VCOM and New Partners Take a Step to Improve Global Health
At a time when 16 percent of Americans are without healthcare (an estimated 40 million), the VCOM Mission to improve the health of those most in need has never been more necessary, and it is the population of Appalachia that may be experiencing some of the greatest healthcare needs.

We cannot look to a burdened government to meet all of these needs under our current economy. Yet, at the government’s side are the country’s medical schools, prepared to bear part of the load, as they have always been a resource for healthcare outreach. Of those medical schools, VCOM provides free care to thousands of patients in Appalachia each year through our work in the free clinics, outreach health fairs and missions, and in our academic clinic. On a global scale, VCOM provides clinics in El Salvador, Honduras, and the Dominican Republic that offer free healthcare to patients who are destitute of options, and who have been without healthcare their entire lives. With the college commitment to this mission, VCOM has attracted students who are committed to the same values. The VCOM students and faculty actively participate in providing altruistic care throughout this region. The result is that VCOM students are some of the most intelligent and most compassionate students; they advance forth to serve the world and brighten the future of healthcare.

The college’s new post-baccalaureate educational program is a dynamic curriculum that prepares students to enter the medical curriculum. The new class is a dedicated one, and we are hopeful that many will join next year’s class. For now, they are not only progressing well in the academic arena, but they have provided outreach to the community and will join our medical mission in the spring.

In 2009, VCOM was listed as one of the top schools for primary care. Of three graduated classes from VCOM, approximately 60 percent entered residency programs in family medicine, pediatrics, OB/GYN, and internal medicine. As 2010 approaches, our first class will finish residency and many will return to Southwest and Southside Virginia to take their place within communities. As we mark these young physicians returning to provide care to one of the most underserved regions in the country, we will see VCOM’s mission materialize.

I hope you enjoy this publication featuring the many commendable accomplishments of the VCOM faculty, staff, and students. I invite each of you to visit our college campus in the upcoming year.
The Edward Via Virginia College of Osteopathic Medicine (VCOM) matriculated a class of 189 new students this fall. The three-day orientation program was held August 12-14, 2009 and included sessions for students to get to know each other, to become oriented with the curriculum, and to hear about future expectations of them as soon-to-be physicians. A picnic and social events planned by VCOM’s SOMA chapter rounded out the program. One of the activities during orientation was for the class to create a mission statement about their aspirations as a class and to have a guide to define what they would like to accomplish at VCOM.

STUDENT VIEWS

“Developing our class mission statement and motto allowed us the opportunity to get to know our classmates on a more intimate level as we discussed the ideals of osteopathic medicine and the reasons for choosing VCOM as our educational institution. The formulation and presentation of our class mission statement and motto was the most profound moment of orientation for me. It was amazing that our class, divided into 12 groups, collectively established an awesome statement that I believe adequately describes us as a whole. As I looked across the classroom at our diverse group and thought about the motto and mission statement we had created for the class of 2013, I realized that we are more similar than we appear.”

Kristin Lynch, Class of 2013

“Orientation was an amazing experience because it painted a perfect picture of the VCOM mission while tying in the faculty and students importance to this mission. It was surreal to realize that I was sitting in a seat that I and so many have worked so hard to get. The students and faculty that I had met on the first day made it even more exciting because of how wonderful everyone was. I consider myself one of the luckiest students for getting an opportunity to work with amazing faculty as they develop my colleagues and me into the best rural physicians we can be.”

Sam Adams, Class of 2013

VCOM Welcomes Seventh Class

The Class of 2013 is 41 percent female. Twenty-six hold advanced degrees, 12 have military scholarships, and 50 had a prior healthcare career.

The largest number of students come from Virginia (69), followed by North Carolina (31), Tennessee (10), South Carolina (10), Pennsylvania (9), Georgia (9), and Maryland (6).

The undergraduate institutions sending the most students to VCOM are Virginia Tech (28), University of Virginia (10), North Carolina State University (10), University of North Carolina (9), Old Dominion University (6), and Liberty University (5).

Class of 2013 Motto

Building on the past. Adapting to the present. Inspiring the future.

Unique and united, we humbly embrace our roles as leaders in our local and global communities, striving to provide compassionate care for the mind, body, and spirit.

About the Class...
The Edward Via Virginia College of Osteopathic Medicine (VCOM) announced a new partnership with Foot Levelers, Premier Transfer & Storage, and Burch Enterprises to take a step against poverty by helping to provide free footwear to those in need. The free footwear is just one component of a larger VCOM global health initiative that includes education and preventive health efforts to decrease the prevalence of foot injuries and parasitic, bacterial, and fungal infection to improve the quality of life for many communities throughout the Dominican Republic, Honduras, and El Salvador.

Foot Levelers donated more than 35,000 pairs of new sandals, work boots, dress and athletic shoes for distribution to those in need in communities served by VCOM’s three international sites in the Dominican Republic, El Salvador, and Honduras. Foot Levelers has donated millions of dollars to chiropractic colleges and healthcare causes over the years. Their tradition of supporting worthy causes continues with this donation to those in need. With generous donors such as Foot Levelers, VCOM will be able to continue its important global health initiatives.

“We are honored to support the admirable work of the Edward Via Virginia College of Osteopathic Medicine,” said Foot Levelers President and CEO Kent S. Greenawalt. “They have an exceptional commitment to education and research. Additionally, they place an emphasis on helping people in need around the world. Foot Levelers shares this humanitarian ideal and is proud to partner with VCOM in this important endeavor.”

Premier Transfer & Storage offered staff and logistical support and donated seven 53’ trailers to ship the shoes from the Foot Levelers in the
VCOM International Programs

This year marks the fourth consecutive year of VCOM’s ongoing International Outreach and Missions program and represents VCOM’s ongoing commitment to partnering with local organizations to improve the health of those at home and abroad.

Since the start of VCOM’s international initiatives, VCOM doctors and students have provided care to more than 12,000 people living in desperate conditions who lack food or clothing, much less a few dollars to purchase shoes. Footwear donated from this initiative will help prevent parasitic, bacterial and fungal infections, and foot injuries in villages in the Dominican Republic, El Salvador, and Honduras.

Many living in the villages served by VCOM have severely worn or inappropriately sized shoes or, no shoes at all, leaving them susceptible to foot injuries, parasites, bacteria, and fungus that can infect their feet and cause other severe health problems. Prevention, through the use of appropriate shoes, has been proven to help prevent disease and injury. Through the great generosity of Foot Levelers, and with the logistical support and assistance of Premier Transport and Burch Enterprises, VCOM will be able to outfit several entire villages with shoes—a simple intervention that can help to control parasites, improve the quality of life, and even save lives.

“We are excited to partner with Foot Levelers and Premier Transfer & Storage, and to continue our partnership with Burch Enterprises to help those in need,” said Dixie Tooke-Rawlins, Dean and Executive Vice President of VCOM. “The combined efforts of all of our partners will help VCOM continue to provide much needed health services to the neediest communities around the world, while at the same time contributing to VCOM’s ongoing mission of providing compassionate and sustainable healthcare. Together we can provide shoes, an essential that is often not affordable where we work.”

John Phillips, President of Premier Transfer & Storage said, “With so many children in need around the world, we are proud to volunteer our time to assist the Edward Via Virginia College of Osteopathic Medicine and Foot Levelers in their quest to provide thousands of pairs of shoes for needy children and adults.”
On May 30, 2009, VCOM held its Commencement Ceremony for the graduating Class of 2009. One hundred and thirty-four students received their D.O. degree, with 14 of the graduates being Health Professional Scholarship Program (HPSP) military scholars who, as commissioned officers, will go on to serve their country.

