OUCOM student Suzanne Morgan, MS-II

Up until a few months ago, few of us as medical students concerned ourselves with the threat of bioterrorism. With recent events, bioterrorism has become a reality here in the U.S. In light of this, the American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine (AACOM) has taken action to ensure that future physicians are educated and prepared for such a threat. They have received support to explore educational avenues that will prime osteopathic students and physicians to respond to terrorist attacks involving biological weapons. All of the osteopathic schools, and post-graduate training institutions will be working to include bioterrorism modules in their teaching. At a recent board meeting for AACOM, Dr. Barbara Ross-Lee, D.O., chair of AACOM's Board of Governors voiced support for

such a curriculum at all of the medical schools. Dr. Ross-Lee added, "Clearly, we are confronting a future that includes the potential use of hazardous chemicals, biologically hazardous materials, radioactive materials and explosives as weapons of mass destruction. In the event that such unspeakable acts occur, we must have osteopathic physicians prepared to respond." The adaptation of our teaching institutions to move towards modern needs in U.S. healthcare is imperative to the success of our graduates. AACOM has taken an important step of leadership in this adjustment to current events and healthcare issues. Details for this article were obtained from www.aacom.org/news/pr-bioterr.html. Visit this website for more information!

We Are All in This Together

Contributed by DMU-COMS student Dan Packard, MS II

Medical school is hard work. The amount of notes we memorize during our four years must account for a small forest. The tests are nearly impossible and the labs are seemingly unending. Worst of all, the time it takes is, well, all-consuming. We as students have little time to work out, even less time for family or to date, and almost no time to play. This lack of free time is almost more of a stress than the exams.

So, why would a medical student want to get involved, and, in particular, why would a student want to spend time getting involved with Osteopathic Medicine on a national level?

Recently, I heard Linda Heun, Ph.D., AACOM Vice-President for Medical Education, speak at a COSGP conference in Pomona, California, and I believe she answered this question. Although she talked about many topics during her presentation, one of the major points she emphasized was that her job at AACOM is not to represent just her organization but to represent all medical professionals and students. "We are all in this together," she concluded.

I often joke with students at my school that I am not involved for their sake, really, but I am involved because I have a problem with a lot of things and I like to solve my own problems. I conclude by telling them that it just so happens that my problems are also their problems, so I solve them for both of us. Now, this is obviously an exaggeration, but it stresses the point: being a leader and helping to solve problems makes the world easier and more pleasant for you and those you represent. It demonstrates that, "We are all in this together."

There are many ways to help the profession nationally as a student, and many different groups you can represent. By joining student government, you could become an active member of COSGP, representing all students at all DO schools. Talk to current student government members at your school to find out more about this.

You could also opt to serve on an AOA National committee. The student representatives for each of the AOA committees is assigned to national student groups each year, and if you are a member of one of these groups, you can apply to serve on their AOA national committees. For example, the Student Association-American College of Osteopathic Family Practitioners had the following national AOA committees assigned to them this year: 1) Committee on Continuing Medical Education; 2) Young Physician Committee; 3) Bureau of Interns and Residents; 4) Committee on Public Relations; 5) Committee on Membership; 6) Committee on Federal Health Programs; 7) Committee on Socioeconomic Affairs; 8) Committee on Osteopathic History. If you are a member of ACOFP, you could have applied to serve on any one of these committees for the year. Talk to the local chapters of your national student organizations to find out how to serve on an AOA national committee next year.

The last, and perhaps most exciting, way to get involved nationally in Osteopathic Medicine is to attend the AACOM Student DO Day on the Hill and/or the AOA DO Day on the Hill during the month of April of each year. During both of these events, students get the opportunity to express their opinions and lobby for their views to members of Congress. The difference between the two events is that, during Student DO Day on the Hill, students get together and lobby for student issues in Osteopathic medicine, and during DO Day on the Hill, students, physicians, and medical professionals alike come together to lobby for general issues in Osteopathic Medicine. It is a great way to influence national policy for the good of all people in the profession.



Virtually Yours- An All New Institute for Excellence in Osteopathic Medical Education

Contributed by OUCOM student Suzanne Morgan, MS-II

Recently, Linda Heun, Ph.D., Vice President for Education at AACOM presented to COSGP the idea of a 'Virtual' Institute for Excellence in Osteopathic Medical Education. The purpose of this website is to connect osteopathic educators, students, and colleges to improve communication and open sharing of information between individuals and schools. "There is an informal advisory group made up of osteopathic medical educators that is guiding the Institute's early stages and in 2002 there will be a new AACOM constituency group for medical educators. We intend to provide to the colleges of osteopathic medicine a variety of services and interaction forums that will promote and support excellence." Doug Wood, D.O., Ph.D., AACOM President, will be the Director of the Institute. The goals of the Institute are:

- To promote, develop, and support best practices and models for medical education
- To facilitate multi-institutional medical education research
- To provide resources to support medical education and training
- To provide career development and mentoring for faculty and staff

All osteopathic medical students are invited to join the conversations on the osteopathic medical education list serve. Currently, there are several interesting questions posted about student notations on patient progress notes and developing post-rotation competency exams. Student responses are needed! If you are interested in participating in this cutting edge virtual experience in medical education please visit <http://www.aacom.org/education/>.

