



NEWSPAGER

In the tradition of Woman's Medical College of Pennsylvania and Hahnemann Medical College

June 2006

Newsletter Volume 7, No. 4

Smart Money: College Endowment Tops \$175 million



Dr. Constantine Papadakis

The Drexel University College of Medicine endowment has nearly tripled since 1998 when the University stepped up to assume management of the medical school. Executives of the bankrupt former proprietor, Allegheny Health Education and Research Foundation (AHERF), had depleted the endowment by reclassifying restricted assets into spending money, Drexel President Dr. Constantine Papadakis said in a recent interview. The College came to Drexel with an endowment of

\$60 million. Now, preliminary figures for 2006 put its market value at \$176 million.

The endowment's remarkable growth is due to both cash infusions and smart management. Drexel University took on the medical college when Tenet Healthcare acquired AHERF's hospitals. The Philadelphia Orphans' Court decided that the portion of the endowment originally directed to the hospitals would go to the new nonprofit created by Tenet called Philadelphia Health & Research Corporation, which later became Franklin Health Trust. Franklin Health Trust received approximately \$35 million in charitable assets. At the same time, the court awarded Philadelphia Health & Education Corporation (PHEC), doing business as Drexel University College of Medicine, the \$60 million originally directed for academic use.

In March 2003, the board of Franklin Health Trust, chaired by Dr. Donna Gentile O'Donnell, moved to reunify the former AHERF endowment assets. An agreement was signed to merge the Franklin funds, then valued at \$40 million, into the existing endowment at the College of Medicine.

This was a very exciting period, Dr. Papadakis said, because, at the same time, Drexel had sued the directors and officers of AHERF for mishandling the endowment. With State Attorney General

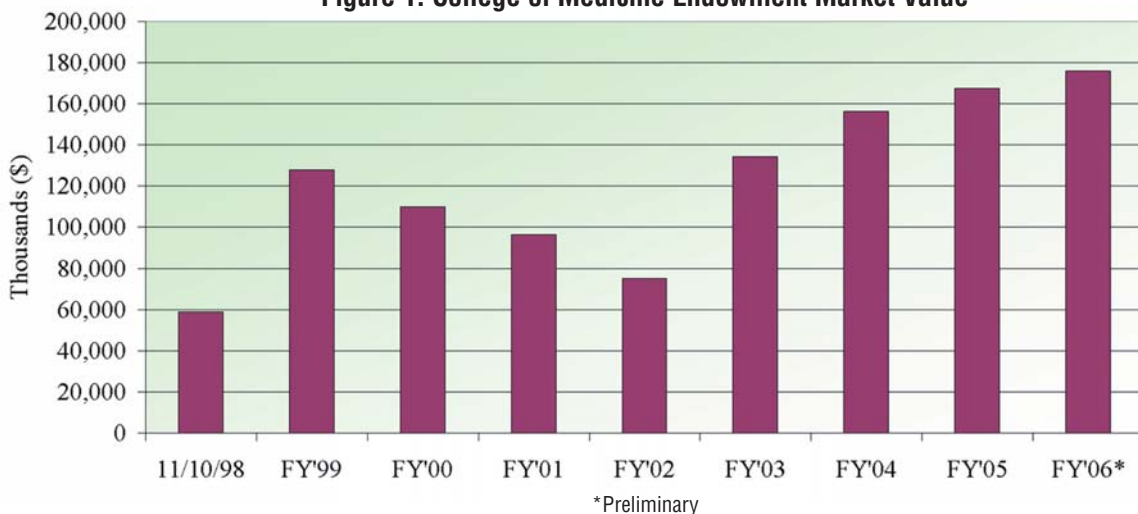
Mike Fischer, the trustees of the AHERF bankruptcy, Franklin Health Trust, and Tenet Healthcare all joining in the suit, the claimants' force was formidable. The AHERF directors' and officers' liability insurance carriers finally settled the suit, and Drexel received \$19 million plus \$1.6 million to reimburse its legal fees. Thus, with the Franklin funds, there was an infusion of more than \$60 million dollars into the endowment in fiscal 2003.

Figure 1 shows the market value of the endowment, beginning in 1998 when the University began to manage the College of Medicine. In 1999, Tenet gave PHEC \$69 million to cover the medical school's expected losses. The money was deposited in the endowment as unrestricted funds and used to cover the operating deficit as the College regained its financial health.