VCOM was honored to have Lieutenant General Ronald R. Blanck, D.O., U.S. Army (retired) speak at this year’s graduation ceremony for the Class of 2009. Blanck is a partner and Vice-Chairman of the Board of Martin, Blanck & Associates. The company, formerly Martin & Associates, does healthcare consulting for the private sector and the government. He retired as the President of the University of North Texas Health Science Center at Fort Worth on June 30, 2006. As president, Dr. Blanck headed an academic health center that includes the Texas College of Osteopathic Medicine, Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences, School of Public Health, and School of Health Professions.

Special recognition by honorary degrees were given to Theodore W. Kheel, J.D., Laura Bireley Cornwell, and Gary D. Cornwell for their outstanding achievements.

Barbara E. Walker, D.O., spoke as the AOA Campus Representative.

Harry Simmons, D.O., receives Professor Emeritus status from Dean Tooke-Rawlins.

VCOM Dean Dixie Tooke-Rawlins, D.O., bestows the hood to graduate Adrienne Hill.

VCOM Chairman of the Board, John G. Rocovich, Jr., J.D., L.L.M., awards a diploma to Sonja Lynm.

Jake Kheel accepts an award for his uncle, Theodore Kheel, J.D., from VCOM President James Wolfe, Ph.D.

VCOM Chairman of the Board, John G. Rocovich, Jr., J.D., L.L.M., awards a diploma to Sonja Lynm.

The guest speaker was Lt. General Ronald R. Blanck, D.O., U.S. Army (retired).

Laura Bireley Cornwell and Gary D. Cornwell each receive an honorary degree from VCOM for their outstanding achievements.
and contributions to medical education and to society. The title of Professor Emeritus was awarded to former VCOM Surgery Chair Harry Simmons, D.O.

Currently, the graduates are beginning internship and residency programs in the various fields of medicine at sites across the United States.

Best wishes graduates!

Left: In the week before the graduation ceremony, a Graduation Celebration Dinner was held at the newly opened VCOM II building. Megan Price is shown here giving an award to Derek McVay.

Below and left: A family picnic with food, music, and fun for graduates and their families.

Serving Our Country

The Military Promotion Ceremony for the 14 Uniformed Service Members of VCOM’s Class of 2009 was held on May 29, 2009 at Virginia Tech’s War Memorial Chapel.

The guest speaker was Colonel Donald Christensen, D.O., M.P.H., Air Force Medical Support Agency United States Air Force (USAF) Office of the Surgeon General from Bolling Air Force Base, Washington, District of Columbia. Colonel Christensen has an extensive military history and has held ranks in both enlisted and officer corps. He also held the position of Deputy Program Director for Occupational Medicine at the USAF School of Aerospace Medicine. In that capacity he developed and executed aspects of the Air Force Medical Service’s operational residency that focused on the health, performance, and safety of air crew, operators, passengers, and support personnel.
Disaster response skills may be called upon at any time, and an understanding of such skills can reduce the morbidity and mortality in any major disaster. This was apparent after the first Bioterrorism and Disaster Training program in 2004. Following the two-day session, 40 students and faculty members spent 23 days in Pass Christian and Bay St. Louis responding to the devastation caused by Hurricane Katrina. Three years later, VCOM Students and faculty were among the first to respond following the shootings on the Virginia Tech campus on April 16, 2007, and during November of 2008, 45 students and faculty responded to the needs of the flood victims in Honduras. The VCOM response to these above manmade and natural disasters reflects the excellence and commitment of the VCOM family.

Since the onset of VCOM in 2003, the school’s administration has recognized the need for students to gain first-hand experiences and the ability to respond to bioterrorism and natural disasters. As part of their medical education and training, all second-year students undergo an intense two-day field and lecture program, known as the Bioterrorism and Disaster Training Program, to respond to unexpected manmade or natural disasters. This program prepares students to respond to natural or manmade disasters by encouraging a sustained partnership with local, regional, national, and international medical communities and by
exploring the need for social, political, and economic stability. The program involves not only students, but VCOM faculty, military lecturers and consultants, Virginia Tech public relations personnel, local media reporters, Virginia Tech Police and S.W.A.T., and local EMS and nursing.

The Bioterrorism and Disaster Response Curriculum included presentations on many topics, such as natural and manmade disasters, infectious agents of bioterrorism, ethical issues in disaster medicine, psychological and psychiatric issues, pediatric patients in a bioterrorism and mass casualty situation, and VCOM’s response to previous disasters, along with many other topics. As for the field exercises, VCOM students and faculty had no prior knowledge of the four simulations they were to face: a pre-hospital triage area, a field hospital area, a psychology instruction area, and an instruction group presented by the Virginia Tech Police/S.W.A.T. teams.

Over 160 medical students divided into four teams were rotated through each station in a 90-minute block. At the military and the STIP (Stabilization and Treatment In Place) pre-hospital stations, students were reacquainted with triage basics and instructed on how to set up a field expedient triage casualty collection point. Students learned the need for a strong communication network and chain of command and the difficulty of deciding which patients were savable based on available resources and expected casualty load. Students also had to expediently distribute the manning they had available to staff the entire unit. Afterwards, students were regrouped and received a debriefing on their areas of strength and weakness. At the psychological instructional unit, students participated both as disaster victims and mental healthcare providers. The internationally renowned Virginia Tech Police/S.W.A.T. team members shared their unique response experiences and engaged the students in medical aspects of police intervention.

The training offered by this program is invaluable because it teaches skills that may save many lives in the future.
The Blake E. Fought Memorial Scholarship-VCOM Golf Tournament held May 4, 2009 at the Blacksburg Country Club netted over $8,000. Twenty-seven teams participated. The tournament’s major sponsor was the Cornwell Bireley Foundation. Other key sponsors included Hitt and Hitt Contracting, Inc. and the Class of 2008.

Amy Fought, Class of 2008, was a third-year medical student when her 19-year-old-son, Blake, died unexpectedly. Courageously, Amy persevered through the loss of her only son to graduate with her entering class and is now in her residency at the Bluefield Regional Medical Center in Bluefield, West Virginia.

In remembrance of Blake's boundless enthusiasm for life, friends of the Fought family have established a scholarship at VCOM in Blake’s name. The annual tournament will raise funds toward the goal of endowing the scholarship. The second annual tournament will be held on May 3, 2010.
VCOM Represented at American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine (AACOM) Annual Meeting

More than 400 attendees and 28 exhibitors gathered for this year’s Annual Meeting in North Bethesda, Maryland on April 15-18, making it an experience to remember. VCOM received second place in the AACOM Excellence in Communications Awards Program for the VCOM Flood Relief Mission booklet in the category of Best Program: Public Education or Community Service.

Speakers and panelists from VCOM spoke on the following subjects during the annual conference:

- Social Media Marketing to the Virtual Generation
  Elaine Powers, M.S.L.S.

- Global Network for Health and Environment: A Novel Approach to Education and Diagnostics
  H. Dean Sutphin, Ph.D., M.S.

- Innovative Approach to Addressing Global Health Disparities Through a Global Health Leadership Training Program in Latin America
  H. Dean Sutphin, Ph.D., M.S., and Dixie Tooke-Rawlins, D.O., F.A.C.O.F.P.

- Teaching Community Health Interventions Through a Traveling Mini-Med School
  Linda Frasca, M.D.

- Establishing an International OME Collaborative
  Jan M. Willcox, D.O.

The next meeting will be held from April 7-10, 2010 in Bethesda, Maryland.

