

Still News

May 2006

A.T. STILL UNIVERSITY | ATSU

ATSU ranked among nation's top graduate schools

US News & World Report recently ranked A.T. Still University's Kirksville College of Osteopathic Medicine #16 in the nation for rural medicine in the magazine's "America's Best Graduate Schools 2007" edition.

The national survey also recognized ATSU-KCOM for being one of the least expensive private schools (15 of 53). ATSU-KCOM also received a high rank for its level of financial aid compared to other private medical schools (7 of 50). The national medical school rankings include 126 allopathic and osteopathic medical schools in the United States.

"The high national rankings of ATSU's Kirksville College of Osteopathic Medicine are a tribute to the administration and faculty of the school," said ATSU

President James McGovern, Ph.D.

In addition, the Physician Assistant Studies program at ATSU's Arizona School of Health Sciences was ranked #25 in the nation. Randy

Danielsen, Ph.D., PA-C, dean of ATSU-ASHS, said

it came as no surprise that the physician assistant program was again ranked in the top 25.

"It's not surprising that the PA program at ATSU continues to remain in the nation's top 25 because of the remarkable talent and professionalism of the department chair [Albert Simon, PA-C] and faculty, as well as the quality of students we are able to recruit,"

Dr. Danielsen said.



ATSU partners with Health News Digest

A.T. Still University is now an official contributor and partner with HealthNewsDigest.com, the premier electronic health news network for current and breaking news for professionals, consumers, and media.

HealthNewsDigest publishes 40 news stories on the health industry every Monday morning, while breaking news is reported on a daily basis. Stories are also featured on AvantGo, the handheld Palm device service, with more than 10 million registered users worldwide.

HealthNewsDigest is also syndicated to thousands of major health industry web sites and wireless phone systems, with feeds to Latin America, Europe, and Asia. More than 2,000 news editors, directors, and health columnists subscribe and have free access to use any and all content.

Currently, other medical education contributors to the site include medical centers/schools from Yale, Cornell, Stanford, Duke, University of Connecticut, and Harvard. The first ATSU article ran in April and featured spring exercise tips written on behalf of the Athletic Training Department from the Arizona School of Health Sciences.

University Relations (UR) requests as much content as possible to demonstrate ATSU's presence as a national resource for health information, so please contact UR with story ideas and health tips at ur@atsu.edu or 660.626.2272.

Honorary degrees approved by ATSU Board of Trustees

Three honorary degrees were recently approved at the April meeting of the ATSU Board of Trustees. The Board approved the Doctorate of Humane Letters (D.Hu.L.) for Philip Shettle, D.O., current president of the American Osteopathic Association and 1964 graduate of ATSU-KCOM.

The Doctorate of Osteopathic Education (D.O.Ed.) was approved for Marina Fuhrmann, president of the German Osteopathic Association.

Richard "Buz" Cooper, M.D., will also receive the D.O.Ed. Dr. Cooper is the author of a study that predicted a shortage of up to 200,000 physicians by the year 2020.

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4th Annual Crystal Awards recognize Arizona individuals and organizations for community excellence

Arizonans from across the state were honored for their commitment and dedication to creating innovative solutions to the state's problems in the health sciences professions while improving the community at ATSU's 4th Annual Crystal Awards. The event took place at the Westin Kierland Resort in Scottsdale, Arizona.

The Mesa Campus was founded on serving the needs of the Arizona community, and the Crystal Awards were established in 2002 to recognize those who were doing the same in the professional world of health sciences.

Each one of ATSU-Mesa's programs: athletic training, audiology, dentistry, occupational therapy, physical therapy, and physician assistant studies, selected honorees in their field. In addition, honorees were selected from the following areas: individual, corporate, nonprofit, nonprofit faith-based, and public agency.

"A.T. Still University aspires to become a community resource for health professionals, health information, and health professions educators," said Craig Phelps, D.O., FAOASM, provost of A.T. Still University's Mesa Campus. "Hosting the annual Crystal Awards supports that vision. It is an honor to have a chance to thank individuals and organizations who are practicing what we are educating our students to do."

Funds raised from the Crystal Awards will go to the ATSU scholarship fund for both the Arizona School of Dentistry & Oral Health and the Arizona School of Health Sciences.