Scholarship funds, as part of the endowment, were also recovered and attentively invested. Figure 2 (page 5) shows the growth in the College of Medicine's restricted scholarship money. From a low market value of \$6.7 million in FY 2002, we see an uptrend to \$9 million in 2003, and nearing \$14 million for 2006 (preliminary figure).

Although the growth to date is notable, the Liaison Committee on Medical Education (LCME), the accrediting body for medical schools,

Figure 1: College of Medicine Endowment Market Value



found a deficiency – the *only* one out of 124 potential deficiencies – in the fact that Drexel medical students

INSIDE...

- Presentations & Publications4
- Compliance Corner5
- Alumnae/i News6



Richard V. Homan, M.D.
Senior Vice President for Health Affairs
Annenberg Dean

A Fine Finish for the Academic Year

Although Commencement will be highlighted in the next issue of the NewsPager, I want to congratulate our new alumni – the graduates of 2006 – and the faculty who participated in their education. May 18 was also a singular day for me, as my first commencement ceremony in Philadelphia. I walked up Broad Street to an early bird breakfast with Dr. Lori Arviso Alvord, our

exceptional Commencement speaker, then joined the faculty in the robing room at the “Grand Old Lady of Locust Street” before participating in the processional and ceremony. It was a great day.

April and May brought other fine things for Drexel University College of Medicine, from both inside and outside the institution, and I would like to share the good news with you.

I am happy to announce the appointment of **Owen C. Montgomery, M.D.** as **Chairman of the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology**. Dr. Montgomery has been a member of the department since 2003 and is the department's Director of Female Pelvic Reconstructive Surgery. Throughout his career, Dr. Montgomery has explored a range of concerns, including technology in women's health, the provision of care to underserved women, gender education, and the prevention of sexual assault, especially in teenagers. He is a past president of the Philadelphia Obstetrical Society and is actively involved in the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, currently serving as Vice Chairman of ACOG District III (Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and Delaware).

The May edition of *Philadelphia Magazine* featured the region's best doctors in 56 specialties. We are happy to announce the following Drexel University College of Medicine physicians who are listed as the region's finest:

- Cardiovascular Disease**, Dr. Howard J. Eisen
- Gynecologic Oncology**, Dr. Stephanie King
- Internal Medicine**, Dr. Howard Miller
- Maternal & Fetal Medicine**, Dr. Ronald Wapner
- Medical Oncology**, Dr. Robert L. Comis
- Obstetrics & Gynecology**, Dr. Paul Nyirjesy
- Ophthalmology**, Dr. Gary R. Diamond
- Otolaryngology**, Dr. Robert T. Sataloff
- Pediatric Infectious Disease**, Dr. Sarah S. Long
- Pediatric Surgery**, Dr. Marshall Z. Schwartz
- Radiation Oncology**, Dr. Lydia T. Komarnicky
- Surgery**, Dr. William C. Meyers
- Thoracic Surgery**, Dr. Michael D. Strong III

Also featured in the magazine was **Christian Sell, Ph.D.**, Associate Professor of Pathology, for his anti-aging research.

Finally, more kudos for our work in **women's health**: In the April 10 *US News & World Report* ratings of graduate schools and their areas of strength, Drexel University College of Medicine ranked 16th in women's health out of 125 M.D.-granting schools.

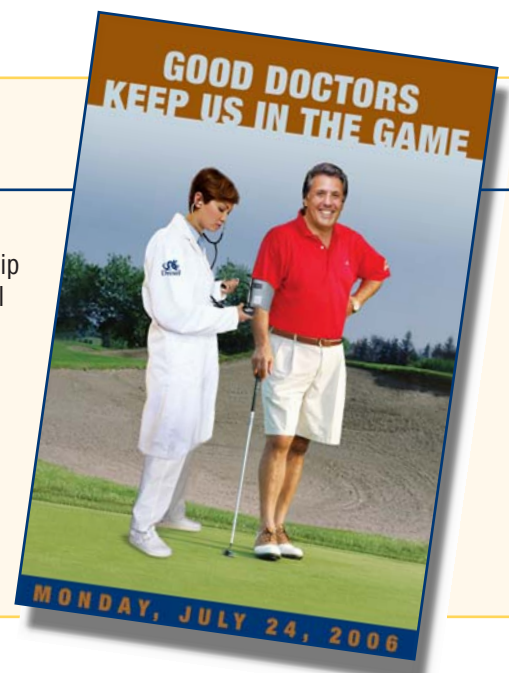
We will begin a new academic year with pride in the accomplishments of our faculty and students and look ahead to an exciting future.