Regional Sites Welcome Class of 2011 VCOM Students

Spartanburg Regional Health System Family Practice Residency provided a welcoming party in August for the incoming VCOM Class of 2011 students who will begin their core third-year rotations at the hospital this fall. The event was hosted at the home of two recent VCOM alumni in the program, Cary and Mary Sue Brewton, Class of 2009. Other alumni in attendance were two members of the inaugural Class of 2007, Dr. Mark Dudley and Dr. Douglas Wiley, who are now in their third and final year of residency in the Family Practice program, and second-year resident, Class of 2008 alumnus, Dr. Doralyn Jones. Ron Januchowski, D.O., Family Practice Program Director and VCOM Director of Student Medical Education said, “As the students enter this new phase of training, this demonstration of support will provide a much easier transition.” This event has become an annual tradition.

Danville Regional Medical Center (DRMC) will be holding regular events throughout the year to welcome VCOM medical students to Danville and incorporate them into the DRMC medical family. These social events will bring students, preceptors, medical staff, and DRMC administrators together. In September, VCOM clinical faculty members and Dr. Vasireddy hosted a pool party and cook out at their home for students.

—Jan M. Willcox, D.O.
Associate Dean for Clinical Academic Affairs
VCOM first and second-year medical students continued to meet the needs of the underserved and vulnerable through their participation in five theme-based mission trips during the 2008-2009 academic year. More than 125 first and second-year students and 13 faculty and staff participated in mission-trip activities during VCOM breaks, providing care for an estimated 2,300 patients over a three-week period.

This year, each mission trip focused on a particular specialty area, allowing interested students the opportunity to gain hands-on experience in their fields of interest while actively engaging student clubs and organizations in the planning and implementation process. Student club leadership helped to plan the trip itinerary, develop health promotion and education materials, gather donations, and assist with the logistics for each trip. This year’s themes and club sponsors included:

- **Disaster Relief in Honduras in November** – Emergency Medicine Club and American College of Osteopathic Family Physicians (ACOFF)
- **Pediatrics in El Salvador in February** – Pediatrics Club
- **Women’s Health in the Dominican Republic in February** – OB/GYN Club
- **Surgery and Faith-Based in Honduras in May** – Surgery Club and the Christian Medical and Dental Association (CMDA)
- **USS Comfort Ship Mission in El Salvador**

Medications and supplies for these mission trips were donated by foundations and suppliers recruited by VCOM International Health and Appalachian Outreach. Kingsway Charities, Americares, MAP International, and Richie Ray’s Specialty Pharmacy have provided excellent support. Additional medications were secured at wholesale rates through Blessings International and other charities.

Eight mission trips planned for next year (2009-2010) will offer students international opportunities in internal medicine, chronic disease prevention, emergency medicine, disaster preparedness, surgery, pediatrics, obstetrics and gynecology, community health and nutrition, osteopathic medicine, family practice, and rural health.

Above: Edi Berbic and Dr. Mario Iglesias, a VCOM doctor in El Salvador, examine a patient.
Honduran Disaster Relief Mission - Thanksgiving 2008 Break

During the Thanksgiving 2008 break, 38 medical students, three Virginia Tech students, and 11 VCOM faculty/staff completed a medical mission trip to six remote villages in Honduras that sustained damage from heavy rains and flooding. The team treated more than 1,200 patients, including more than 50 orphans outside of Tegucigalpa.

Honduras Surgery and Faith-Based Mission – May 2009 Break

Twenty-four students participated in a surgery and faith-based mission to Honduras during the May 2009 break. The team provided village-based medicine to five different sites and observed in the surgical and obstetrical departments of a local hospital.

Dominican Republic Women’s Health Mission – February 2009 Break

The team of more than 30 students and six VCOM faculty/staff that participated in the women’s health mission trip to the Dominican Republic in February 2009 provided free women’s health services, village-based medical care, and a preventive health program for high school students in and around Verón and Punta Cana. Over 600 patients were seen in a home and make-shift clinic exam area donated by a community leader of Verón, and another 150 women received critical exams to prevent cervical and other female cancers.
Thirty students and five VCOM faculty/staff participated in the pediatrics trip to El Salvador, providing care to more than 600 patients at orphanages, including one orphanage for HIV positive children, and remote village sites. During the last day of the trip, the village was so remote that the buses could not make the full journey, and the team had to walk the last mile and a half. It was a true mission experience, and one that the students, faculty, and staff will remember for many years to come.

Left: VCOM students, faculty, and staff traveled to El Salvador to care for residents in remote areas.

El Salvador Pediatrics Mission – February 2009

Above: From left to right, Lauren Mientkiewicz, Andrew Lawson, and Empress Hughes assess a patient in El Salvador.

Right: Dave Chestek, Class of 2012, entertains a young patient in El Salvador.
El Salvador Comfort Ship Mission – June Break

Seven first-year medical students combined forces with 650 medical military professionals to provide free healthcare and humanitarian relief to the people of El Salvador. The students joined the crew of the USNS Comfort for one week of the ship’s annual four-month medical tour of Central America and the Caribbean. VCOM students were stationed in the port city of La Union, El Salvador where they worked from a community school with specialty health treatment facilities that included dentistry, optometry, surgery with anesthesiologists, radiology with x-ray, and OB/GYN with ultrasound. Two of the VCOM students participating in the trip are enrolled in the Armed Forces Health Professions Scholarship Program, and one is a former member of the U.S. Navy. Dean Rawlins, D.O., and H. Dean Sutphin, Ph.D., accompanied students along with Dr. Mauro Iglesias, the VCOM doctor permanently located in El Salvador. The level of activity in international medical missions at VCOM increased significantly last year and will continue to expand in 2009-2010 with eight mission trips tentatively planned.

— H. Dean Sutphin, Ph.D.
Assistant Vice President International and Appalachian Outreach

Above: From left to right, Dave Bury, Brad Cox, Clint Kellogg, Alec Sharp, Class of 2012, and H. Dean Sutphin, Ph.D., prepare for field clinic day during the July El Salvador Mission with USNS Comfort Ship.
VCOM welcomes its new members, as well as noting the accomplishments of the outstanding faculty and staff. Share your news (and photos) of awards, scholarships, grants, honors, publications, marriages, births, or other special recognitions, by sending a note to News@vcom.vt.edu.

**John Anstrom, Ph.D.**, has assumed duties of Department Chair of Anatomy. Dr. Anstrom replaces Dr. Francine Anderson, P.T., Ph.D., who has transitioned into the Director of the Post-Baccalaureate program position. Before coming to VCOM, Dr. Anstrom was employed at Wake Forest University School of Medicine, where he taught anatomy courses (gross, histology, and embryology) and conducted research related to the development of the human brain during the latter stages of gestation. John has two children, Ben and Kaitlin.

**Jill Cramer, M.D.,** Assistant Professor of Neurology at VCOM, and her husband James, welcomed their new baby girl, Jordan Claire Cramer, on June 12, weighing in at four pounds, five ounces.

**Kenneth D’Amato, D.O.,** has joined VCOM as the new Surgery Chair. Dr. D’Amato received his B.A. at the University of Maine and his D.O. degree at Kansas City University of Medicine and Biosciences College of Osteopathic Medicine. After completing a three-year National Health Service Corps commitment in a family practice at Northern Maine Medical Center, he entered orthopedic residency at Memorial Hospital in York, Pennsylvania. He has practiced orthopedics for 27 years, of which the last 20 were spent in Elkins, West Virginia. Dr. D’Amato is married and has three daughters.

**Dr. Shaadi Elswaifi, Ph.D.,** Assistant Professor of Infectious Diseases and Microbiology at VCOM, and his wife are happy to announce the new addition to their family: Kareem Elswaifi, six pounds, 12.2 ounces, and 19.75 inches long, was born on July 12, 2009 in Blacksburg, Virginia.