Individual:	Leland L. Fairbanks, M.D. Arizonans Concerned About Smoking
Corporate:	Honeywell Volunteers of Arizona
Nonprofit:	Mariposa Community Health Center
Nonprofit:	Paz De Cristo Community Health
Public:	Central Arizona Shelter
Athletic Training:	Gary Delforge, former head athletic trainer at University of Arizona; former chairman of the board for National Association of Athletic Trainers
Audiology:	Lylis Olsen, program manager for <i>Hear for Kids</i> program, which provides loaner hearing aids
Dentistry & Oral Health:	Marisue Garganta, director of Community Health Integration for Catholic Healthcare West
Occupational Therapy:	Marsha Dunn Klein, founder of Mealtime Notions LLC, established to provide consultation, training, and resources for families and professionals working with children whom have special needs and mealtime challenges
Physical Therapy:	Blair Packard, co-owner of East Valley Physical Therapy; past president of Arizona Physical Therapy Association; co-founder of Care For Life, a non-profit charity working in Africa providing education, healthcare, and economical development

2006 Crystal Award winners



ATSU staff member supports MDA

Corissa Vasquez recently volunteered to be a team leader for the Muscular Dystrophy Association's (MDA) 6th Annual Stride and Ride in Tempe. Vasquez recruited 10 people to be on her team and gave them each a goal of raising \$63 for the MDA. Each \$63 pledge funds a "research minute." Vasquez raised more than \$2,000 with a team of dental students and ATSU faculty.

The MDA is a voluntary national health agency – a dedicated partnership between scientists and concerned citizens aimed at conquering neuromuscular diseases that affect more than 1 million Americans. MDA combats neuromuscular diseases through programs of worldwide research, comprehensive medical and community services, and far-reaching professional and public health education.

ATSU holds 11th Annual Still-Well Recognition Banquet

Students at ATSU-KCOM enjoyed fine dining and entertainment at the 11th Annual Still-Well Recognition Banquet. The March event was held in the Georgian Room on the campus of Truman State University in Kirksville. The Still-Well program, which encourages students to stay physically, mentally, and spiritually active during their years in school, has been in existence at ATSU-KCOM for 15 years.

There are seven components to the Still-Well program: emotional, environmental, intellectual, physical, social, spiritual, and vocational. All components combine to encourage wellness and health throughout medical school and provide an atmosphere in which students can reach their maximum potential.

Erica Jacobson, MS II, master of ceremonies for the banquet, said ATSU-KCOM stood out as she compared medical schools as a prospective student. The focus on student wellness was unique among all the schools she considered.

Indeed, research by Fred Peterson, Ph.D., chair of physiology at ATSU-KCOM, has shown that students benefit in measurable terms from participating in the program.

In four, six-month studies that compared the incoming class at ATSU-KCOM to an incoming class at a similar osteopathic medical school, ATSU-KCOM students were more physically fit and had lower levels of anxiety and depression. Dr. Peterson attributes the results directly to the Still-Well program.

“It’s not so much that our students improved during the six-month period, but they didn’t go downhill,” Dr. Peterson said. “KCOM students have consistently been more physically fit and emotionally sound than the general population when they enter school. After six months, KCOM students had significantly higher levels of aerobic fitness and significantly lower anxiety levels when compared to students from another similar



For the past 15 years, the Still-Well program has encouraged wellness and health through seven key components: emotional, environmental, intellectual, physical, social, spiritual, and vocational. Students have free access to the Thompson Campus Center and participate in annual events such as the Lego contest.

osteopathic medical school. The only identifiable difference between the

two programs was Still-Well at KCOM. Still-Well is working.”

ATSU-Mesa students participate in Convoy for Hope

In March, ATSU-Mesa students from ATSU-ASDOH and the Physician Assistant Studies Program participated in the 2006 Convoy of Hope in the Health Services. Convoy of Hope, a non-profit organization, sponsored the national event in major cities across the United States.

Locally, Convoy of Hope is an outreach event to the needy families of the community. This event is fueled by local businesses, corporations, community organizations, and churches that join together to do what none of them can do alone.

Free groceries, a free meal, free medical/dental screenings, a free kid’s carnival, free haircuts, and a large tent of community service organizations allow Convoy of Hope to meet some of the needs that are always present in the community in a meaningful way.

“We truly enjoyed having ATSU students at the event,” said Amberli Nigh, event coordinator for health services. “We had over 450 people come through the health tent in five hours. Many people were thankful to have screenings, and I have heard stories of a child so excited to have had his mouth looked at. He had never been to the dentist before in his life!”

The first Convoy of Hope was held in Mesa on November 20, 2004. There were 32 churches, 60 organizations, and 1,142 volunteers who served more than 4,000 guests.