Contact: 215-762-3500

Come Out and Golf for Scholarship Dollars

“Good Doctors Keep Us in the Game” is the slogan for the 2006 edition of the Manuel Stamatakis Golf Classic, teeing up July 24 on the Philadelphia Country Club's championship courses. To attract and aid our future good doctors, all proceeds from the Golf Classic will go to the Manuel N. Stamatakis Medical Education Scholarship Fund. In keeping with his commitment to the College, Chairman “Manny” Stamatakis established the fund to support scholarships for academically talented Drexel medical students with a demonstrated financial hardship. After a morning of hard work, come out and play for a very worthy cause.

Contact: Ellen Plower, 215-255-7327 or eplower@drexelmed.edu



Saint Peter's University Hospital: A Healthy Start for Students and Babies

Babies demand a lot of attention, especially at Saint Peter's University Hospital in New Brunswick, N.J., where about 6,400 are delivered each year. In the hospital's renowned Regional Perinatal Center, 1,700 newborns receive care annually in the 54-bassinett neonatal intensive care unit, one of the most advanced in the country and one of the largest on the East Coast, and 1,100 expectant mothers with high-risk pregnancies are monitored each year by a team of perinatal specialists.

As they grow, those babies benefit from a full range of pediatric subspecialties at The Children's Hospital at Saint Peter's, an acute-care facility that treats more children than any other hospital in Central New Jersey and is affiliated with The Children's Hospital of Philadelphia. The hospital's facilities include an eight-bed pediatric intensive care unit and a dedicated pediatric emergency department that treats about 20,000 children annually.

"The sheer volume and diversity of patients in these areas of specialty, as well as others at Saint Peter's, provide Drexel medical students with an enormous breadth of experience," says Nayan Kothari, M.D., Chairman of the Department of Medicine and Associate Dean of Medical Education at Saint Peter's. The hospital has more than 1,000 physicians and 2,800 support personnel who care for more than 30,000 inpatients and over 200,000 outpatients annually.

"Saint Peter's long tradition of expertise in areas such as maternal/fetal medicine and pediatrics dovetails with Drexel University College of Medicine's tradition of dedication to women's health," notes Barbara A. Schindler, M.D., Vice Dean, Educational & Academic Affairs, DUCOM.

Saint Peter's is also renowned for its expertise in minimally invasive surgery (MIS) and was the first hospital in the country to pioneer minimally invasive thoracic surgery. The hospital serves as an international MIS training center, and hundreds of complex MIS procedures are performed there every year.

Saint Peter's takes pride in its 60 years of involvement in medical education and in its affiliation with Drexel University College of Medicine, which began in July 2005. "Partnering with a medical school of Drexel's caliber enhances our reputation as an academic medical facility and further validates our commitment to medical education and to the quality of care we can provide to the community as a teaching hospital," says Tony Costabile, Vice

President, Professional Services, Saint Peter's, and a member of the oversight committee for the affiliation.

Nearly 200 third- and fourth-year Drexel medical students experienced Saint Peter's commitment firsthand while completing rotations at this 422-bed hospital during the past year. "Our students consistently tell us that Saint Peter's goes above and beyond to ensure a great educational experience," notes Dr. Schindler. "The faculty's enthusiasm and commitment to

providing stellar clerkship rotations has been exceptional. More than 100 faculty members at Saint Peter's are full time and they spend a generous amount of time with the students. They clearly enjoy teaching."

One unique way that Saint Peter's has gone "above and beyond" is by offering a daily

board review class during every rotation, developed by Dr. Kothari to help students prepare for board exams. In addition to increasing their knowledge base and skills, students also benefit from direct interaction with several of Saint Peter's leadership physicians who conduct the classes, including Dr. Kothari.

