



# The Link

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**Class of 2005  
Preview Weekend/  
Spring Fling News on  
Page 7**

### Inside this issue:

What is COSGP	2
COMLEX Pass Rates	3
Dear Abby	4
Comics	5
Senior Speak	6
Community Issues	7
Class Reports	8

## WHY I'M PROUD TO BE A D.O.

*Happy Castro, MS II*

At a dinner party recently, I met an Amish Canadian of Swiss descent who grew up in Mexico, now lives in Fort Worth, was formerly a pre-med but now majors in Art and English at TCU, is gay, an atheist, was home-schooled for awhile, and speaks four languages. As I spoke to this young man I found his background obviously very interesting, but even more impressive to me was how he knew all this history about his roots, and how he was extremely proud of it. Here was a person from a people who had been persecuted and driven away for hundreds of years, from all corners of the earth, and yet the pride that beamed through was unmistakable. I couldn't help but think to myself, "a lot of people at TCOM could use some of that pride."

I can still remember Dr. Dickey, during the very first OMT lecture, tell the class that if we didn't want to be in an osteopathic school, the school didn't want us either. We could still leave and get a refund on tuition. No one left, but the lack of pride in many of my classmates continues to be evident. My roommate, (and classmate) Tejas, once told me that it's ironic, but he says the biggest D.O. haters are probably in D.O. school. Sad, but probably true.

The question is, why does this lack of pride exist? I mean, when people ask if we go to a D.O. school, for a lot of us the standard answer is "yes, but we're just as good as MD.'s", despite the fact that we all know we have to study not only everything allopathic students have to study, but a little bit more on top of that. We all acknowledge that some of the smartest people we've ever met are in our classes, people who are just absolutely brilliant, and yet we get intimidated simply because someone goes to school at U.T. Southwestern. Why?

Another facet of all this is the complacency from which the profession, especially the younger generation, seems to be suffering. These days, after graduation there are a myriad of post-graduate training programs we can go to, both AOA and AMA; if we decide on a military route we get commissioned as officers, with all the rights and privileges accorded a physician in the military. However, it wasn't too long ago that it wasn't like that, and yet how soon we all forget the fight those who came before us fought, paving the way for the benefits we have today. Membership in TOMA and the AOA is waning, and yet, it was those same organizations that played a big part in

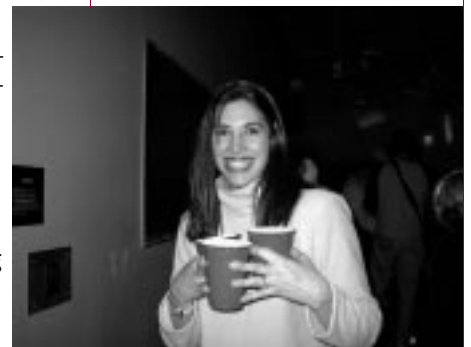
*(Continued on page 2)*

## Party at Club Everett!

*Reina Patel, MS II*

Friday the 16<sup>th</sup>, Everett Hall was transformed into the party place to be for the night! There were over 100 first and second years who came to let off a little steam after finishing their cardio and nervous systems. People danced to the sounds of the DJ (thanks to Keith (2004) and Scott Young's brother), and jammed to the music the band played [Stiff- consisting of Judson(2003), Scott (2003), Ben(2003), and Sam (2004)], and ate and drank....and were merry!

Thanks goes out to all those that helped with the preparations. Those who didn't make it missed out on the wild outfits..you know who you are... and the special appearances by our very own Dean Foreman, Dr. Blanck, and his wife...dancing to techno!



*"They're not all for me, I swear" says Ruth Wiley, Class of 2004*

## Why I'm Proud To Be a D.O. (cont'd)

(Continued from page 1)

the benefits we today take for granted. Folks, the less help the AOA gets, the weaker we become as D.O.s. Turning our backs on our own professional organization only hurts us. We truly never know what we have until we lose it, and truthfully, we can still lose it. It doesn't seem like it now, but no one thought the Titanic would sink either.

All this aside, the bottom line is we have chosen the D.O. profession, and the sooner we all get our chins up and our shoulders straight as we proclaim that, the better it will be for

*"...explain Osteopathy twice, thrice, ten times if you have to...the pride has to come from within."*

all of us, both personally and professionally. A lot of people, even in Fort Worth, don't even know what a D.O. is, and yes, this is sad; but, it's our own fault for not telling more people ourselves. Who cares if they don't know what Osteopathy is or what TCOM is the first time someone asks you where you go to medical school?

