Students help Motown get its groove back

Detroit

More than 30 osteopathic medical students joined the American Osteopathic Foundation (AOF) this summer to help revitalize a former industrial giant, the city of Detroit, by spending two days in the Littlefield neighborhood completing a cleanup project.

The 2014 AOF HumanTouch Student Leadership Project brought together students from across the nation to make a difference for an underserved community. Using muscle power, teamwork and positive energy, the group cleared overgrowth from a school field and abandoned houses, picked up trash and painted homes.

Their efforts were well received by the community, with onlookers inspired to join in, and even continue the work at the conclusion of the project.

Now in its fifth year, the project aims to inspire, motivate and empower osteopathic medical students to participate in public service projects that benefit communities in need and promote leadership and teamwork within the osteopathic profession.

To see a highlight video, or to donate, visit aof.org. HT

Melissa Martinez, OMS II at MSUCOM, said the trip helped more than the community. “As students we get so sucked into books and fake cases and patients, but by being part of actual lives, and making a positive change that brightens their day—brought me back to why I was in medicine, why I sacrifice and why I am trying to be the best physician I can be.”
More than 500 osteopathic physicians, students, educators and their friends and family, as well as corporate benefactors joined the AOF for its 65th anniversary and annual Honors celebration on Oct. 24 at OMED. It was a festive and collegial atmosphere as 32 of 50 tables were filled with students and faculty from nearly all the colleges of osteopathic medicine, and almost $10,000 was raised on the spot for the 2015 AOF HumanTouch Student Leadership Project via mobile text donations.

During Honors 2014, attendees toasted to 65 years of success and growth of the AOF as well as the best and brightest of the osteopathic profession. More than 100 osteopathic physicians and students were honored for their hard work, scholarship and excellence. Festivities included an evening of drinks, dinner and dancing in the grand ballroom at The Sheraton Seattle. HT
OMED HELPING HANDS

Before taking part in the AOF Honors celebration, volunteers spent the morning of Oct. 24 at the 2014 OMED Helping Hands Project—an annual service project that benefits the local host city by helping those in need. This year’s project benefited Seattle’s Union Gospel Mission, an organization that serves over 1,200 men, women, and children every day. With an array of programs, the mission provides emergency food and shelter, addiction recovery, education, and more.

INSTITUTE OF MEDICINE (IOM) ANNIVERSARY FELLOWSHIP FOR OSTEOPATHIC MEDICINE

Dr. Creagh Milford, DO, MPH, recently began a two-year osteopathic fellowship with the Institute of Medicine, which is made possible by an endowment funded by the AOF, the AOA and the American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine. The groups created the fellowship to exist in perpetuity to ensure an osteopathic medical professional has the opportunity to work on and influence evidence-based healthcare or public health studies that affect the nation’s health. Dr. Milford is an AOA-board certified internist and 2008 graduate of Midwestern University/Chicago College of Osteopathic Medicine.

“The IOM Fellowship provides an excellent opportunity to learn from our nation’s experts and to contribute to the national health policy debate in a very meaningful way. My hope is that my participation will positively impact how our policymakers think about these complex issues,” said Dr. Milford.

BIOMEA WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION (WHO) INTERNSHIP

Congratulations to Marc Cassone, OMS II at Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine (PCOM), who will be traveling to Geneva, Switzerland in early 2015 for a three-month internship with the WHO working for the Department for Health System Policy and Workforce.

The internship is made possible by a $10,000 grant given by the AOF to the AOA’s Bureau on International Osteopathic Medical Education and Affairs (BIOMEA). Cassone was selected by BIOMEA from nearly 40 applicants to represent the osteopathic profession for this prestigious internship at the global health organization.

ROSNICK HUMANITARIAN GRANTS

Osteopathic physicians, residents and students are able to make a difference around the world through the AOF Rossnick Humanitarian Grant program. These grants help caring individuals give back and showcase the talents and compassion of the osteopathic profession.

In 2014, the AOF provided 36 Rossnick Humanitarian Grants, for a total of $36,000, to individuals who dedicated one week to several weeks of their lives to provide medical care to people worldwide who need it the most. Due to the popularity of this program, the $36,000 allocated for these grants was expended shortly after opening the application process. HT

The AOF organized a group of volunteers including the Advocates for the AOA, osteopathic medical students and OMED attendees to work with Seattle’s Union Gospel Mission at their distribution center and their Men’s Recovery Program. All helped with a variety of projects from sorting donated products to cleaning and organizing.