**Meredith Georges** is VCOM’s new Administrative Director of Graduate Medical Education. Meredith has a B.S. from Virginia Tech and an M.B.A. in Corporate Finance from Virginia Tech. She will be assisting in the development of new graduate medical education programs and the coordination of existing residency programs. She will be a resource to our Directors of Medical Education, Administrative Directors of Medical Education, and Medical Education Coordinators.

**Ann Peton,** Director of the Center for Rural Health Policy, Education, and Research and the National Center for the Analysis of Healthcare Data, was appointed to the 2009-2010 Health Policy Fellowship Program. Only 12 people are chosen, ten of which must be D.O.s. Only one other non-Ph.D. candidate has ever been chosen for this program. For more information on this program, visit http://iris.nyit.edu/nycom/hpf/

**Karol L. Gordon, D.O., Certified Medical Director (CMD) of Blacksburg, Virginia, VCOM’s Chair of Geriatrics,** has been granted the title of Certified Medical Director in Long Term Care by the Board of Directors of the American Medical Directors Certification Program (AMDCP). A new study, commissioned by the AMDCP, and which was International Review Board approved, finds that having an AMDA certified medical
director contributes positively to a nursing home’s quality of care. Analysis of data showed that quality scores represented a 15 percent improvement in quality for facilities with certified medical directors. The study appears in the July 2009 issue of the Journal of the American Medical Directors Association. The CMD designation provides an indicator of professional competence to long-term care providers, government and other quality assurance agencies, consumers, and the public.

**Julie Goodman Bailey** is now a Medical Education Coordinator at VCOM after serving until December of 2008 as Assistant to the Associate Dean of Medical Education. Julie also married **Jarod Bailey, D.O., Class of 2008**, on August 1st, 2009 in Christiansburg, Virginia.

**Rebecca Hart** has become the Clinical Education Coordinator with Clinical Affairs after serving as Assistant to the Associate Dean of Clinical Affairs in 2008.

**Jean Herndon** has joined VCOM as Director of the Post-Baccalaureate Educational Program. Jean holds a master’s degree in Career and Technical Education and a B.S. in Business Administration. Jean comes to us from the administrative offices of Montgomery County Schools. Her family includes her husband Michael and sons eight-year-old Kyle and five-year-old Sean.

**Megan Price** is Director of Admissions at VCOM. The “I Walk Because… of Breast Cancer” 3-Day Walk is a 60-mile walk sponsored by the Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation and National Philanthropic Trust. In order to participate, walkers need to train extensively and raise $2,300. Eighty-five percent of the net proceeds of this event go to Susan G. Komen for the Cure. Every advancement in breast cancer research, treatment, education, and prevention in the last 25 years has been touched by a Komen for the Cure grant. The remaining 15 percent of net funds goes to the National Philanthropic Trust Breast Cancer Fund to provide a permanent endowment for ongoing support of breast cancer initiatives.

"The fight against breast cancer is personal to me. My Great-Grandmother Ava, Aunt Donna, dear friend Marguerite, and best friend from high school, Anna, have all been diagnosed with breast cancer. Most of these amazing women are survivors, which led me to believe that breast cancer is a commonly curable disease. During the Boston 3-Day Walk (my first), I learned just how wrong I was. Many men and women who are diagnosed with breast cancer are not as fortunate as my loved ones—they do not survive the disease. Sadly, one person dies of breast cancer every 14 minutes.

Recently, I walked in my fourth 3-Day event and am honored to have raised over $10,000 for breast cancer research, education, screening, and treatment. This figure is a true reflection of the generosity of the VCOM family. This year alone, VCOM faculty, staff, alumni, and students contributed $1,520, which is 60 percent of my total 2009 contributions."

**Janelle Looney** has joined VCOM as an Administrative Assistant. Janelle is originally from Dublin, Virginia and graduated from Virginia Tech in 2003. Before coming to VCOM she worked as a receptionist in the Computer Service Center located in the on-campus University Bookstore at Virginia Tech.

*Continued on page 18"
Katherine Nicewander has joined VCOM as the Executive Administrative Assistant in the Division of Research and Graduate Studies. Katherine and her family recently settled in Pembroke, Virginia. Prior to moving to this area, Katherine worked in Jacksonville, North Carolina for 17 years, where she was Senior Paralegal and General Business manager for a firm specializing in Military Criminal Law. Katherine is married to Vernon Kelley, and they have two wonderful daughters, Alivia and Harmony.

Crystal Petry joins VCOM as Medical Education Coordinator for the Class of 2013. Crystal is originally from Christiansburg and holds a bachelor’s degree in English from Virginia Tech.

Teresa Quinn is VCOM’s Biomedical Sciences Assistant at Research Building II, located in the Corporate Research Center. Teresa is a graduate of the University of North Carolina at Wilmington. Before moving from southeastern North Carolina, Teresa worked in local government as the county Keep America Beautiful Director, specializing in recycling and environmental education. Teresa, her husband Frank, and her daughters, fifteen-year-old Haley and eleven-year-old Davis, reside in Salem, Virginia.

Kasie Ralls has joined VCOM as Assistant Web/Graphic Designer. Kasie and husband, Andrew Ralls, Class of 2012, moved to Virginia from Kelso, Missouri along with their dog Reese.

Annette Roy has joined VCOM as the new Administrative Assistant to Jan Willcox, Associate Dean for Clinical Academic Affairs.

Rayne Stenger has joined VCOM as the Administrative Assistant to the Simulation and Technology Center. Rayne grew up in Kirksville, Missouri, the birthplace of osteopathic medicine. Rayne recently worked at Virginia Tech in the Office of Recovery and Support.

Dawn Stull is now the Director of VCOM Sponsored Fellowships and Clinical Research. Dawn was the Director for Medical Education at VCOM until 2008.

Sarah Cerrato-Zalud, International Health and Appalachian Research Coordinator at VCOM, and husband Jose welcomed David Manuel Cerrato-Zalud into their family on July 8, 2009. Weighing in at six pounds and nine ounces, and 19 inches long, he is healthy and bringing great joy to his parents.

AWARDS

Greg Beato, D.O., VCOM’s Sports Medicine Fellow won a poster competition at the American Osteopathic Academy of Sports Medicine National Conference in Salt Lake City, Utah. The poster was entitled “Would You Clear Your Son to Play Football with Hemophilia A?”

Cathy Callahan, M.D., M.P.H., F.A.C.O.G., VCOM Chair of Obstetrics and Gynecology, was selected into the National Academic Scholars and Leaders Program. She is one of 20 physicians nationwide that has been accepted by the Association of Professors of Gynecology and Obstetrics (APGO) as a 2010-2011 Academic Scholar.
and Leader. The APGO Academic Scholars and Leaders Program is a comprehensive educational curriculum designed to assist obstetrics and gynecology faculty in teaching women’s health more effectively.

John M. Kauffman, Jr., D.O., F.A.C.P., Associate Dean for Post-Graduate Affairs at VCOM, was recently awarded fellowship status in the American College of Physicians. Dr. Kauffman was also named to the Virginia Governors Council of the American College of Physicians.

Hara Misra, M.D., Ph.D., was invited to attend and present a plenary lecture at the International Conference on Advances in Free Radical Research: Natural Products, Antioxidants and Radiprotectors. The Conference was held at the King George Medical College in Lucknow, India on March 19-21, 2009. Dr. Misra also presided over one of the conference’s scientific sessions. Dr. Misra’s lecture was based on his research abstract: Neuroprotection of Nutraceuticals Against Oxidant-Induced Neuronal Injury. Please visit www.vcom.vt.edu for more on this story.