During pediatric clerkships, students are each assigned a faculty mentor who meets with them weekly for individualized instruction and review of their progress. "We've had great success with these student-mentor relationships," says William Bernstein, M.D., Chair of the Graduate Medical Education Committee and Director of the Pediatric Residency Training Program at Saint Peter's. "This personalized attention helps to ensure that students don't feel lost or overwhelmed during their clerkships."

Since April, first-year Drexel medical students have had the option of completing their primary-care practicum at Saint Peter's, and beginning in July, third- and fourth-year students will be able to complete all 12 weeks of the medicine clerkship at Saint Peter's. The hospital also offers residency programs in pediatrics, obstetrics and gynecology, and internal medicine. In April, Saint Peter's was designated by the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education as an integrated institution for DUCOM's surgical residency program.

"Drexel medical students benefit by helping to care for a very large underserved population in the community we serve, which is an important mission at Saint Peter's," says Sheryl Slonim, President and CEO of Saint Peter's. "Learning about the implications of socioeconomic issues and cultural diversity in patient care enhances their ability to become caring and responsive doctors."



Saint Peter's University Hospital



Dr. Abaza

Nabil A. Abaza, D.M.D., Ph.D., Professor and Program Director of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery, was an invited guest speaker during the 12th International Dental Congress convened in Cairo, Egypt on March 22 – 24, 2006. Dr. Abaza presented the “Contemporary Biologic Aspects and Surgical Managements of Benign and Malignant Lesions of the Jaws,” as well as the initial results of a prospective study entitled “Two-Staff Surgical Management of Massive Odontogenic Cysts of the Jaw.” The study is currently ongoing in the Division of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery.



Dr. Baas

Peter Baas, Ph.D., Professor, Department of Neurobiology and Anatomy, has co-authored an article with members of his laboratory, **Wenqian Yu**, Research Instructor, and **Liang Qiang**, doctoral student, entitled “Tau Protects Microtubules in the Axon from Severing by Katanin,” in Volume 26 of the *Journal of Neuroscience*. This article proposes a new hypothesis for the deterioration of the microtubule array contributing to nerve degeneration during diseases such as Alzheimer’s.



Dr. De Luca

Francesco De Luca, M.D., Associate Professor of Pediatrics, and Chief of the Section of Endocrinology and Diabetes, St. Christopher’s Hospital for Children, authored an article entitled “Impaired Growth Plate Chondrogenesis in Children with Chronic Illnesses” that was featured in the May issue of *Pediatric Research*.

Gianluca Gallo, Ph.D., Assistant Professor, Department of Neurobiology and Anatomy, chaired a symposium at the American Society for Neurochemistry meeting in March entitled “The Neurobiology of Actin: Dynamics, Regulation and Transport.”

Simon Giszter, Ph.D., Associate Professor, Department of Neurobiology and Anatomy, was the invited organizer of a session on spinal cord injury at the “Neural Control of Movement Meeting Satellite on Neural Control of Abnormal Movement,” held April 30 – May 2. The session also included DUCOM faculty member Anthony Burns.

Dr. Giszter was also invited to speak at the 28th International Symposium on Computational Neuroscience: From Theory to Neurons and Back Again, at the University of Montreal.

William Hirschhorn, Director of Graduate Clinical Research at the College of Medicine, published an article entitled “How to Plan and Implement Investigator-Initiated Clinical Trials,” that appeared in Volume 11 of the *Clinical Trials Advisor*.



Dr. Núñez

Ana Núñez, M.D., Associate Professor of Medicine and Director of the Women’s Health Education Program, chaired “The Heart Truth Professional Education National Dissemination Strategy Meeting,” sponsored by the Office of Women’s Health in Washington, D.C., on March 13 – 14, 2006.

Dr. Núñez was also an invited panelist at the Association of American Medical Colleges Group on Student Affairs Annual Meeting in Philadelphia on April 4 discussing “Diversity as a Compelling Interest.”



Dr. Nyirjesy

Paul Nyirjesy, M.D., Professor of Obstetrics and Gynecology, led the development of a new Practice Bulletin, *Vaginitis*, for the American College of Obstetrics and Gynecology. These bulletins are designed to aid practitioners in making decisions about appropriate ob/gyn care.



