2004 Career Evening
Nearly 160 School of Medicine students were on hand to gain insight into the important decisions they’ll need to make in the next few years at the WSU School of Medicine Alumni-Student Career Evening on January 7.

The President’s Greeting
From William O’Neil, M.D.

Alumni Profile: Daniel Baker, M.D.
Emergency medicine physicians encounter many challenges and assume many responsibilities. A steady stream of patients with a wide array of injuries and ailments requires doctors who are willing to face unexpected duties. For 2002 graduate, Daniel Baker, M.D., these unexpected duties are nothing new.

In Memoriam
John Escott, M.D., ’74
James Thorp, M.D., ’79
Tina Kelly, M.D., ’03

Chair Profile: Dr. George Murakawa Modernizes Dermatology Department
The Department of Dermatology at the Wayne State University School of Medicine was officially established in 1937 and since that time, many prominent physicians have guided the department to success. When he assumed the responsibilities of managing the department in 2000, Dr. Murakawa, at 39, was the youngest physician to hold a department chair in the United States, and it desperately needed someone to help it move into the twenty-first century.

Education Commons to Provide Resources for All Stages of Medical Education
At the State of the School address in February, Dean John Crissman, M.D., and Associate Dean Robert Frank, M.D., shared their vision for a $25 million Education Commons that will help serve as a resource for students, alumni and all health professionals in the area.

Directory Helps Alums Keep In Touch
Soon, locating fellow alumni will be as easy as turning a page with the Wayne State University Medical Alumni Directory.

2004 Medical Alumni Reunion
The 2004 Medical Alumni Reunion will take place on Saturday, May 8, 2004. The continuing medical education (CME) program and luncheon will be held at the medical school, and the dinner and awards presentation will be at the Somerset Inn in Troy, Mich.

Announcing: MedStart
The School of Medicine is proud to announce a unique bachelor of science/medical degree program. It is a collaboration among Wayne State University’s Honors Program and the WSU School of Medicine, Michigan Technological University (MTU) and Northern Michigan University (NMU).

Life Members
The Office of Alumni Affairs recognizes new Medical Alumni Association Life Members

Save the Date
The Kresge Eye Institute (KEI) and the Wayne State University School of Medicine will host the 49th Annual Clinical Conference on June 18, 2004 at the Hutzel Auditorium at KEI.

Class Notes
School Hosts West Coast Alumni Receptions
Dean John Crissman, M.D., and staff from the WSU School of Medicine’s Office of Development and Alumni Affairs started the new year with a successful trip out West. On January 16-18, dinner receptions were held for School of Medicine alumni and friends in Scottsdale, Ariz.; San Diego, Calif.; and Los Angeles, Calif. More than 80 people attended the three events.

GRADUATE ALUM NOTES
Dear Graduate Alumni
Letter from Kenneth Palmer, Ph.D., assistant dean for graduate programs

Graduate Alumni Profile: Dr. Maria Worsham
Persistence is a character trait that Dr. Maria Worsham has used to her advantage. Her career in pathology was postponed for nearly 15 years as she made time for marriage and a family. All the while, however, she pursued her goal and in her spare time continued to remain on the leading edge of research.

DEVELOPMENT NEWS
The Heinz C. Prechter Fund for Manic Depression Awards Grant to School of Medicine
The Heinz C. Prechter Fund for Manic Depression has awarded a $200,000 grant to the School of Medicine’s Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Neurosciences. The fund will be distributed over the next two years and used for a bipolar disorder research project titled, “Use of High Field Real-Time Functional Magnetic Resonance Imaging to Examine Brain Circuits Involved in Affective Regulations in Patients with Bipolar Disorder.”

Still Collecting for Telefund
The Medical Alumni Board of Governors members are continuing to make calls to those who were not contacted during the Telefund in October/November, 2003.
The Medical Alumni Association sponsored the annual WSU School of Medicine Alumni-Student Career Evening on January 7. Nearly 160 School of Medicine students were on hand to gain insight into the important decisions they’ll need to make in the next few years. The event gives students an opportunity to speak with physicians and faculty members to learn about various specialties. The evening’s events began with dinner and introductory presentations by Dr. William O’Netill, president of the WSU School of Medicine Alumni Board of Governors, and Dr. Kertia Black, assistant dean for student affairs. Afterwards, group sessions took place during which students met with physicians to discuss specific specialties.