ATSU sponsors chronic disease prevention and care summit

Eleven counties represented at regional meeting in Kirksville

Eleven counties of northeast Missouri were represented by a wide variety of healthcare providers and health agencies attending a regional luncheon meeting at Pattersons on April 10.

The Kirksville meeting was the third of seven such meetings to be held throughout Missouri to gain local input on the Monarch Project of the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services (MDHSS). The goal of the Monarch Project is to improve the chronic disease prevention and care services offered by MDHSS by integrating current disease-specific programs into a coordinated approach.

Participants in the meeting heard about four possible approaches to using the chronic care model. It prevents disease progression, promotes wellness, and improves the quality of life for individuals with chronic conditions, including arthritis, asthma, cancer, diabetes, and heart disease.

The chronic care model is an evidence-based strategy for creating system-level improvements for prevention, disease management, and patient education. MDHSS views the chronic care model as a cost-efficient public health approach to achieving population health improvement across many chronic conditions.

Meeting participants were asked to provide input on which of the four possible approaches would work best in northeast Missouri.

One approach discussed in the meeting emphasized partnerships that would be established to initiate a network of regional centers dedicated to improving efforts to prevent and treat chronic conditions.

Additional approaches that were discussed included chronic disease patient self-management service assurance, volume maximization for existing chronic care services, and achievement-based contracts with service providers. The Monarch Project will place an emphasis on education and training to enhance self-management support for individuals with chronic conditions. Policies will also be promoted that address leading risk factors for chronic conditions, such as tobacco use, lack of physical activity, and inadequate diet/nutrition.

Eric Armbrecht, a consultant working with MDHSS, provided an overview of the Monarch Project and led the group in a discussion of the alternatives being considered by MDHSS for implementing the project in Missouri. Armbrecht will be working with a newly formed Chronic Disease Policy Council to support widespread adoption of the chronic care model, using seed money for regional pilot projects during the next year.

Two grant-funded programs of A.T. Still University were local sponsors of the meeting. The Northeast Missouri Regional Arthritis Center under the direction of Doris Fountain, R.N.C., has been funded for 21 years by the MDHSS and serves 16 counties. Healthy for Life is a three-year project serving six counties, with lead educator Sarah Eber, R.D., LD, CDE, that is funded by the Missouri Foundation for Health.

For more information about the Monarch Project, refer to www.monarchproject.info.

ATSU student government association supports EVCCC



ATSU's Student Government Association presented a check for \$625 to the East Valley Child Crisis Center. Pictured are (left to right) Beth Poppre, associate vice president for Student Services, SGA advisor; Rob Flores, SGA president; Pam Tahiliani, EVCCC volunteer; Valerie Lane, SGA vice president; and Shannon Coen, SGA activities chair.

During the 2006 Wellness Week Penny Wars at ATSU-Mesa, the Student Government Association (SGA) raised \$625 for the East Valley Child Crisis Center (EVCCC). Penny Wars was a weeklong event where every program competed to see who could collect the most pennies. First-year Physician Assistant Studies students won the war and

received a free lunch compliments of the SGA.

The check was presented to Sherry Desimone, the marketing assistant for Chester's Harley-Davidson. Chester's sponsored its annual "Stuff your Stomach with Idaho Spuds" as a fundraiser for the EVCCC.

Arizona's lone dental students visit state legislators

National Dental Student Lobby Day, an annual event organized by the American Student Dental Association (ASDA), was held nationwide on March 28. In recognition of the observance, ATSU-ASDOH's ASDA chapter sent 11 dental students to the Arizona State Capitol to learn how legislators and others involved in the operation of the state's government work together to enhance the quality of oral healthcare in Arizona.

Students met with representatives and senators from the State Legislature's Health Committee. They discussed access to dental and medical care, concerns about the use of dental amalgam and water fluoridation, and current legislation about dental care for the developmentally challenged. In addition, Greg Harris, a lobbyist from the law firm Lewis & Roca, and Rick Murray, executive director of the Arizona State Dental Association (AzDA), informed students about the benefits of organized dentistry and the technicalities and required steps for a bill to become a law.

"I think it was quite the education for the students to see the varied opinions lawmakers have on dentistry and healthcare issues, Murray said. "Students are so wrapped up in their education, it is sometimes hard for them to

see that not everyone thinks as we do. That is why it is so important to have a strong presence at the legislature, to inform legislators of the practice of dentistry from those whom live it every day."

Dental students also learned how they can integrate the many lessons in politics back to their communities.