Dr. Petrucci

Ralph J. Petrucci, Ed.D., Associate Professor of Psychiatry and Medicine, and colleagues published “Cognitive Dysfunction in Advanced Heart Failure and Prospective Cardiac Assist Device Patients” in the May issue of *Annals of Thoracic Medicine*. This original article describes the cognitive deficits of end-stage heart failure patients and those awaiting implantation of mechanical cardiac assist devices.



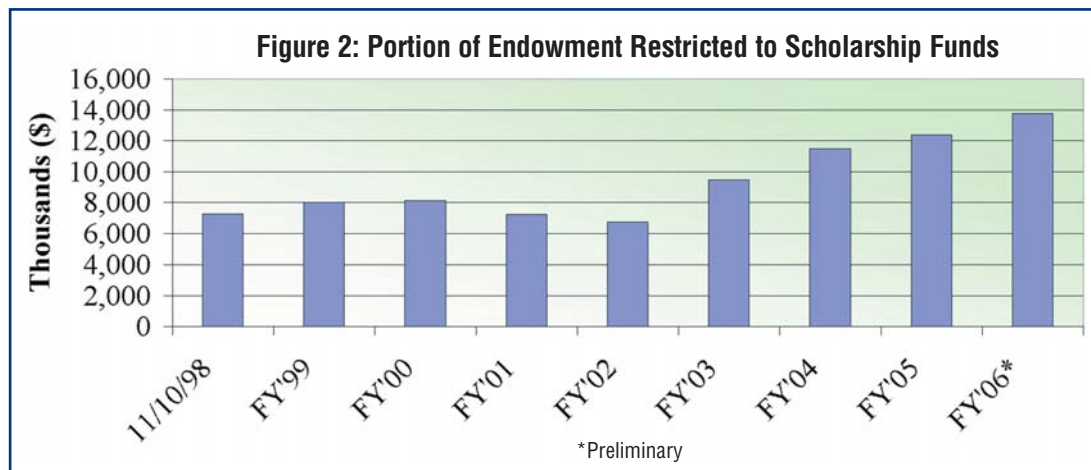
Candace Robertson

Candace Robertson, MPH, Research Manager at the Women’s Health Education Program presented “Women and Children Living with HIV/AIDS” at the NAACP Region II Conference (60th Annual Civil Rights Advocacy Training Institute) in Somerset, N.J. on April 21.

Smart Money: College Endowment Tops \$175 million...continued

graduate with too much debt, and that is a result of our not having enough scholarship funds. "That's why we suggest making a gift to the endowment with the income earmarked for scholarships," Dr. Papadakis said. "We encourage alumni to think about what they can do for today's students. Maybe when they were in school, somebody helped them. They could do that too for our kids, and it would be the best investment that they could make."

In FY 2003, when the average growth rate of university endowments was hailed as a move into positive numbers at 3 percent, the Drexel University consolidated endowment grew 19.1 percent. In FY 2005, when the top 50 private institutions (those with at least \$400 million) were ranked by the growth rate of their endowments, Drexel, with 17.3 percent, was number 5 – ahead of all the Ivies, save for Yale (*Chronicle of Higher Education*).



Enviably growth: Drexel University's total endowment ranks 112 of 746 colleges and universities, and 77 out of private institutions (*National Association of College and University Business Officers*). In fiscal 1995, the University's endowment was worth \$94 million. In 2005, the total market value of Drexel's endowment (including the College of Medicine) was \$497 million, a change of 427 percent, or an average 18.1 percent compound annual growth. Even during the 2001 and 2002 bust years, when other funds were reeling, the endowment's values were off just 2.9 and 8 percent, respectively. "I should have invested my money in the Drexel endowment," Dr. Papadakis said.

of independent consultants, they select a number of external investment managers, who are expected to more than beat the market and regularly do.

With the University's total endowment now over \$550 million, it is likely that a full-time investment manager, reporting to the CFO, will be brought online in fiscal 2007, the President said. The inside money manager will still use external managers, but will provide daily oversight. Dr. Papadakis will be watching closely too.