Students gather at the Scott Hall cafeteria to learn about medical specialties.

Faith Crompler, year I, and Laura Russell, year II, take a dinner break.

Angie Garcia, year II, is anxious to explore career options.

Adrienne Jordan, year I, and David Bozaan, year II, register for Career Evening.
In Memoriam

The Office of Alumni Affairs in the School of Medicine has received notification of the deaths of the following alumni. On behalf of the university community, we extend sincere sympathy to family and friends.

Tina Kelly, M.D., 2003, a first-year pediatric resident at Children’s Hospital of Michigan (CHM), was killed in a car accident February 4. Very active in her church and community, Dr. Kelley was a graduate of Michigan State University and the School of Medicine. She completed an externship at CHM in 2000 and volunteered in the hospital’s hematology/oncology unit with the Arie Foundation. Dr. Kelley was involved in several community outreach programs. She was a tutor, youth leader, counselor and friend to many. Dr. Kelley’s application for residency included a personal statement, part of which reads: “My goal was and is to help children. It doesn’t matter if the patient is poor, rich, white or black; every child deserves good health care.” As a memorial to her, flags at CHM were flown at half staff.

Editor’s note: We know that timely reporting of alumni deaths is important to our readers. At the same time, we must ensure that our reports are accurate. Therefore, we ask that friends and family send us either an obituary or a letter of confirmation notifying us of someone’s death. Please write to the WSU Medical Alumni Association, 101 E. Alexandrine, Detroit, MI 48201 or e-mail alumni@med.wayne.edu.

Tina Kelly

Dear Colleagues,

About five years ago, I was sitting in my living room cussing at another Lions debacle when our phone rang. Needless to say, if it had been a salesperson, I would have vented all my 40 years of pent-up frustration as a Lions “fan” on the hapless caller! To my surprise, a rather meek young adult voice was on the other end. He introduced himself as a Wayne State medical student and was calling for the annual drive. That was the first of my involvement with the Wayne State University School of Medicine Alumni Association. I have participated in many national and local committees and task forces, but none has given me the personal and professional satisfaction that involvement with the alumni association has brought. Since I have practiced in Michigan for 25 years, it seems odd that I never got involved before that fundraising call.

Perhaps I was too busy developing my reputation to see those young med students walking the halls of Beaumont. Perhaps I felt too distant from the school to get involved. Perhaps I questioned what one person could do for such a large school. Or, perhaps nobody ever asked? Well, I can’t hope to ever enumerate all the reasons you may have for not being involved with the alumni association. I can, however, remove one reason.

Please accept this short note as my formal invitation for ALL Wayne State medical school alumni to volunteer to get involved. We are accepting nominations for our alumni board now. Many other volunteer opportunities exist including regional representatives all across the U.S. and in Michigan. Please let us know if you have an interest. Your medical school needs you now more than ever.

Great things are in the planning for the school including a new library addition to which the alumni association has contributed greatly. We all can be a dynamic, powerful advocacy group for our school. I can promise you that, like myself, you will find this volunteer job as one of the most rewarding things you can do. By being so close to the students and watching how your help and example makes a difference in their lives, you can’t help but be energized in your career! We can promise you wonderful camaraderie with other alumni, and the great feeling of helping the school that helped put the M.D. after your name.

William O’Neill, MD, ‘77
President
Wayne State University
School of Medicine
Medical Alumni Association

Alumni Profile: Daniel Baker, M.D.

Emergency medicine physicians encounter many challenges and assume many responsibilities. A steady stream of patients with a wide array of injuries and ailments requires doctors who are willing to face unexpected duties. For 2002 graduate, Daniel Baker, M.D., these unexpected duties are nothing new. “The variety of cases I saw at the School of Medicine definitely gave me an edge. I encountered almost everything I’ve seen in Cincinnati while I was at Wayne State,” he said.

“There’s very little that I’ve been exposed to here that I wasn’t already exposed to as a student.”