Dr. Cuddy spends time with children of families she’s served in rural communities.

Dr. Dela Cruz works with children during her trip to El Salvador.

Emily Wittenburg, OMS III in Uganda.
Michael Italo Opipari, DO, MACOI, FAODME, FACOS (Hon.), the recipient of the AOF 2014 Lifetime Achievement Award, is considered by many as the father of Osteopathic Postdoctoral Training Institutions (OPTI). He has spent more than four decades not only practicing and teaching osteopathic medicine, but pioneering systems and standards for osteopathic medical residents that will continue to influence generations of osteopathic physicians for years to come.

Serving for 20 years as the chair of the Council on Osteopathic Postdoctoral Training for the American Osteopathic Association (AOA) and as an advisor for the AOA’s Council on OPTIs for eight years, Dr. Opipari continues to influence the future of the profession as a member of the AOA/ACGME Joint Education Committee and as an advisor on the Council he formerly chaired.

The OPTI concept was introduced to the AOA Board of Trustees in the late 80s by Dr. Opipari, but it wasn’t until the late 90s that osteopathic residency programs had to be incorporated into an OPTI. He felt strongly that hospitals and colleges could work together and not compete—an idea that took time for acceptance—but now is one that differentiates, and even strengthens the profession by offering high quality, cost efficient training.

In addition to his profound contributions to postdoctoral training, he has held numerous leadership positions including president of the American College of Osteopathic Internists (ACOI) and chairman, governing board of the statewide campus system of the Michigan State University College of Osteopathic Medicine (MSUCOM).

Born in Detroit in 1937 to Italian immigrants who stressed the value of education and hard work, Dr. Opipari graduated from Wayne State University in Detroit in 1959 and went on to the Chicago College of Osteopathy, where he received his osteopathic medical degree in 1964. He completed his internship and residency at Detroit Osteopathic Medical Hospital, followed by a fellowship in medical oncology at Wayne State University School of Medicine—where he also taught for a year.

Dr. Opipari spent the next 40 years teaching at MSUCOM. He also served in a variety of educational and administrative positions with the Detroit Osteopathic Hospital Corporation and the Henry Ford Health System. He has authored and co-authored nearly three dozen scholarly publications, abstracts and book chapters.

Board certified in internal medicine and medical oncology, Dr. Opipari practiced medical oncology for 26 years and is a Master Fellow of the American College of Osteopathic Internists (ACOI), a Fellow in the Academy of Osteopathic Directors of Medical Education and an Honorary Fellow in the American College of Osteopathic Surgeons.

The AOF recently spoke with Dr. Opipari about his award and his thoughts on postdoctoral training. To read excerpts from the conversation, go to aof.org. 

Establishing a new osteopathic medical school is no small undertaking, especially in rural, underserved areas. But John M. Kaufman, Jr. DO, FACOI, FACP (AOA/ACGME), founding dean and chief academic officer for Campbell University Jerry M. Wallace School of Osteopathic Medicine (CUSOM) and AOF Educator of the Year, was up to the task when opening the first medical school in North Carolina in more than 35 years and helping to develop the state’s first DO internal medicine residency program.

Now hailed as a flagship osteopathic medical school that Jerry M. Wallace, EdD, its namesake describes as the “miracle at little Buies Creek,” Dr. Kaufman has instilled the osteopathic spirit and infused the message of mind, body and spirit into the curriculum. The school, which started its inaugural class of 160 medical students from more than 1,000 applicants last year, aims to close a gap in the state’s rural and persistent health care shortage areas.

Before CUSOM, Dr. Kaufman spent four years in different roles at Edward Via College of Osteopathic Medicine (VCOM) in Blacksburg, VA, including vice dean and associate dean for postgraduate affairs and chief academic officer. Dr. Kaufman graduated from Allegheny College and later the Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine (PCOM). He then completed an internship at Clarison (PA) Community Hospital and his residency at Lehigh Valley Hospital Center in Allentown, PA. He went on to practice internal medicine for many years, and later became a Fellow in the American College of Osteopathic Internists and the American College of Physicians.