The stewardship of the separate College of Medicine and Drexel endowments is overseen by the investment committee of each board. In addition to the goals of conserving and enhancing their real value, the funds are structured to provide for the board-approved spending rate. The investment committees are composed of investment bankers and financial experts. They set the asset allocation policy and, with the assistance

Compliance Corner: Conflict of Interest and Commitment Policy Distribution



Edward G. Longazel
Chief Compliance Officer

Drexel University College of Medicine (Drexel Med) occupies a position of trust and responsibility in the community. It has obligations to external organizations, government, patients and the community to use its resources responsibly and, where required, for designated purposes. In meeting its obligations, and consistent with its threefold mission of patient care, education and research, Drexel Med expects all Members of the College Community to carry out their responsibilities with the highest level of integrity and ethical behavior.

The College is subject to many laws, regulations, and contractual obligations that are often complex. Faculty, staff and administration have activities essential to the success of Drexel Med, and it is important that there is cognizance of all legal and regulatory requirements associated with activities undertaken.

The Conflict of Interest Policy is communicated at least annually to all applicable members of the College community. A Conflict of Interest Statement and Policy is sent annually, prior to June 30, via e-mail to applicable members, per definitions attached to the policy. Immediate supervisors, vice presidents and administrative heads are to assure that all applicable members complete the statements. Completed and signed statements must be returned electronically by July 31. Disclosures of conflicts (a yes to any of the questions on the form) will be forwarded to the Chief Compliance Officer automatically. However, forms may be requested to permit submission of updated conflict information at any time as required. The July 2006 conflict disclosure cycle will be accompanied by submission of a Code of Conduct attestation via a similar e-mail process. Call the Chief Compliance Officer at **215-762-2023** with any questions. **CONFIDENTIAL HOTLINE: 866-936-1010, WEBSITE HOTLINE: www.drexelmed.edu, click *Faculty and Staff Resources*.**



ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

'70s

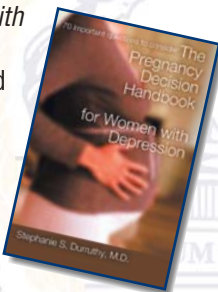
Ric Baxter, M.D., MCP '78, has been named Medical Director for the Lehigh Valley Heartland Hospice. Dr. Baxter has been affiliated with the Heartland agency since 2000 and has run a private practice in family medicine for the past 19 years.

'80s



Dr. Durruthy

Stephanie Durruthy, M.D., HU '81, authored a book entitled *The Pregnancy Decision Handbook for Women with Depression*, which was selected as a book award finalist and earned the silver honor in the self-help category for *ForeWord Magazine's* Book of the Year Award.



Thomas A. Boyd, Psy.D., HU '82 has joined Psychological and Behavioral Consultants in Willoughby Hills, Ohio. Dr. Boyd was most recently the Director of the Psychological Assessment Center at MetroHealth Medical Center.

In Memoriam

John Anthony Petkus, M.D., HMC '45, of Sun City Center, Fla., and Shohola, Pa., died April 18 at the age of 91. Dr. Petkus had a family practice in Shohola and served on staff at Callicoon, Saint Francis and Sunnyside hospitals prior to his retirement in 1993. In his private practice, he provided obstetrics, delivering over 600 children, as well as general family practice. He was an avid golfer, who garnered his first hole-in-one at the age of 86, as well as a seasoned licensed pilot with a passion for his planes and flight. He is said to have devoted his life to serving his community. Dr. Petkus is survived by his wife of 58 years, Elizabeth Anne (Betty), five children, 10 grandchildren, and four great-grandchildren.

Send alumni notes to Patty Comey at pcomey@drexelmed.edu or mail to: College of Medicine Office of Alumni Relations Suite 11489, 1601 Cherry Street, Philadelphia, PA 19102

Alumni Relations Office: **215-255-7341**
Toll Free: **866-373-9633**
Website: <http://www.drexelmed.edu/med/ia/alumni/>

Dr. Greenberg Receives Highest Honor in Occupational and Environmental Medicine



Dr. Greenberg

Michael I. Greenberg, M.D., MPH, FACOEM, Director of the Division of Medical Toxicology, Professor of Emergency Medicine and Public Health, received the highest honor in occupational and environmental medicine when the American College of Occupational and Environmental Medicine, an international medical society of more than 5,000 physicians and other allied health professionals,

presented him with the 2006 William S. Knudsen Award. Created in 1938 by William Knudsen, president of General Motors and a worker health advocate, the award recognizes an individual who has made outstanding contributions to the field of occupational and environmental medicine. Dr. Greenberg's assistance in developing and directing the first fellowship training program in occupational, environmental, and hyperbaric emergency medicine at Drexel, among other accomplishments, made him a prime candidate for selection.