Update on Emerging New Osteopathic Medical Schools

Contributed by UNECOM student David Salama, MSII

At the last COSGP meeting, more news was brought forth regarding emerging new osteopathic medical schools. Some of the schools are further along in applying for accreditation and beginning enrollment programs while others simply consist of interested investors and osteopathic physicians in specific locales. The first one to open will be the Edward Via College of Osteopathic Medicine in Blacksburg, VA, which will be associated with Virginia Technological University. The school at Virginia Tech has applicant status and is expected begin interviewing candidates this fall for matriculation of its first class in the fall 2003 and a first graduation class in 2007. Current projections estimate a first class of 180-200 students. The interim academic dean of the Kirksville College of Osteopathic Medicine, Dean Rawlins, has accepted the job as the Dean of the new osteopathic medical school in Virginia.

The other potential schools consist of interested parties and are less organized than the Virginia School. One location is in Provo, Utah in association with Utah Valley State College. The aspirations for a school in Utah began with Warren Peterson, DO and Judith Moore, DO, two Orem, UT-based doctors who have formed a private corporation known as the Intermountain College of Osteopathic Medicine, which will be the name of the new school. The proposed school is projected to help Utah, Idaho and Montana's need for more family-practice doctors.

However, another group has begun pursuing whether or not there is an interest in starting a medical school in Montana as well. This would be the only medical school in Montana, as no allopathic program exists in this state.

A fourth area of interest is in New Mexico. A specific location, target date or affiliated university has not been announced.

The fifth school, would be located in Georgia, and affiliated with Southern University. This group is slightly different, as they would like to be a for-profit medical school. This issue is under deliberation with the AOA, as they currently do not permit for-profit medical schools.

The new schools aren't without controversy. With AOA approved residency programs already in short supply for current osteopathic graduates, the problem will only be compounded when the new schools start to graduate classes in the latter part of this decade. Many current students feel that the focus should be on adding new AOA graduate medical education programs before adding new schools. Regardless, some of the new schools are moving forward with accreditation status and will increase the visibility of DO's in the country.

National Osteopathic Research Institute Unveiled

Contributed by PCSOM student Steve Jackson, MSII

After reviewing applications submitted by the colleges of Osteopathic Medicine, the AACOM, AOA, AODME, AOHA, and AOA specialty colleges granted The University of Texas Health Science Center- Texas College of Osteopathic Medicine with the new National Osteopathic Research Center. The research center is set up to conduct rigorous clinical studies of Osteopathic Manual Medicine (OMM) for the diagnosis of neuromusculoskeletal injuries and disorders. The research center has been charged with the following tasks: 1) developing the infrastructure required to carry out research; 2) carrying out pilot studies; 3) providing training in research methodology to individuals who wish to develop research careers in OMM. For more information, visit the osteopathic clinical research website at www.osteopathicresearch.net

Pirates, Chess and Vowels; Something Fun and Useful

Contributed by DMU-COMS student Terrence McNamara, MSII

We all struggle to retain the many facts crammed into our heads, whether you are a flailing first year, a panicking second year (boards are coming), or a scuttling third or fourth year. Since I have yet to go on clinical rotations, I can only guess what it might be like to be pimped at 7 am about something you read about only once during that blurry experience called medical school. So what's the solution? Well unless you are like my cousin Lester and have a photographic memory, you're going to have to trick your brain into remembering things.

I took an informal poll of the first and second year students here at DMU-COMS to find out what works for them in terms of long-term memory. Although most of us can cram a list of facts into our heads the morning of a test, having a context for the information helps it stick. Some students use stories, draw pictures, or other creative devices.

I have collected some mnemonics for your enjoyment (as far as studying goes anyway) and some sources for concise facts that someone someday will surely pimp you on.

GI Rotations:

Extra intestinal Manifestations of IBD-Unpleasant Entities that Parallel "Entestinal" Activity; Uveitis, Episcleritis,

Ptyderma gangrenosum, Erythema nodosum, Arthritis.