As a second-year resident at the University of Cincinnati Medical Center, Dr. Baker is responsible for nine to 10 patients at any given time in the E.R. This includes carrying out all procedures while he’s on the floor, such as intubating patients and administering central lines. In addition to general responsibilities, emergency medicine physicians participate in several other activities. They travel with EMS crews on calls throughout the city as medical advisors to assist with care and also provide medical support for visiting dignitaries and officials.

One of Dr. Baker’s primary duties, however, is to accompany pilots and flight nurses several times each month on emergency helicopter missions. These “air-care” flights are, often times, the fastest way for medical treatment to help difficult-to-reach patients. “It’s really one of the most exciting parts of my job here,” he confessed.

The wide range of responsibilities Dr. Baker must balance is a skill he learned while at the WSU School of Medicine. “We were allowed a large amount of independence there,” he said. “We were trusted with a high level of clinical responsibility, but we also received all the necessary guidance that really helped me prepare for my transition into residency.”

Dr. Baker also works closely with the Cincinnati Police S.W.A.T. team. “The team requires medical support on all of their missions,” he explained. “A small group of area doctors cooperate with the S.W.A.T. team to ensure that they have the assistance they need.”

The physicians accompany the team in the S.W.A.T. van or in a patrol car during missions in the event that emergency medical attention is needed, and they are encouraged to train with the S.W.A.T. team members. According to Dr. Baker, “They feel more comfortable knowing that you know their procedures and how to react in various situations.”

These “various situations” and others which Dr. Baker finds himself involved in on a daily basis reaffirm his choice to enter emergency medicine. “The field provides me with a variety of cases. The scope encompasses an intellectual, as well as a hands-on aspect. It incorporates components of surgery, internal medicine and many other fields of medicine. My work here is exciting and always presents me with new challenges.”

One of Dr. Baker’s primary duties is to accompany pilots and nurses several times each month on emergency “air-care” helicopter missions.

Alumni Profile: Daniel Baker, M.D.
Chair Profile: Dr. George Murakawa
Modernizes Dermatology Department

The Department of Dermatology at the Wayne State University School of Medicine was officially established in 1937 and since that time, many prominent physicians have guided the department to success. “Each of the prior chairs was a legend in his time. I had some pretty big shoes to fill,” explained George Murakawa, M.D., Ph.D., current holder of the Hermann Pinkus Chair in Dermatology.

When he assumed the responsibilities of managing the department in 2000, Dr. Murakawa, at 39, was the youngest physician in the United States, and the dermatology department desperately needed someone to help it move into the twenty-first century. “The department was underfunded,” he explained. The establishment of the Pinkus chair and the funds generated by it “levelled the playing field” and provided the resources necessary to make improvements.

“When I walked in, I wanted to lead by example. I’ve never been afraid to roll up my sleeves and work.” Shortly after his arrival, he was able to purchase the necessary equipment and computers to bring the department up to date and address staffing needs to ensure everything ran more efficiently.

In addition to modernization, one aspect that needed to be attended to was the academic mission. The department is responsible for the education of medical students, non-dermatology residents, dermatology residents, and dermatologists. Dr. Murakawa concentrated on revamping the residency program. “It was a priority to energize it,” he explained. “Dermatology is a naturally competitive field, so I knew that if the residency program was flourishing, everything would fall into place and we would attract the highest caliber residents.”

Recently, the curriculum was extensively modified and expanded to meet the needs of these students and the residency program received excellent reviews during the last site visit.

One of the challenges Dr. Murakawa faces as chair is to know which hat to wear at any given time. Teacher, researcher, administrator, and clinician are some of the titles he holds from day to day. “I’ve found that it is critical to build a department in which people are put into situations where they can succeed,” he said. “People’s roles within the department are determined by their strengths.”

Finance has been another concern that Dr. Murakawa must address frequently in his position. The department has concentrated on increasing the number of high-paying procedures such as Mohs micrographic and cosmetic laser surgeries to improve its bottom line. These treatment options have contributed to a 300 percent growth in gross clinical revenues in recent years. In addition, the department is looking to expand and hopes to open a suburban practice in Troy in the near future.