"Having the opportunity to attend lobby day at the Arizona state capitol helped me realize the importance of involvement as a dental student, as well as further involvement upon graduation" said Adrienne Harmon, a second-year ATSU-ASDOH student from Illinois. "The legislators were interested in our views and concerns regarding public policies associated with dentistry. Involvement is essential in order to make a difference."

"The recent visit to the Arizona legislature by our students was an important opportunity for them to see how critical personal participation in developing meaningful public policy is in promoting a sound oral health agenda," said Jack Dillenberg, D.D.S, M.P.H., dean, Arizona School of Dentistry & Oral Health. "Their interaction with public leaders has helped them develop the confidence needed to be engaged in the political process."



The 11 students from ATSU's Arizona School of Dentistry & Oral Health whom visited the Arizona State Capitol are (as pictured left to right): Greg Sikora, Brigitte Lovell, Robert Flores, Katie Hammel, Amy Smith, Neal Smith, Adrienne Harmon, Ian Vale Cruz, Jason Whetten, Rishi Popat, and Macy Hyvonen.

ATSU hosts second annual Lecture on Aging

Renowned scientist discusses health promotion, healthy aging

The United States spends 16 percent of its gross national product (GNP) on healthcare, and yet citizens of other countries live far longer than those in this country. In fact, life span in the United States normally ranks between 25 and 35, usually ranks with countries such as Cuba who have no money to spend on a high-tech healthcare infrastructure.

When John Morley, M.D., began his lecture on health promotion and healthy aging at A.T. Still University's second annual Lecture on Aging, he startled his audience with some surprising information about the United States.

"Cuba has no money, therefore they spend a lot of time with high-touch medicine," Dr. Morley said. "Medicine is divided into high technology, and we do that wonderfully in this country; however, we tend to spend all the money on high technology, not high touch," he added.

"One thing I love about osteopathic [medicine] is that you are at least theoretically a high-touch field."

One of the looming statistics in the United States is the large number of people entering retirement age and the growing lifespan of the average citizen. At the turn of the 21st Century, the life expectancy has lengthened to 80 and beyond.

Dr. Morley said that geriatrics, which an industry survey has recently shown to be the most satisfying and fulfilling medical career, has to deal with new issues that arise as older adults live longer. In the past, physicians tried to keep older people with serious diseases comfortable. The prevailing logic was that the person would probably die before the disease could kill them, and aggressive treatments may only quicken their death.

That approach is no longer appropriate, according to Dr. Morley.

"We have to learn to be much more aggressive [in treating disease] than we used to be with older people,"

Dr. Morley said. "You also need to realize that medications that may be wonderful for you when you're 30 can be terrible for you when you get older."

Older adults will become more and more interested in living independent lifestyles. Dr. Morley pointed out that osteopathic medicine, with its whole person approach that includes paying attention to the mental and spiritual wellness of a person, is uniquely qualified to supply the type of treatment that older adults need.

"The No. 1 cause of problems with old people is depression," Dr. Morley said. "We all need a hug every day. We all need to be listened to. We know that if you keep your mind active, it delays cognitive impairment. If you avoid isolation and recognize and treat depression early, it maintains vitality."

Dr. Morley also pointed out that participating in a social community, such as a local church, is extremely beneficial to older adults.

"Spirituality is key to longevity. Church attendance, which you could interpret as social support, is really important," Dr. Morley said. "For those of you who are not religious, go to church anyhow, because it's great social support."

Dr. Morley said the best thing for medical students as future doctors to remember is that they don't know everything, and listening to and respecting their patients is most important.

"When you are finished at medical school and you go out, please remember that you are 26, 27, and maybe you don't have all the answers for 85-year-olds because you read it in a textbook. We don't know why most 85-year-olds got there, and it's most probably not due to anything we tell people," Dr. Morley said.

"The single most important thing I tell [these] patients is keep doing what you are doing and remember most of your physicians will not reach your age."



Dr. John Morley was the featured speaker at the second annual Lecture on Aging. Dr. Morley said the single most important thing he tells his patients over 85 is to keep doing what they are doing.

John E. Morely, M.D.

Dr. John E. Morley is the Dammert Professor of Gerontology at St. Louis University Medical School and director of the Geriatric Research Education and Clinical Center at the St. Louis V.A. Medical Center. Dr. Morley was educated at the University of Witwatersrand in his native South Africa and received postgraduate training at UCLA.