Elaine Powers, M.S.L.S., Director of Library Services at VCOM, presented two posters at the annual Medical Library Association meeting from May 16-20, 2009 in Honolulu, Hawaii. The first poster was presented with Sarah Zalud-Cerrato and entitled “Fusion of Culture, Language and Medicine,” while the second poster was presented with J. Pierce and J. Skica and entitled “Osteopathic Libraries’ Use of Web 2.0 Technologies.”

Brian Wood, D.O., Neuropsychiatry and Behavioral Science Chair at VCOM has been awarded the Outstanding Faculty/Teacher Award of the Carilion Clinic Psychiatry Residency Program. The award is determined by the residents of the program.

Hong Zhu, M.D., Assistant Professor in the Division of Biomedical Sciences has received an R15 award for her project “Renal Salvage via Nrf2-Dependent Antioxidative/Anti-inflammatory Enzymes” from the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases of the National Institute of Health. This is a three-year study plan with a total budget of $229,050.

Yunbo Li, M.D., Ph.D., Professor of Pharmacology at VCOM, has been awarded a National Institute of Health grant of $419,925 to investigate the molecular/signaling pathways leading to ischemic myocardial injury and to develop mechanistically-based novel drugs for intervention in ischemic myocardial degeneration.

Hara Misra, M.D., Ph.D., was invited to attend and present a plenary lecture at the International Conference on Advances in Free Radical Research: Natural Products, Antioxidants and Radiprotectors. The Conference was held at the King George Medical College in Lucknow, India on March 19-21, 2009. Dr. Misra also presided over one of the conference’s scientific sessions. Dr. Misra’s lecture was based on his research abstract: Neuroprotection of Nutraceuticals Against Oxidant-Induced Neuronal Injury. Please visit www.vcom.vt.edu for more on this story.

Elaine Powers, M.S.L.S., Director of Library Services at VCOM, presented two posters at the annual Medical Library Association meeting from May 16-20, 2009 in Honolulu, Hawaii. The first poster was presented with Sarah Zalud-Cerrato and entitled “Fusion of Culture, Language and Medicine,” while the second poster was presented with J. Pierce and J. Skica and entitled “Osteopathic Libraries’ Use of Web 2.0 Technologies.”

Brian Wood, D.O., Neuropsychiatry and Behavioral Science Chair at VCOM has been awarded the Outstanding Faculty/Teacher Award of the Carilion Clinic Psychiatry Residency Program. The award is determined by the residents of the program.

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Visit the website at www.vcom.vt.edu for more information about VCOM’s outstanding faculty and staff.
In today's world we are inundated daily with news about HIV/AIDS, bioterrorism, the developing Swine Flu H1N1 pandemic, and increasingly drug resistant pathogens. It is crucial that the medical community understand and be prepared to respond to dynamically changing infectious disease and the interplay between new pathogens and the defenses of hosts.

In 2008, the Department of Microbiology, Infectious and Emerging Diseases took on the challenge of modifying the Osteopathic Medical Student (OMS) I and II curriculum to better serve our students and to also establish Biosafety Levels 1 and 2 infectious diseases research laboratory facilities to be able to respond to the changing needs within our medical community.

Both Dr. Palmieri and Dr. Elswaifi developed a comprehensive proposal to establish a research laboratory complex within the VCOM Research Building II facility. With financial and administrative support from Dean Rawlins and from Biomedical Affairs and Research at VCOM, both Dr. Palmieri and Dr. Elswaifi aggressively...
established the facility during the spring months of 2009. Interviews with Virginia Tech junior and senior students within the departments of microbiology and biochemistry were conducted. Only top honor students with a GPA above 3.5 were considered, and a strong team of ten Infectious Diseases Research Interns was established.

The student interns were divided into research groups consisting of two to three interns. Students were taught the research skills necessary to work safely in the Biosafety Level 2 laboratory facility. Afterwards, students designed protocols and wrote research proposals for their projects, which were scrutinized and approved by Dr. Palmieri and Dr. Elswaifi.

Each week, interns meet with faculty for 90 minutes to present their research findings and to discuss their ongoing research project. In addition to their research project, each team has taken on the task of writing a review article on a detailed aspect of their research project, which will be submitted for publication. The goal of each team of interns is to produce meaningful research, which will be presented at the 6th Annual Via Research Recognition Day and then written and submitted to a peer-reviewed journal.

The laboratory is in the heart of the VCOM Research Building II and includes an outer area designated for Biosafety Level 1 work and an inner area designated for Biosafety Level 2 work. The Biosafety Level 2 area has restricted access only to students approved to work with the dangerous organisms. The laboratory is equipped for microbiology and cell culture research, and each group of students has a designated work area in which to perform their research experiments.

Each group of students was allowed to select a research topic that interested them. Topics were selected to include working with protozoa, bacteria, or cell cultures available in the laboratory. Some of the topics chosen were the interaction between protozoa and bacteria, protozoa, and macrophages; protozoan cell biology; and bacterial biofilm formation.

One of VCOM’s medical students, Leah McKay, is also a member of the research group and is examining the microbiological composition of Kefir milk grains and factors that affect their formation. The student interns enjoy a diversity of life and academic experiences that contribute to a pleasant yet disciplined work atmosphere. Students are encouraged to work as teams, learn from each other, and work collectively on their experiments and writing duties. The style of advising that Dr. Palmieri and Dr. Elswaifi have adopted with the students encourages a friendly and family-like environment and helps maintain productivity in a large and diverse group of students.
The Pediatrics Club (ACOP) at Edward Via Virginia College of Osteopathic Medicine (VCOM) held a Mini-Med School on April 22, 2009. Ten kindergarten students from Dayspring Christian Academy participated in the event. The Mini-Med School started with the children receiving white coats, donated by Super Shoes, to wear for the day. The kindergarten class was then split into four groups and led to the following stations: nutrition, anatomy, medical instruments, and first aid. The nutrition station featured an assortment of healthy foods for the children to choose from for lunch. The students were taught the new food pyramid and how to balance food choices for a healthy meal. In order to facilitate learning, the children’s plates were divided into the different food pyramid categories. Children chose foods to place in each section of their plate.

One of the club officers dressed up in an anatomy suit for the anatomy station. Children were eager to place the Velcro organs in the right place on the costume. The students were then shown models and taught the function of each organ.

One of the most exciting stations for the kindergarteners was the instrument station. A blood pressure cuff, otoscope, stethoscope, reflex hammer, and many other instruments were shown to the students. The kindergarteners were told how each instrument worked and were allowed to practice on Pediatric Club members. The aim of this station was not only to educate students about medical instruments, but to ease children’s anxiety about visits to the doctor. In the first aid station, children were taught how to clean a wound and put a Band-Aid on. The kindergarteners then made their own mini first-aid kits. The kits were filled with fun Band-Aids, alcohol swabs, antibacterial gel, antimicrobial swabs, gauze, and tweezers.

At the conclusion of the program, the children received a certificate of completion and took a “graduation” picture. Twenty Pediatric Club members participated in the event.