Woman One Scholars Stand Out

Special guest Governor Ed Rendell was on hand to congratulate three of Drexel's Woman One Scholars at the Fourth Annual Woman One event at the Rittenhouse Hotel on April 27. LaToia Marks (left), a second-year Drexel University College of Medicine student who received a special scholarship funded by AmeriChoice, Veronica A. Ramirez, and Sharrón Manuel joined the Governor and the First Lady Judge Marjorie O. Rendell, in saluting this year's honoree, Suzanne Roberts. Each year Woman One salutes a woman of exceptional leadership credentials and raises funds to support minority women's scholarship for study at Drexel University College of Medicine. The event was created by the Institute for Women's Health and Leadership of the College of Medicine.



DUCOM Brings HIV/AIDS Education to Malawi

One of the highest rates of HIV/AIDS in the world is found in the country of Malawi, where 70 to 80 percent of people admitted to the hospital are infected. Patients crowd small, soiled hospital rooms with two in a bed and more on concrete floors and outdoor porches. Citizens walk miles to their local clinic to get in line by 4 a.m. hoping to be seen before the clinic cuts off at 140 patients per day. With the help of our own medical staff at Drexel, it is a place that is hoping for change.

David Rubenstein, Psy.D., Assistant Professor of Psychiatry and Director of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Programs at the Specialty Clinics at the College of Medicine, joined Suzanne Willard, Ph.D., CRNP, FAAN, Assistant Professor for the College of Nursing and Health Professions and on staff as a nurse



Dr. Suzanne Willard pictured with a participant in the HIV/AIDS conference that she and Dr. Rubenstein led in Malawi

practitioner at the Partnership Comprehensive Care Practice, Division of HIV/AIDS Medicine at the College of Medicine, to bring a unique initiative to the Kamuzu College of Nursing in Malawi.

Dr. Willard, making her sixth trip to Africa, saw the benefit of having Dr. Rubenstein's expertise in mental health and psychiatry, and the pair traveled to Malawi to present a conference at Kamuzu College for nurses from all over the country, followed by a four-day intensive, hands-on development program for 10 key faculty members.

The curriculum focused on developing skills for education and care, including inpatient, outpatient and home care; methods to counsel and instruct caretakers and patients about HIV/AIDS; ways to encourage individuals to get tested while promoting behavioral change; and methods to ensure adherence to the newly available antiretroviral medications. Combination antiretroviral therapy, available throughout the United States for more than a decade, is just being introduced into Malawi, as well as other developing nations.

Upon touring the hospitals and clinics in the poverty-stricken country, the doctors found that dismal surroundings were prevalent and a lack of hope was evident. "The conditions that the doctors and nurses of Malawi must provide care in were the



A typical village in Malawi

worst I've ever seen," says Dr. Willard. In the entire country there was only one working CD4 test machine, a necessary tool which tells an HIV/AIDS patient his or her immune status. The hospitals and clinics often lose electrical power, making medication storage a challenge because of the lack of refrigeration. Many of the patients do not have electricity at all, and must bury their medicine in clay pots in the ground to keep it cool.

Despite these circumstances, Dr. Rubenstein says of the faculty members, "They were so welcoming, so wanting, so interested and engaging ... they were hungry for knowledge and change and I felt inspired by their perseverance." He continued: "Every single person in that room was affected by HIV/AIDS, with friends or family dying, or even being infected themselves, and all hope for change. It was a life-changing experience."

Both Drs. Willard and Rubenstein agree, there are many challenges in working with a country that lacks resources to deal with an epidemic of this magnitude, and it is vital to teach a curriculum that is not Western-centric and that respects the cultural norms and standards of the country. The extent of the situation can be overwhelming.

As Dr. Rubenstein explains, "Sometimes you wonder, how can you throw a pebble into an ocean and have an impact?" However, every contribution helps. Says Dr. Willard, "If we make an impact with one person, one provider, it will improve the lives of many living with HIV/AIDS."