Explain it twice, thrice, ten times if you have to. Wear the TCOM caps, shorts, sweatshirts, and T-shirts. The pride has to come from within. And just as I was impressed with the pride my Amish friend had for his heritage, remember that an M.D. will

respect an Osteopath who is knowledgeable and proud of his history more than he will one who isn't.

So why am I proud to be a D.O.? Well, because I know that I'm a different kind of doctor, one who was born out of the need for a "better kind of medicine" when the traditional approaches of the late 1800's didn't work. I am a doctor who has in his bag more than just drugs; a doctor that emphasizes additional learning about Pharmacies, HIV Clinics, Hospice Care, Planned Parenthood, Easter Seals, Alzheimer's Care, Pain Management, Dialysis Centers, Rehabilitation Medicine, Occupational Medicine, Cultural Issues, and Ethics; a doctor of the community, one that truly treats people, not just symptoms.

And if nothing else, I am proud to be a D.O. because I am one.

## What is COSGP?

*Shelly Van Scoyk, MSGA President, MS III*

Sometimes it seems like there are so many clubs and organizations out there it's hard to know which group does what. With all those acronyms floating around, it's difficult to remember which clubs you are a member of and which you're not. Well, I've got another set of letters for you to get to know, and you're a member of this club too.

The organization I'm talking about is COSGP, the Council of Osteopathic Student Government Presidents. It is composed of the 19 presidents of the osteopathic medical schools' student councils. As the president of your Medical Student Government Association, I am your official delegate to the four meetings held each year around the country for COSGP. At COSGP meetings, our main focus is to discuss issues that affect osteopathic medical students, such

as proposed changes in the COMLEX or the choice of paths to accreditation. We also share ideas between the schools for community service projects, social activities, and fund-raising ideas for our campus organizations. One upcoming COSGP event is the Student D.O. On the Hill Day, co-sponsored with SOMA and held in Washington D.C. on April 26.

One of the most recent COSGP-sponsored activities at TCOM was the selection of the Student D.O. Of The Year. This is an award created by COSGP several years ago to recognize the one student at each osteopathic medical school that has done the most for their school, their community and the profession. Any student from any of the four classes can be nominated. This year, ten students were nominated by fellow students, faculty, and staff. They were then asked to submit an ap-

plication and one student was selected to represent our school as our Student D.O. Of The Year. The award winner will be revealed at Honors Day, May 1. Each of the nominees deserve our thanks and recognition for their outstanding achievements. This year's ten nominees for TCOM's Student D.O. Of The Year are:

Gheath Al-Atrash, Class of 2002  
Kevin Blanton, Class of 2001  
Lisa Butler, Class of 2001  
Roberto Cardarelli, Class of 2001  
Mark Gamber, Class of 2002  
Terry Hashey, Class of 2003  
Brandon Lewis, Class of 2002  
Matthew Margolis, Class of 2001  
Jeff Siu, Class of 2001  
Erin Westerholm, Class of 2002

\*\*For more information about COSGP or to read their newsletter, "COSGP's Front Page" please go to your class website.

# COMLEX I PASS RATES

## COMLEX I PASS RATES

Below are pass rates for COMLEX I and curriculum formats as reported from the last COSGP meeting Jan. 12-14 in Phoenix, Arizona. Question marks denote a pass rate that is not released by the administration to the student council.

SCHOOL	CURRICULUM	PASS RATE
OSU-COM	Mixed/problem-based	98.9%
WVSOM	Systems-Based	?
AZCOM	Mixed	99.2%
PCSOM	Mixed	?
DMU	Mixed	97%
NYCOM	Mixed	?
KCOM	Mixed	99.6%
PCOM	Systems-Based	?
LECOM	Problems/Ind. study	?
CCOM	Traditional	93%
NSU	Mixed	?
UNECOM	Systems-Based	95%
MSUCOM	Systems-Based	92%
Western U/COMP	Systems-Based	97%
TCOM	Mixed	97.8%



# LOUISIANA TO RECOGNIZE COMLEX

For years, Louisiana has been the only state in the union that refused to recognize the COMLEX as a licensing exam for osteopathic physicians. This July, however, that will all change. Under the new rules, D.O.s entering post-graduate training programs in Louisiana on the basis of COMLEX would be offered the same privileges as their M.D. counterparts. In the second year of their programs, D.O.s would be granted permits. Their permit would allow them to practice medicine within their programs and as approved by their programs directors, just like with allopathic trainees. Upon completion of their programs, the physician would be granted a regular, full license to practice medicine, renewable annually so long as he or she is progressing towards specialty certification.