— Candace N. Prince, Pediatrics Club President, S.I.G.N. Secretary, Class of 2012

American College of Osteopathic Family Physicians (ACOFP)

On November 1, 2008, members of the Edward Via Virginia College of Osteopathic Medicine’s chapter of the American College of Osteopathic Family Physicians participated in the Caregiver Conference and Resource Fair held at New River Community College in Dublin, Virginia. This event was hosted by the New River Agency on Aging and was open to anyone who provides care to an older adult or person with disabilities in the local area. Along with VCOM, there were several exhibitors available to provide information about products and services.
services available to assist caregivers. There was a strong representation of VCOM with second, third, and fourth-year medical students participating in the event. The ACOFP members provided the opportunity for the conference participants to have their blood pressure and cholesterol checked for free. They also had the chance to listen to the featured presenter Teepa Snow, who is a dementia care and education specialist. Her presentation was on “How to Enjoy Holidays or Other Major Events When Dementia is Part of the Picture.” There were also presentations by the Montgomery County Department of Social Services and the Southwest Virginia Legal Aid Society. Overall, this event was beneficial for the ACOFP members and the community participants.

Emergency Medicine Club—Safety Day

On June 6th, 2009, the students of the Emergency Medicine Club at VCOM held the first annual Community Safety Day. Taking place in the parking lot of the medical school, many organizations gathered to provide information and demonstrations to about 200 community members. This event was free to the public, with lunch and door prizes provided.

The local Blacksburg Fire Department flew the United States and VCOM flag from the tops of their two extension ladder fire trucks. The Blacksburg Volunteer Rescue Squad provided child seat safety inspection and installations, as well as an exciting demonstration of an extraction using the “Jaws of Life.” The Blacksburg police department showed their patrol cars to those interested and provided information on bike safety. The police department also held a “Bike Rodeo,” allowing children to ride their bikes through an elaborate course of traffic cones.

Carilion’s new Lifeguard helicopter was able to land on the parking lot to provide tours, and Carilion representatives answered questions about the air ambulance service. Many VCOM school clubs were on hand to provide osteopathic manipulation, provide information on various safety issues, and hold a “Mini-Med School” where children could learn about the human body.

The goal for Community Safety Day was multifaceted. The Emergency Medicine Club set out to not only provide safety information to the community, but to bring together the many emergency services in Blacksburg.

Obstetrics/Gynecology Club (OB/GYN)

In April the OB/GYN Club held a fundraiser at the Cold Stone Creamery in Christiansburg. The fundraiser was attended by club members and VCOM staff who passed out flyers about the NRV Women’s Resource Center (WRC) at the event. The flyers served to increase community awareness about the organization and their mission to end domestic and sexual violence in our area. The OB/GYN Club was able to match a donation of the funds raised and presented the WRC a check for $226. The club was also able to meet with the WRC when presenting the check, and club members learned more about the ongoing services the money will support. The Cornerstone apartment the club has sponsored in the past is also a service utilized by women and their children from the WRC. (Continued on next page)
Ob/Gyn Club - cont. from page 23

The club also has many exciting activities planned for this year, including some events in October for Domestic Violence and Breast Cancer Awareness involving raising funds, a domestic violence seminar, and a sponsored speaker about breast cancer. Additionally, they are in the midst of planning for a holiday project/food drive for the women and children served by the WRC. The club plans to conduct monthly simulation sessions with Noelle (the simulated medicine patient that demonstrates deliveries). These sessions will be taught by Dr. Callahan, the club’s advisor.

Some new things in the club that started this past spring are the club attending weekly Grand Rounds with the OB/GYN department at Carilion Roanoke Memorial. The OB/GYN Club also had a shadowing program for students at the Montgomery Regional Hospital (MRH) Birthing Center. Also, students have been attending prepared childbirth, breastfeeding, and parenting classes at MRH to learn more about the field.

The OB/GYN Club hosted a fundraiser for the New River Valley’s Women’s Center on April 23, 2009. The New River Valley Women’s Center provides services and programs for victims of domestic violence and sexual assault. They provide a 24-hour crisis hotline, crisis intervention, emergency advocacy and shelter, counseling, support groups, transitional housing, and children’s programs.

OB/GYN Club Members Attend the Choose Virginia Conference

“T
he Choose Virginia Family Medicine Conference was a great opportunity for me to meet residents and program directors from all the residency programs here in Virginia in one single location. The workshops I attended were extremely helpful, and there was plenty of time for one-on-one communication with several different locations throughout the state.

One workshop I particularly enjoyed was the Obstetrics/Gynecology Office Procedure Workshop. We rotated through three different mini-workshops and practiced IUD insertions, endometrial biopsy retrieval, and incision/drainage of cysts. The physicians took their time helping us with the procedures and gave us valuable information on what types of procedures they perform in their offices. It was also nice to meet other medical students and physician assistants interested in family practice.

Overall, I heard only positive comments from the VCOM students who attended the conference. In total, there were approximately 15 VCOM students who attended and about 150 total students at the conference. I am looking forward to more opportunities such as this one to explore residency options while gaining valuable knowledge from the workshops that are provided.

This conference took place from March 13-14, 2009 in Richmond, Virginia.”
— Jaclyn Tolentino, Class of 2010

Two VCOM students were teaching about the effects of smoking. They had assistance from a Spanish interpreter as well.
OB/GYN Club Hosts Two Mini-Med Schools in the Dominican Republic

On February 18th and 19th of 2009, VCOM presented Mini-Med School at two high schools in the Dominican Republic. These events were sponsored by the OB/GYN Club.

“The Mini-Med School experience was better than I anticipated. As in Virginia, our outstanding medical students gave engaging presentations. In the Dominican Republic, two of the stations, specifically pregnancy and nutrition, were changed to accommodate the needs of the Dominicans. The high school students were intelligent, motivated, and seemed to enjoy the presentations.

The addition of the interpreters for the Spanish speaking students was very helpful. In fact, at the smoking station the Spanish interpreter was also educating the students beyond what was explained in English. In addition to our anatomical charts in English, we brought the Spanish version and gave each high school a set to keep after the presentations were done.”

—Linda Frasca, M.D., Assistant Professor, Emergency Medicine
students a break with coffee, drinks, and snacks.

**Student National Medical Association (SNMA)**

Ariana Burgess, Class of 2011, was recently selected as the SNMA 2009-2010 Co-Chair of International Affairs. In this role, student doctor Burgess will educate the student membership on the necessity of approaching health issues in a cultural context, will disseminate and educate medical students nationally on the elements of successful health intervention, and will serve as a liaison to medical students (both osteopathic and allopathic) on international health opportunities.

Ariana has had extensive medical mission experience. For two-and-a-half months, she helped patients with parasitic diseases in Ethiopia. She participated in a VCOM medical mission trip to El Salvador, served as a volunteer with a VCOM Missouri Flood Relief Mission, and worked with Project Esperanza (founded by Virginia Tech students) in the Dominican Republic. Burgess graduated from Florida A&M University with a B.S. in Molecular Biology. She is a member of the VCOM chapters of the SNMA and Christian Medical and Dental Association.

**SNMA Hosts Multicultural Show**

The sixth annual VCOM SNMA Multicultural Dinner and Show was held June 10, 2009. The dinner was held in the Old Dominion ballroom on the campus of Virginia Tech. A variety of foods representing various cultures were donated from various restaurants throughout the New River Valley. The show took place in the Haymarket theatre on Virginia Tech’s campus. The show was a cultivation of various acts representing cultures from China, Japan, Mexico, the United States, Nigeria, Zambia, India, and the Caribbean.

The show’s purpose was to offer insight into other cultures. The show also raised money to support children in Haiti. The money will be used to provide them with tuition and food to eat for a year. The night was an overall success and next year’s figures are projected to be even better!
Student Osteopathic Medical Association (SOMA)

SOMA was pleased to hold the annual VCOM Winter Gala! This Red Carpet Affair was held on January 17, 2009 at the Inn at Virginia Tech with 290 guests attending.