When it comes to treating some of the most complicated immunological cases in the world, many patients turn to Dr. Calabrese, who has spent thousands of hours in the Cleveland Clinic. Known for his work in rheumatology and immunodeficiency diseases, Dr. Calabrese is the first physician to hold two endowed chairs at the world-renowned facility: the RJ Fasenmyer Chair of Clinical Immunology at the RJ Fasenmyer Center for Clinical Immunology and the Theodore F. Claassen Chair of Osteopathic Research and Education.

The Cleveland Clinic has been home to Dr. Calabrese for his entire career. He performed his internal medicine training there, and held a fellowship in rheumatology and immunologic disease before serving on staff in that department—where he still serves today.

Dr. Calabrese also holds a joint appointment in the Department of Bioethics, Humanities and Spiritual Care at the Cleveland Clinic Foundation, is a professor at the Cleveland Clinic Lerner College of Medicine of Case Western Reserve University, and a co-director of the Center for Vasculitis Care and Research with a joint appointment in the Department of Infectious Diseases.

For Dr. Calabrese, osteopathic medicine is a way of life. His father, Arthur B. Calabrese, DO, was a pioneer in the profession. Both were graduates of Kansas City University of Medicine and Biosciences. The tradition continues with his oldest child (pictured above), Cassandra Calabrese, DO, chief medical resident at the Cleveland Clinic, a position he also held in 1978—a pairing that is a first in the institution’s history. 

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NEW AWARD BENEFITS COMMUNITY HEALTH CLINICS

The American Osteopathic Foundation (AOF) is proud to introduce the Caring for Communities Award, an annual award to recognize and support clinics in the United States utilizing the aid of osteopathic physicians to serve communities in need.

“I’ve been inspired by friends and colleagues who have worked in clinics, and feel we should recognize and support the outstanding work of these and other osteopathic physicians—especially those helping in overlooked communities at home,” said Larry Wickless, DO, an AOF Board Member and past-president of the American Osteopathic Association who donated the funds, along with his wife, Carole Crosby, JD, to establish the award.

Beginning in 2015, the $5,000 award will be presented annually to a qualified 501(c)(3) center with an osteopathic physician directly involved that best exemplifies the humanitarian values of compassion, dedication and dignified care while addressing the healthcare needs of people in disadvantaged communities.

Dr. Wickless knows the impact a health clinic can have on a community. A Lake Erie College of Osteopathic Medicine (LECOM) professor in Bradenton, FL, Dr. Wickless volunteers with students at Turning Points Clinic at the Bill Galvano One Stop Center in Bradenton, a free clinic that provides healthcare, food, clothes, access to computers and more to the homeless and those at risk of being homeless.

“I hope this award brings much-deserved recognition to these clinics and the people behind them, and the good they do for the community. I want to acknowledge their service and help with their financial needs so they can accomplish their mission.”

Dr. Regina Benjamin walks away from the construction site for her new clinic in Bayou La Batre, Alabama.

He’s also been inspired by many colleagues who have made a difference at free clinics in the U.S., including past AOF Physician of the Year, Sister Anne Brooks, DO and her clinic in Tutwiler, MS, former U.S. Surgeon General Regina Benjamin, MD, and her clinic in Alabama, a former classmate James O’Connor, DO who runs a free clinic in Jackson, MI, and 2010 AOF Spirit of Humanity Award winner Steve Kamajian, DO who has worked in free clinics in California and advocated on their behalf to create Good Samaritan laws for doctors working in them.

“I hope this award brings much-deserved recognition to these clinics and the people behind them, and the good they do for the community. I want to acknowledge their service and help with their financial needs so they can accomplish their mission,” Dr. Wickless said.

During his tenure as AOA president in 2009-10, his theme was “leading change.” He says of the Caring for Communities Award, “It’s not important that my name isn’t attached to it. It allows the award to be carried on by someone else. I try to lead by action and if someone else comes along and finds that the award is a good idea, then they can donate to it.”

The first Caring for Communities Award recipient will be announced during the AOF Honors Ceremony at the 2015 Osteopathic Medical Conference & Exposition (OMED). Applications will be available beginning in early 2015 at aof.org.

IT’S NOT TOO LATE! Please consider a year-end gift to the AOF by sending a donation in the enclosed envelope or donating online at aof.org. With your help, we can make a difference!