Since assuming the role of chair, Dr. Murakawa has brought many changes to the dermatology department. “When I arrived here, I knew that it was my responsibility to continue to advance this department into the twenty-first century, and I knew if we couldn’t be progressive, we wouldn’t make it,” he said. “To accomplish this, I knew we had to be creative.”

As a display of his commitment to the department and its improvement, Dr. Murakawa has established the George Murakawa, M.D., Endowed Fund for Dermatology to increase funding. “We’re in such a heavy growth mode, but I’ve realized that now is also a great time to create a nest egg to secure funding for the future. By the time my work here is done, I hope to create more endowments and continue to recruit the best staff for this department,” he said. “We don’t want to be playing keep-up with other dermatology departments. We want to be innovative and force others to strive to keep up with us.”

Education Commons to Provide Resources for All Stages of Medical Education

Nearly half of all practicing physicians in metropolitan Detroit are Wayne State University School of Medicine alumni. It stands to reason that the school should remain a resource for medical training for these physicians throughout their careers.

At the State of the School address in February, Dean John Crissman, M.D., and Associate Dean Robert Frank, M.D., shared their vision for a $25 million Education Commons that will help serve as a resource for students, alumni and all health professionals in the area. The technologically advanced building will be connected to Scott Hall and include 24-hour study areas, examination and laboratory space and an auditorium.

Highlights of the Education Commons

• The commons will be based on the existent 68,000-square-foot Shiffman Medical Library. This building will be physically connected to Scott Hall via a “skywalk.”

• The commons will create enduring connections among today’s students, alumni and affiliated physicians within the state by offering both physical and technology-enabled learning, meeting, service, evaluation and administrative spaces.

• This addition will include space for a large number of small group learning areas: laboratories, patient examination or surgery rooms, quiet study areas and 24-hour access.

• The addition will include space for tenants and partners who will appreciably improve campus life for students, faculty, health care affiliates and the community. A 24-hour networked café, a bookstore, banking and other amenities are envisioned.

• Other features of the new Education Commons that will contribute to the school’s preeminence in 21st century medical education include: a technology-assisted learning and conferencing auditorium, classrooms and production studios.

• The generosity of alumni, friends, faculty and staff will make the Education Commons possible. The projected cost is $25 million.
The Heinz C. Prechter Fund for Manic Depression Awards Grant to School of Medicine

The Heinz C. Prechter Fund for Manic Depression has awarded a $200,000 grant to the School of Medicine’s Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Neurosciences. The fund will be distributed over the next two years and used for a bipolar disorder research project titled, “Use of High Field Real-Time Functional Magnetic Resonance Imaging to Examine Brain Circuits Involved in Affective Regulations in Patients with Bipolar Disorder.”

Bipolar Disorder affects approximately 2.3 million Americans – more than one percent of the population. This project focuses on utilizing the department’s state-of-the-art 4 Tesla magnet and its unique real-time fMRI capabilities to explore brain regions and circuits involved in emotional expression in people with bipolar disorder.

The research will enable the Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Neurosciences to gain a better understanding of the cognitive distortions that often lead to poor adherence to treatments and less-than-optimal outcomes. In addition, the research could reveal new diagnostic tools for monitoring treatment and develop new therapeutic approaches using real-time fMRI. “This research is extremely important,” said Waltraud Prechter, Chairman of the Heinz C. Prechter Fund for Manic Depression, “The real-time imaging, using the 4-T magnet, may prove to be the tool that has been missing from bipolar disorder research.”

Our sincere appreciation goes to The Heinz C. Prechter Fund for Manic Depression for aiding our research initiative. This grant provides the financial support necessary to move pivotal research such as this forward. In addition, we are proud to be included in the “Prechter Network” of researchers from across the United States. The knowledge and insights shared within this network and, subsequently, with the global research community will undoubtedly speed improved treatment options to those facing the challenges of bipolar disorder.

Again, without the financial support and advocacy of the Fund, the future would not look nearly as hopeful for patients and their families.

Directory Helps Alums Keep In Touch

Soon, locating fellow alumni will be as easy as turning a page with the Wayne State University Medical Alumni Directory. The Medical Alumni Association will be working with Bernard C. Harris Publishing Company, Inc., on the next alumni directory which is scheduled to come out in March 2005. A questionnaire will be mailed out in June. Please complete it and return as soon as possible. You may reserve your personal copy when your Harris representative calls. Don’t delay because only pre-publication orders will be guaranteed.