Student Osteopathic Surgical Association (SOSA)

On July 9, 2009, students from SOSA at VCOM held the first “movie night” for student body, faculty, and the area community.

VCOM’s SOSA Club also hosted two blood drives for the American Red Cross on June 15 and June 22, 2009. The drives were held at Torgersen Hall at Virginia Tech.

SOSA wishes to thank everyone who donated during this blood drive.

Above, left: Shelly Singh, Empress Hughes, Natasha Powell, Karol Gordon, D.O., Molly Ashby, Maryann Mikal, Sherine Winter, Sharon Abraham and Celeste Young capture a memory of the evening.

Above: Raul Mirza, Class of 2009, and guest.

Left: Jeffrey Ellis with date, Fred Rawlins, Class of 2010, with wife Allison.
Undergraduate American Academy of Osteopathy (UAAO)

Special thanks to all those in VCOM’s UAAO group for holding the Faculty and Staff Appreciation: Osteopathic Manipulation Medicine (OMM) Treatment on January 14th at the Knollwood building across from VCOM.

For the second year in a row, the VCOM UAAO has won the Outreach Chapter of the Year Award. The UAAO, as well as Dr. Stephen Blood, D.O., and Dr. David Harden, D.O., also brought home the Research Chapter of the Year Award from the AAO convocation in March, 2009.

Via Wellness Program

VCOM’s Via Wellness hosted two great events earlier this year. One was the “Chili Cook-off,” and the other was a “Dance Dance Revolution Competition.”

Beginning last May, VCOM’s Via Wellness program began offering a yoga class. The class is designed for all experience levels, from never-tryed-it to seasoned practitioners. The classes are taught by Carrie Griffin, Class of 2012, and other Via Wellness Committee members. Students can earn one Via Wellness point for every session attended.

If you are interested, please join the group in the student lounge on Tuesdays from 6:00 p.m. to 7:15 p.m.
VCOM’s Virginia Rural Health Association (VRHA) Helps Remote Area Medical (RAM) Meet the Need

The Virginia Rural Health Association (VRHA) club volunteered July 24-26, 2009 at the Wise County Virginia Remote Area Medical (RAM), which is the largest medical mission in the United States. Five VCOM students (Isaac Spence, Bailey Balentine, Leah McKay, Allyson Hudson, and Jacinda Hays) and four VCOM faculty physicians (Dr. Jan Willcox, Dr. Linda Frasca, Dr. Deborah Hayter, and Dr. Sarah McGinley Turner) volunteered. Patients were treated by VCOM students and faculty in the general medical tent as well as the VCOM tent. Approximately 91 patients and 37 volunteers were treated with osteopathic manipulative treatment in the VCOM tent.

Above: Linda Frasca, M.D., reviews a patient's chart with Leah McKay, Class of 2012.

Left: Linda Frasca, M.D., Jacinda Hays, Bailey Balentine, Jan Willcox, D.O., and Allyson Hudson take a break from treating patients to pose for a picture.
VCOM is proud of the accomplishments of over 450 alumni and 740 current osteopathic medical students. Share your news of a new residency, awards, scholarships, grants, honors, publications, marriages, births, or other special recognitions, and photos by sending a note to News@vcom.vt.edu.

**ALUMNI**

**Class of 2007**

**Kristie Baisden Wolfe, D.O.** was given a resident award from the Georgetown medical students called “String of Pearls” for excellence in teaching.

**David Danner, D.O.** was a recipient of the Arnold Gold Resident Award at this year’s Student Clinician Ceremony held at the Virginia Tech German Club, Blacksburg, Virginia.

**Kristin Geers, D.O.**, and Adam Childers are now engaged. Kristin and Adam met while playing Ultimate Frisbee on the Drillfield at Virginia Tech. Adam finished his Ph.D. in Math at Virginia Tech and will be teaching in Roanoke in the fall. Kristin is currently at Carilion Roanoke Memorial Hospital in the Internal Medicine residency program.

**Justin and Niyati (Sheth) Mitchell, D.O.** have made it to their third year of residency at South Pointe Hospital, Cleveland Clinic. Niyati is in her final year of her Internal Medicine residency. She has spent the past year as the Internal Medicine Chief of Residency, but this year she has decided to trade one position of power for another. She will be serving as South Pointe Hospital’s Resident House Staff Council Chairperson. Justin is thriving in his orthopedic residency program. He was recently recognized by his program director for logging more orthopedic surgeries in his first two years of residency than many at his level. Justin continues his journey as an aspiring Orthopedic Surgeon.

**Paul Phillips, D.O.** has been named “Chief of Chiefs” for 2009-2010 at Bristol Medical Center.

Melissa Simon, D.O., gave birth to a lovely little girl on January 6, 2009. Her name is Anastasia Marian Simon; she weighed six pounds and 13 ounces, and was 15 inches long. She joins her big sister Naomi Lee who is three years old. Melissa is also serving as chief resident at her program in Wisconsin.

Cliff Smith, D.O., will have an article published in an upcoming issue of the peer reviewed journal "Consultant." Cliff is currently a third-year Family Medicine Resident and worked on the article to be published with a staff D.O. Dermatologist. The citation is as follows: “Eruptive Vellus Hair Cysts” Cliff Smith, D.O., Eglin Air Force Base Family Medicine Residency, Eglin AFB, Florida & Oliver Wisco, D.O., Wilford Hall Medical Center, Lackland AFB, Texas.

James “Eric” Sutherland, D.O., Liliya (Shevchenko) Sutherland, Class of 2008, were married on April 25, 2009 in Charleston, South Carolina. The wedding party included other VCOM Alumni: Josh Knowles, Class of 2007, Donna Lawson, Class of 2009, Michelle Martin, Class of 2008, and Jaime Wagner, Class of 2007.

Katherine Lively-Swartz, D.O., along with husband Shaun welcomed Hunter Wilson Swartz into the world on August 20, 2009. Hunter weighed in at eight pounds and 15 ounces, and was 21 inches long. Both mother and son are doing great!

Class of 2008

Victoria Asbury, D.O., was a recipient of the Arnold Gold Resident Award at this year’s Student Clinician Ceremony held at the Virginia Tech German Club, Blacksburg, Virginia.

Mike Baze, D.O., and wife have a new addition to their family. Kai Baze was born on April 3, 2009.

Also, Mike’s wife Noriko was awarded the Donna Jones Moritsugu Memorial Award at the 2009 VCOM Graduation. She was nominated by Dean Dixie Tooke-Rawlins, D.O., and as Noriko was still in Japan, Dean Rawlins accepted the award. This award honors the role of a professional’s partner by providing immeasurable support of his or her mate, family, and the osteopathic profession, while being an individual in their own right.
Class of 2008 (continued)

Catie (Piehl) Campo, D.O., was married to Matt Campo on June 20, 2009 in Mount Laurel, New Jersey. Catie and Matt dated throughout their time at VCOM. She is in her second year of General Surgery residency at UMDNJ in Stratford, New Jersey while her husband is a Corporate Real Estate Consultant in New York City.

Chase A. Grames, D.O., was a recipient of the Arnold Gold Resident Award at this year’s Student Clinician Ceremony held at the Virginia Tech German Club, Blacksburg, Virginia.

Ashesh Parikh, D.O., and Rashita Parikh were married on July 11, 2008.

Class of 2009

Raul Mirza, D.O., was one of 13 osteopathic medical students who were inducted into Omega Beta Iota, the national osteopathic political action honor society, on March 7, 2009 at the Gaylord National Resort and Convention Center in Oxon Hill, Maryland. The annual ceremony took place in conjunction with the American Osteopathic Association’s D.O. Day on the Hill, the American College of Osteopathic Family Physicians’ Annual Convention, and the Student Osteopathic Medical Association’s Spring Convention.