# TCOM WASN'T BORN IN A BOWLING ALLEY!!!

That's right, we weren't. It makes for a great story, but the truth is that the first entering class of TCOM went to class at the 5<sup>th</sup> floor of the OMCT (now appropriately the OB-GYN ward). It was the next year, when a new first year class came, that there was no longer enough space on the 5<sup>th</sup> floor to accommodate both classes, that we moved into the bowling alley.

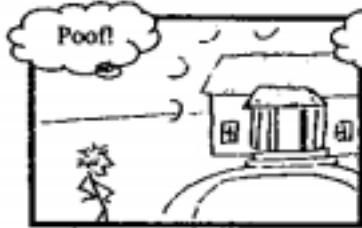
Mr. Ray Stokes, who has been a close friend of TCOM's since its beginnings (and for whom one of the conference rooms on the 8<sup>th</sup> floor is named after), was misquoted early on and has been teased by the alumni about saying "we were born in a bowling alley" ever since. Hence, he would like all of us to know that we were indeed "**born in a hospital, not a bowling alley.**"



# Comics

Lou Taylor

## The other side

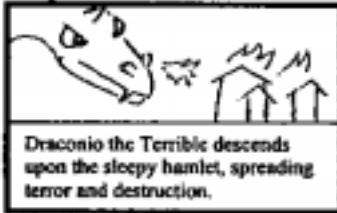


You have been accepted to medical school!

Study Study Coffee  
Coffee study coffee  
Study exam study  
Coffee study exam  
Study study study  
Exam coffee study  
Study study study



## Open wide...



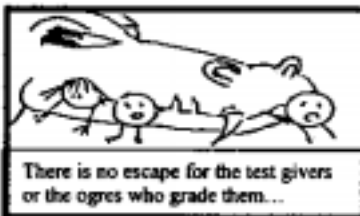
Draconio the Terrible descends upon the sleepy hamlet, spreading terror and destruction.



The mighty creature targets the local Health Science Center



He ravenously devours the helpless professors



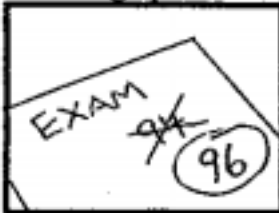
There is no escape for the test givers or the ogres who grade them...



Sparing one survivor to recount the tale...



## Get a grip!



I'm so angry. I'll never get a good residency with this grade! I deserve more!

Dr. Schmoie is sooooo unfair!  
This stinks!  
Can you believe it? He only gave us 2 free points!

**THIS PANEL CENSORED FOR EXTREME BITTERNESS AND LOATHING.**

Oh my gosh! I'm sooo excited! I got an 87... I studied so hard and it paid off! I know you guys must be proud... you are so smart and always do well!

Wow! We're so lucky to just even be here! Want to go to 'Blue Mesa' and celebrate our success?



Isn't Dr. Schmoie cool? He gave us 2 points!  
He rocks!  
Cheers!

## SENIOR SPEAK: WORDS OF WISDOM FROM THE “OUTSIDE”

*By: Shelly Van Scoyk, MSGA  
President, MS-III*

Most of us in our third and fourth years of medical school have come to realize that the first two years are a test, a very long, arduous test. They are a test of your endurance, your sanity, and your determination, not so much your intellect. Sure, you will take many difficult exams over the first two years of your medical education, but these may not provide your greatest trials. Some days it seems the greatest trial is just not quitting, not picking up the phone to dial 1-800-BARTEND and leaving school to be a mixologist in Cozumel. That said, there are also some really great things about the first two years, stuff to which we wish we'd paid more attention. So, we as your fellow students would like to offer you some advice. Take them with a grain of salt—and maybe a margarita.

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- 1) Keep up with the subject material during your rotation--it will be of benefit for COMLEX / USMLE II. You can't possibly cram everything within 4 weeks.
  - 2) Visit residency programs if they are competitive (i.e. ortho, opha, derm). Doing a clerkship will be a tremendous stride in your favor. If they see you there, it tells them you are interested.
  - 3) To improve your GPA

during clerkship, do family medicine and manip first.