The pair plan to return to Malawi and continue educating and helping develop new programs for medical and nursing faculty and staff.



Dr. Rubenstein pointed out that HIV/AIDS causes the same emotional feelings and responses amongst people in any country after participants in the program were asked to write descriptive words for what the letters A I D S represented to them.

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Bulletins:

Eat, Sleep, Study, Paint

The workload that a medical student undertakes may likely take up every spare minute, except for eating and sleeping. However, for first-year College of Medicine student Brian Chen, creating art is an essential part of his day. Brian's work is currently on display at the F.U.E.L Gallery located at 249 Arch Street in Philadelphia. The gallery is open Tuesday – Saturday. See www.fuelcollection.com.

Medical Malpractice Suits Still Paying Out

Approximately 40 percent of the medical malpractice cases filed in the United States are groundless, says a Harvard analysis study that appeared in the *New England Journal of Medicine*. Although many of the lawsuits were dismissed without pay to patients due to a lack of evidence that any medical error was committed or injury sustained, unsubstantiated lawsuits still accounted for 15 percent of the money paid out in settlements or verdicts, the study continued. The American Medical Association, which favors caps on malpractice awards, called the study proof that meritless claims continue to slip through, forcing doctors to waste time defending them.

Could the United States Be a Healthier Place?

The annual number of deaths in the United States dropped by 50,000 in 2004, the largest decline in more than 60 years. According to health officials, drops in death rates for heart disease, cancer and stroke accounted for most of the surprising development. The mortality data, released by the National Center for Health Statistics, found a 2 percent decline in deaths recorded from 2003 to 2004.

Panel Backs Vaccine for Cervical Cancer

A vaccine that blocks viruses that cause most cervical cancer is safe and effective and should be approved, a federal panel recommended recently at a meeting in Washington. The vaccine, named Gardasil and produced by Merck, could potentially cut global deaths from the cancer by more than two-thirds by protecting against two types of human papillomavirus, which scientists believe is responsible for 70 percent of cervical cancer cases. A decision by the FDA is expected soon and experts are predicting approval for the vaccine that may help to eliminate a cancer that kills 290,000 women a year worldwide.

Calendar:

June	<i>National Vision Research Month</i>
Jun 2	Faculty Day , Queen Lane campus ELAM Reception , Queen Lane Atrium
Jun 4	National Cancer Survivors Day
Jun 9-11	AMA Section on Medical Schools annual meeting Palmer House Hilton, Chicago Contact: 800-262-3211, ext. 4655, or e-mail section@ama-assn.org
Jun 12-18	<i>National Men's Health Week</i>
Jun 26-30	Junior Orientation
Jun 27	<i>National HIV Testing Day</i>
July	<i>UV Safety Month</i>
Jul 19	Department of Medicine Grand Rounds: Hypertension Crisis 8:30 am, Geary Auditorium Lecture Hall B New College Building, 245 N. 15th Street Contact: Walter Albright, 215-762-8695
Jul 26	Department of Medicine Grand Rounds: Advances in HIV Therapy 8:30 am, Geary Auditorium Lecture Hall B New College Building, 245 N. 15th Street Contact: Walter Albright, 215-762-8695
August	<i>National Immunization Awareness Month</i> <i>Children's Eye Health and Safety Month</i>
Aug 4	First-year medical student orientation begins (Class of 2010)
Aug 10	First- and second-year medical student classes begin
Aug 11	White Coat Ceremony Hilton City Avenue
September	<i>Healthy Aging Month</i> <i>Polycystic Ovarian Syndrome Awareness Month</i> <i>Ovarian Cancer Awareness Month</i> <i>Prostate Cancer Awareness Month</i>

NEWSPAGER, a newsletter for the Drexel University College of Medicine community of students, faculty, staff, and alumni, is published by the Communications Department, Linda A. Roth, Director. Submissions may be mailed to **NEWSPAGER**, Communications Department, Suite 11484, 1601 Cherry Street, Philadelphia, PA 19102, or e-mailed to Linda.Roth@drexelmed.edu, or faxed to 215-255-7301. Deadline: first of the preceding month. Telephone: **215-255-7330**. Philadelphia Health & Education Corporation d/b/a Drexel University College of Medicine is a separate not-for-profit subsidiary of Drexel University.