Infectious agents commonly cause bloody stool (my favorite): **CHESS**; **C**ampylobacter, **H**emorrhagic E. Coli (0157:H7);

Entamoeba histolytica; **S**almonella; **S**higella

Cardiology:

Diagnosis of new onset Atrial Fib: **PIRATES**: **P**ulmonary disease, **I**diopathic or **I**nflammatory disease, **R**heumatic fever,

Atherosclerotic CAD, **E**thanol consumption, **S**ick Sinus Syndrome.

Nephrology:

Indications for acute dialysis: Think **A, E, I, O, U**: **A**cidosis, **E**lectrolytes (hyperkalemia, hyperphosphatemia),

Intoxication, **O**verload (volume), **U**remia (pericarditis and weight loss)

Where can you find tidbits like those above? Those of you who use board review books as textbooks probably have seen a ton of these. Popular books such as First-Aid and Step-Up are staples for DMU students; I have found the Recall book series, where the above mnemonics came from, to be very concise and pertinent to tested material. For those of you as financially challenged as myself, here are some great websites for FREE info bytes

www.alertandonline.com
www.img.com.tripod.com/mnemonics.htm
www.hossain.clara.net



COMLEX-USA Update

Contributed by PCSOM student Steve Jackson, MSII



The National Board of Osteopathic Medical Examiners (NBOME) is now one step closer to implementing the Physical Exam (PE) portion of the Comprehensive Osteopathic Medical Licensing Examination (COMLEX-USA). The examination, which has been in development for the past four years, is a performance examination that will add a dimension to the COMLEX-USA sequence of exams that cannot be demonstrated in any other way. Recent pilot studies at PCOM proved that implementing the PE portion of the examination along with COMLEX step II is feasible. The program looks at skills that cannot be demonstrated on paper; ability to apply techniques, communicate and extract information from the patient, and deal with circumstances from real life where a decision needs to be made.

Implementation of the exam is currently scheduled for July 2004. The examination will require each candidate to perform an evaluation of a patient in a clinical setting. As it stands now, the exam is approximately 4 hours per candidate. The main purpose of the exam will be to demonstrate communication, management, documentation and prioritization skills. Not to worry, the training of patients and evaluators alike will be implemented to help standardize the testing experience. Studies are constantly being conducted to assure validity, reliability and standardization. Over the next year and a half, information about the exam will be posted on the NBOME website at www.nbome.org.

Final Recommendations from COSGP Executive Board Regarding Student Appointment to AOA Bureaus, Committees, and Councils for 2002-2003

Council on Postdoctoral Training

Nominee: Jennifer Howell (OSUCOM)
1st Alternate: Matthew Lowe (OUCOM)
2nd Alternate: Keoni Nguyen (UHSCOM)

Bureau of Research

Nominee: Thurman Alvey (PCSOM)
1st Alternate: Adam Ray (UNECOM)
2nd Alternate: Jason Cohen (UNECOM)

Committee on Strategic Planning

Nominee: Jessica Jewart (AZCOM)
1st Alternate: Joseph Forrester (UHSCOM)
2nd Alternate: Doug Duke (UHSCOM)

Committee on AOA Organizational Structure

Nominee: Kira Grant (UNECOM)
1st Alternate: Amitabh Goswami (DMUCOM)
2nd Alternate: Stuart Damon (UNECOM)

COPT Subcommittee on OPTI Evaluation

Nominee: James Treadwell (NSUCOM)
1st Alternate: Michelle Mudge (DMUCOM)
2nd Alternate: Toby Paulson (OUCOM)

Bureau of State Government Affairs

Nominee: David Romans (DMUCOM)
1st Alternate: Christine Harms (UHSCOM)
2nd Alternate: Thomas Pham (CCOM)

Committee on Health Related Policy

Nominee: Jennifer Lindner (LECOM)
1st Alternate: Derek Melby (CCOM)
2nd Alternate: Kara Beasley (AZCOM)

Bureau of Emerging States Concerns

Nominee: Paul Beckett (UHSCOM)
1st Alternate: John Paes (OUCOM)
2nd Alternate: Lillian Fok (DMUCOM)

AOA Unity Campaign Blue Ribbon Committee

Nominee: Larry Northorn (NYCOM)
1st Alternate: Elizabeth Bacon (DMUCOM)
2nd Alternate: Sherman Jew (UHSCOM)

Committee on Basic Documents and Operations of Affiliated Organizations

Nominee: Walter Yee (DMUCOM)
1st Alternate: Artur Miernik (AZCOM)
2nd Alternate: Cindy Meng (UNECOM)

Let Your Voice Be Heard

What would you like to see included in future editions of the "Student DO Update!?" Please send comments and suggestions to Jennifer Howell at jennhowell@hotmail.com. The "Student DO Update!" is published quarterly following each COSGP meeting. For a copy of this newsletter, please talk to the president of your Student Government Association, or send an email to the address above.



Members of COSGP at the winter meeting in Pomona, CA.