Woody Moss, MS-IV

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- 1) If you wish to do a residency at a program, only do an elective rotation there if you are willing to work hard and impress the faculty. Do not do an elective rotation at an institution you are interested in if you are going to SLACK—you will probably only ruin your chances of getting in. If you are a harder worker, doing a month at the particular institution can be very beneficial for you and increase your chances of being accepted to the program—this, however, is my opinion, not fact.
  - 2) Elective rotations are a great time to learn medicine. I would not suggest doing only blow-off or easy rotations.

Nadya Hasham, MS-IV

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Although impossible for many, for those that can travel I would recommend it. I have learned so many different approaches at different institutions as well as getting a better idea of

what I want in a residency program. There is an amazing difference from one place to the next in terms of morning report, teaching rounds, etc., and this is where much of the learning takes place.

Don't be afraid to go to bigger MD programs either. I was terrified at first, but fortunately TCOM's preparation turns out to be very comparable over-all.

Also, don't be surprised to find some prejudice. The State of Virginia told me that DOs couldn't do a 4<sup>th</sup> year elective at their institution, and yet foreign grads could. It didn't even matter that I had taken the USMLE.

One more tip: if you are interested in interviewing at a program and have not heard from them, call them! bug them! I have found that many MD programs can't find my COMLEX scores because they are not listed on the directory. It turns out our scores are at the back of the transcripts, and even more confusing, when programs go to the transcripts, it shows only one page. The scores are found by scrolling through that page until it progresses to the next (un-numbered page) or by printing it out.

Tammy Hooker, MS-IV

## Students Meet with Administration to Discuss Review Course

By: Aaron Metcalf, MS-I

On February 14, members of MSGA met with Dean Blackwell, Dr. Forman, Dr. Tommerdahl, and Rynn Sloan to discuss issues concerning COMLEX Step Two review and the rotation schedule for the TCOM Classes of 2003 and 2004. Both classes, as well as 2005, have already been scheduled for a four-week review course prior to COMLEX Step One, and there was some talk around campus about the possibility of a similar mandatory review course for Step Two. This has not been added to the schedules of 2003 and 2004, though, because 1) the school has not found a proven review course, and 2) the time constraints of our current clinical ro-

tation schedule. However, students should remember that if they do not pass Step Two after the second time it is given, then they are dismissed from school and will not graduate. Dean Blackwell expressed the idea Step Two is not a test that could just be studied for the month prior to the exam and that students should study for Step Two throughout their 3<sup>rd</sup> year (core) rotations.

As far as rotations for the Classes of 2003 and 2004, there have been several changes when compared to the Class of 2002. First, the core rotations of OB/Gyn and Pediatrics have been extended to six weeks each. Second, their core rotations will begin and

end a month earlier so that the students will be able to begin their electives, and subsequently their "residency quest", earlier. Also, even though the school is not scheduling a formal Step Two review, the students can use one of their six four-week electives for Step Two preparation. Beginning in December 2003 with the Class of 2004, students will have a two-week holiday break.

Finally, Emergency Medicine has been added back as a core rotation, but the students can complete this "core" during their fourth year and can do this rotation at a site off-campus, much like a regular elective.

### Spring Fling and Preview Weekend Scheduled for March 30-31

The annual Spring Fling event and volleyball tournament are scheduled for Saturday, March 31st. The event (scheduled from 9:00 a.m. –3:00 p.m.) will be held in the east parking lot of the Patient Care Center and in front of the Founder's Activity Center.

In addition to the volleyball tournament, Spring Fling will have a "carnival" that will consist of interactive games, midway booths, and concession stands run by our student clubs and organizations.

This year's Spring Fling will also honor Dr. Ronald Blanck, D. O. and celebrate his inauguration as the fourth president of the University of North Texas Health Science Center. This program kicks off a week of activities prior to his formal inauguration on April 7th at the Bass Hall.

Another addition to Spring Fling is the Preview weekend pro-

gram. In order to welcome TCOM's newest group of students (yes, the Class of 2005!) the new students and their spouses have been invited to come on Friday and meet their new classmates, spend time with current students and participate in the festivities of Spring Fling. We will start the weekend on Friday with a student panel discussion at 6:00 p.m. in the Founders Activity Center and conclude the night with a mixer for the classes of 2003, 2004, and 2005. After participating in Saturday's events, new students are welcome to explore housing opportunities in the area and become familiar with the area they will soon call home!