Omega Beta Iota has recognized the political initiative and grassroots activism of osteopathic medical students since 2007. In the spirit of vision, initiative, and diligence of early osteopathic leaders, acceptance into this honor society is a reward for the hard work and dedication in the political arena. Omega Beta Iota is an affiliate organization with the Student Osteopathic Medical Association, which can be found at www.studentdo.com.

Class of 2010

Malak Iskandar and Christian Rubio-Cespedes were accepted under the dual degree program between Virginia Tech/VCOM. After completing all course requirements, both will receive their D.O. and M.B.A. degrees in 2011.

Owen Speer won the Welch Scholars Grant ($2,000).

Megan Stobart has been chosen to be a member of the very selective Medical Student Committee of the Association of Women Surgeons for the 2009-2010 year. Megan was one of two osteopathic students chosen to serve on this international committee.
Tanya Tocharoen supported children in need on a medical mission to the Dominican Republic with many other VCOM faculty, staff, and students. Tanya noticed that many of the children did not have shoes. As she planned for another rotation on a medical mission to Honduras, she asked faculty, students, and many others to donate shoes.

“We went to a tiny village called Vino. This was the only school for about 50 miles, and it goes up to sixth grade. The dirt road that led to the school went for almost two miles and was extremely rocky. Kids have to walk this road every day to get to school. Most of the kids had worn out shoes and some didn’t have shoes. We lined up the kids, youngest first, and we fitted them to a pair. We ran out of sizes, but we gave shoes to about 65 children. The next week we gave the remaining shoes to an orphanage we visited. I am extremely thankful for everyone’s help and support! It was not possible without you... be thankful for everything you have in life!”

Tanya Tocharoen

Jamie Vizcarra was accepted into the SCAIFE /IRETA (Institute for Research, Education and Training in Addictions) Advanced Medical Assistantship in Alcohol and Other Drug Dependency program for the Summer 2009 semester.

Brad Carter attended and presented a poster at the Annual Conference for the American Osteopathic College of Ophthalmology and Otolaryngology. The event was held in Austin, Texas on May 6-11, 2009. His group received the first place award for their poster entitled “A Rare Case Demonstrating Progression of Hydroxychloroquine Retinopathy Post Cessation of Treatment.” Other authors were Tracy Carter, Wayne Davis, Sam Wilson, Blake Isom, Abe Fish, and Clint Kellogg.

Jordan Thomson attended and presented a poster at the Annual Conference for the American Osteopathic College of Ophthalmology and Otolaryngology Head and Neck Surgery.

Jessica Naff won the Burnett Student Osteopathic Research Award ($5,000).
Thamiris Valeria Palacios won the William G. Anderson, D.O., Minority Scholarship ($5,000).

Isaac Dwight Spence won the Welch Scholars Grant ($2,000).

Sam Subramanian was commissioned as Second Lieutenant in the U.S. Army, May, 2009.

The Student Clinician Ceremony is held each year to celebrate the transition from core third-year rotations to the fourth-year experiences that will further prepare students for residency. During the ceremony, VCOM students acknowledge a Preceptor of the Year for each of the VCOM core regional sites. Students shared examples of the positive impact certain physicians had on their professional development. These physicians possess traits and characteristics that VCOM graduates will emulate as they progress in their training, as well as their future practice of the art of medicine. We acknowledge these physicians for their dedication to the mentoring of VCOM students. The Class of 2010 recognized the following physician mentors who serve as role models to the profession:

Eileen Conaway, Class of 2010, presenting Captain Paul Lucha, D.O., with the Preceptor of the Year Award.
### 2008-2009 Preceptor of the Year Award Winners

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Preceptor</th>
<th>Specialty</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Asheville/Hendersonville, NC</strong></td>
<td>Don Jablonski, D.O.</td>
<td>Underserved Care/Family Medicine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Fayetteville, NC</strong></td>
<td>Ram Mohan Bongu, M.D.</td>
<td>Geriatrics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Salisbury/Charlotte, NC</strong></td>
<td>Valerie Moore, M.D.</td>
<td>Surgery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Spartanburg, SC</strong></td>
<td>Ronald Januchowski, D.O.</td>
<td>Family Medicine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Danville, VA</strong></td>
<td>Gary Lahti, D.O.</td>
<td>Surgery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Farmville, VA</strong></td>
<td>Thomas Basco, M.D.</td>
<td>Obstetrics and Gynecology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Clinch Valley/Richlands, VA</strong></td>
<td>Jack Davis, M.D.</td>
<td>Pediatrics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>New River Valley/Pulaski, VA</strong></td>
<td>David Stoeckle, M.D.</td>
<td>Surgery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Wytheville, VA</strong></td>
<td>John Turski, D.O.</td>
<td>Underserved Care/Family Medicine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Alleghany/Low Moor, VA</strong></td>
<td>Barry Scott Brown, M.D.</td>
<td>Internal Medicine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Front Royal, VA</strong></td>
<td>William Kerns, M.D.</td>
<td>Family Medicine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Roanoke/Salem, VA</strong></td>
<td>Clem Binnings, M.D.</td>
<td>Family Medicine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bluefield, WV</strong></td>
<td>Ryan Cicenas, M.D.</td>
<td>Pediatrics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Abingdon, VA</strong></td>
<td>Andrew Chang, M.D.</td>
<td>Internal Medicine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Lebanon, VA</strong></td>
<td>Jeffry Gee, M.D.</td>
<td>Psychiatry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Marion, VA</strong></td>
<td>Thomas Steed, M.D.</td>
<td>OB/GYN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Norton, VA</strong></td>
<td>Matthew Cusano, D.O.</td>
<td>Internal Medicine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Riverside/Newport News, VA</strong></td>
<td>Joy Elliott, D.O.</td>
<td>Family Medicine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey</strong></td>
<td>Ricardo Perez, M.D.</td>
<td>Internal Medicine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Military Sites Award</strong></td>
<td>Captain Paul Luscha, D.O.</td>
<td>Surgery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Preceptor of the Year for Underserved Care</strong></td>
<td>Matthew Cusano, D.O.</td>
<td>Underserved Care/Internal Medicine</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Empress Oramas, Adam Greenblatt, Class of 2010, Donald Jablonski, D.O., Jan Willcox, D.O., Jennifer Czaplicki, Class of 2010.**

**Salisbury VAMC DSME Paul Labagnara, D.O., Tanya Tocharoen, Tiffany Mateen, Empress Oramas, Rachel Wilson, Class of 2010, and Virginia Jeffries, Salisbury VAMC site coordinator.**

**Donald Jablonski, D.O., gives his acceptance speech at the Annual Student Clinician Ceremony.**

**Jody Hargus, Class of 2010, presenting Matthew Cusano, M.D., with the Arnold Gold Foundation award.**
VCOM and Virginia Tech have collaborated on a joint degree program that will offer the D.O./M.B.A. dual degree to VCOM students. In this five-years combined degree program, VCOM students would complete the M.B.A. requirements between the third and fourth years of medical school. As many doctors move directly into private practice after completion of medical school and postgraduate training, there is a real need for a certain amount of business education—an aspect of the profession in which most are typically lacking. Further, many doctors also move into the field of hospital and academic administration, typically later in their career, where a business education would be particularly valuable. Thus, whether caring for patients or managing a thriving medical practice or moving to administrative positions, the combined D.O./M.B.A. degree will open many doors for VCOM students. For more information, visit our website and/or contact Dr. Hara Misra at hmisra@vcom.vt.edu.