Dr. Morley is board certified in endocrinology and geriatrics. He is the author of numerous papers and 14 texts, including *Geriatric Nutrition*, Second Edition (1995), *Memory Function and Aging Related Disorders* (1992), *Medical Care in the Nursing Home*, Second Edition (1996), *Frailty in Older Individuals* (1993), and *As We Age* (1996). In 1990, Dr. Morley was included among the 100 Most-Cited Scientists in the World from 1981-1988. Dr. Morley's current research topics include memory function, nutrition, and endocrinology of the elderly.

Nation's newest dental school hosts groundbreaking national meeting on oral HIV testing

Health leaders from across the nation descend on ATSU-Mesa

The Arizona School of Dentistry & Oral hosted an innovative national meeting sponsored by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the National Association of Community Health Centers Inc. (NACHC), "Testing for HIV During Routine Dental Visits: Practical Considerations and Strategies for Implementation," on the ATSU-Mesa Campus.

Leaders in community-based oral health and HIV/AIDS explored the practical aspects of testing for HIV in the dental setting; how testing can be best integrated into clinical operations and the clinical settings in which testing appears most feasible; and the adjustments that need to be made to overall operational flow and processes.

ATSU-ASDOH Dean Jack Dillenberg, D.D.S., a noted nationwide expert on oral healthcare and innovative dental education technologies, was the keynote speaker at the event.

"A.T. Still University and ASDOH have been long-time partners with the NACHC because of our shared

commitment to public health," Dr. Dillenberg said. "The ideas and results of this meeting could potentially affect future dental visits in the U.S. for a lifetime."

The meeting provided the opportunity to discuss current practices and opinions regarding HIV testing in dental clinics and areas for collaboration. Information from the meeting will assist the NACHC in aligning with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's strategy to develop and evaluate new models for diagnosing HIV infections outside the traditional medical setting.

ATSU-ASDOH utilizes an advanced, innovative educational model that better prepares its students to be effective students and to serve underrepresented communities across the United States and abroad. Students currently take the national board exams after their first year, instead of the second year as practiced in traditional models, and are passing at a 93 percent rate. The first class will graduate May 19, 2007.



2006 Rotator Cuff Tournament

ATSU's Thompson Campus Center hosted the 2006 Rotator Cuff Tournament in March, sponsored by Alpha Phi Omega, McDonald's, Heritage House Realty, Wal-Mart, and ATSU. The tournament has evolved over the years into a sort of "goodwill" event that fosters relationships between osteopathic medical students at schools in the Midwest.

Eleven teams from three schools competed in the tournament this year: Kansas City University of Medicine & Biosciences (two men's teams and one women's team), Des Moines University (one team), and A.T. Still University (five men's teams and two women's teams).

In the end, the second-year men's team from ATSU-KCOM emerged as champions, coming up from the loser's bracket to defeat the fourth-year ATSU-KCOM squad.

"This was one of the most competitive tournaments in the history of Rotator Cuff," said Dan Martin, director of the Thompson Campus Center. "There was no dominant team; any of the teams could have won it."

Martin said the degree of goodwill displayed among players was the most encouraging outcome of the tournament.

"There was a lot of mutual respect when they played every game," Martin said. "No team wanted to give an inch, but there were lots of examples of good sportsmanship. This kind of competition creates a lot of great *esprit de corps*."

Correction

In the April 2006 *StillNews* article "Dean Wood announces hiring of Thomas McWilliams, D.O.," we incorrectly reported that Dr. McWilliams had retained his teaching position with the Arizona College of Osteopathic Medicine (AZCOM). Dr. McWilliams has resigned his position with AZCOM.

PA faculty member Michael Goodwin chosen to conduct landmark study

ASHS physician assistant faculty member Michael Goodwin recently was chosen to be on a national professional working group by the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) to conduct a survey regarding Commercial Motor Vehicle (CMV) examinations. There has been no research to date that directly examines the role and performance of medical examiners who determine the physical qualifications of CMV drivers in the United States.

Through surveys and site observations, this study will evaluate medical examiner performance as it exists in the field, and examine tasks delegated to support staff and problems medical examiners encounter during the examination process. This working group will be instrumental in (1) developing case studies for the



GOODWIN

study survey, (2) reviewing survey drafts, (3) assisting in the development of site observation tools and reports, and (4) providing training to three research associates who will conduct site visits. The group will conduct these studies over the next year. Mr. Goodwin will be involved in at least two on-site meetings and two to three audio/web-based conferences.

Goodwin has been involved in occupational medicine for more than 20 years after having completed a residency program in occupation medicine in St. Louis in the mid-1980s. He has been a full-time faculty member at ASHS for two years. He is the owner of Occupational Assessments & Services (OAS), an Arizona-based business providing occupational services to industry.

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