To enter a 6-8 person team into the volleyball tournament, or to RSVP your attendance to Preview Weekend, please contact Rynn Sloan in the Office of Student Development.

### Ronald Blanck, D.O. Inaugurated April 7

Inauguration ceremonies for Dr. Ronald Blanck are scheduled for April 7 at the Nancy Lee and Perry R. Bass Performance Hall in downtown Fort Worth. The ceremony will begin at 1:00 p.m.

A veritable Who's Who from government, medicine and business have come together to serve on the host committee for the upcoming inauguration.

Just a few of the names you will recognize are:

- C. Everett Koop—Former US Surgeon General.
- Kay Granger—US Representative and former Fort Worth Mayor
- Kay Bailey Hutchison—US Senator from Texas

All students are encouraged to attend. Free tickets for the Inaugural Ceremony will be distributed in the Atrium sometime late in March. You must have a ticket to enter Bass Hall.

# Class Reports

## *2001 Class Report*

*By: Nicki Benz, MS-IV Secretary*

This is the most exciting time of the year for the seniors as residency positions become known. Twenty nine people in the Class of 2001 matched on "Match Day 2001" for positions in the AOA, and one other joined them with an accepted position during the scramble period. Our class also had several placements in the earlier military matches and in AMA Neurology and Ophthalmology. The AMA match results for the remaining students will be announced on March 22<sup>nd</sup> at 2 pm. Class members are invited to "pin" their residency location and list their positions on the class board. Good luck to everyone!

Eighth semester is rapidly approaching, and the scheduling of events is underway. Weekday lunches for the senior class will be provided during this time period and dinner events are being scheduled as well. In the planning stages are, of course, the Senior Banquet, Senior Roast, a Student/Doctor golf tournament, Senior Mixer; River inner-tube/canoe trip, and possible Bonfire/White Clinic Clerkship Coat burning ceremony. If any of you have ideas on additional activities you would like our class to sponsor, please contact one of the Class Officers.

## *2002 Class Report*

*By: Erin Westerholm, MS-III President*

Class of 2002 is doing great. We are now deep into rotations and starting to set up our fourth year elective rotations. The class is looking to reunite at a spring picnic on May 26<sup>th</sup> at Longhorn Park. Congratulations go out to Matt Darling with the arrival of his baby boy (Gage Matthew 11lb 4oz)! Best wishes to John Simons for the arrival of his baby in the next couple of weeks. The class also is anxiously awaiting the arrival of Baby Newman and Babies (yes, twins) Iverson. Congratulations also goes out to Adriana Hwa on her engagement.

Best of luck finishing up the school year!

## *2003 Class Report*

*By: Terry Hashey, MS-II President*

As the beginning date for clinical rotations draws ever near, our class trudges through each systems course: only two to go! Recently, we held a garage sale at the Founder's Activity Center which raised over \$1200 towards our boot party. Many of the Health Science Center family donated to our cause. The Class of 2004 was kind enough to donate all of their items that didn't sell at their garage sale. Once again, Melissa Sneed grabs the dough for 2003.

We have a new fundraiser on-line. We now have a link to Hand Spring brand hand-held computers on our web site: [www.hsc.unt.edu/tcom2003](http://www.hsc.unt.edu/tcom2003). All purchases are tax free and free of shipping charges. These are the same prices at any store. We receive a commission that will go towards our boot party and graduation.

Our Class Co-Hosted a great party with the Class of 2004 at the end our Neuro II course and the end of their Cardiopulmonary course. Scott Young(2003), Judson Severson (2003), Ben Olssen(2003), Sam Tredemeyer(2004), along with their manager Turner Slichon rocked the house with their band, Stiff. The party was held in the Kiva and no arrests were reported. Kudos to Reina Patel(2003) and Sue Bacsik(2004) for being such great Co-Hostesses!

## *2004 Class Report*

*By: Dave Brabham, MS-I President*

The Class of 2004 has finished the cardio system and the G.I. system is in full swing! We are proud to send 14 representatives to D.O. on the Hill Day in Washington D.C. and 3 students to the AOA Convocation.

Planning for the Silent Auction Fundraiser has intensified. The Silent Auction will be May 5th in conjunction with the alumni association's Murder Mystery Dinner. The Class is developing a mission statement to express the goals and values of our class.

Congratulations go out to classmate Melissa Koehler and her husband as they announced she is expecting a baby in September!