The directory promises to be the definitive reference of over 9,400 of our alumni. Don’t miss the opportunity to be a part of it!

Still Collecting for Telefund

The Medical Alumni Board of Governors members are continuing to make calls to those who were not contacted during the Telefund in October/November, 2003. They have a vested interest in supporting academic and student programs and it is this commitment that helps provide an exceptional educational experience for students. As of April 15, we have raised $486,908 but are still looking to reach our goal of $565,000.

The annual fund provides support for medical student scholarships, student loans, and student activities, including community outreach programs, Match Day, Student Senate Retreat, Career Day, Family Day, and the Welcome Ceremony. It also provides funding for the honors program, maintenance of the student fitness center, summer research fellowships, and investment funds to support academic and student programs. The school relies on alumni to provide this financial assistance that is essential to continued growth and academic excellence.

Those wishing to make a contribution to the Alumni Annual Fund should contact Lisa Ramos in the Alumni Affairs Office at (313) 577-3587 or mail a check directly to: WSU School of Medicine Alumni Annual Fund, 101 E. Alexandrine, Detroit, Mich. 48201.

Get the latest information about upcoming events, major announcements, and breaking news about the School of Medicine delivered directly to your e-mail in-box.

To begin receiving the School of Medicine e-Update, simply send an e-mail to mguentille@med.wayne.edu and register.

WSU SCHOOL OF MEDICINE
T-SHIRT/SWEATSHIRT ORDER FORM

Name _____________________________
Address __________________________
Phone ____________________________

Check style: □ Golf Shirt $28 
□ S/S Proud Parent $20 □ S/S Proud Grandparent $20 
□ L/S Proud Sibling $20 □ S/S WSU SOM Logo Only $20 
□ L/S WSU SOM Logo (Centralized) $20 □ S/S SOM Logo (Centered) - T-Shirt $18 
□ S/S SOM Logo (Centered) - Sweatshirt $30

Circle size and enter quantity
M _______ L _______ XL _______ XXL (add $2) _______

Total amount due (Add $6 per item for shipping and handling): ______

Circle method of payment
□ VISA □ Master Charge □ Check

Name as it appears on card _____________________________
Charge number _____________________________
Expiration date _____________________________

Make checks payable to WSU Medical Alumni Association

Return order form and payment to
WSU Medical Alumni Association
101 E. Alexandrine
Detroit, MI 48201
2004 Medical Alumni Reunion

T he 2004 Medical Alumni Reunion will take place on Saturday, May 8, 2004. The continuing medical education (CME) program and luncheon will be held at the medical school, and the dinner and awards presentation will be at the Somerset Inn in Troy, Mich.

You Heard It Here First: Experts Discuss the Latest Advances in Their Fields

8:30 A.M. – 5:30 P.M.
WSU School of Medicine
Gordon Scott Hall of Basic Medical Sciences
540 E. Canfield, Detroit
8:30–9:30 A.M.
Registration and Continental Breakfast
9:30–10:15 A.M.
Continental Breakfast
10:15–10:40 A.M.
Question and Answer
10:40–11:05 A.M.
Metabolic Syndrome
Michael Doyle, M.D.
11:05–11:30 A.M.
Question and Answer
11:30–11:45 A.M.
Endowed Memorial Scholarship
Nellie Corbin Alford Memorial Fund
11:45–12:00 A.M.
Question and Answer
12:00–12:30 P.M.
Update on the School
12:30–1:30 P.M.
Annual Business Luncheon
1:30–2:00 P.M.
Student Alumni Awards
• William Stapleton, Jr., M.D.
Freshman Scholarship Award
• Medical Alumni Sophomore Scholarship Award
• Junior Scholarship Award in Surgery
• Medical Alumni Senior Scholarship Award
• Elvis Smith Alford, M.D., and Nellie Corbin Alford Memorial Scholarship Award
• The Saul Brown, M.D., Endowed Memorial Prize in Pathology
• Dr. Morris S. Brent Award
• The Frank B. Walker, M.D., Endowed Memorial Prize in Pathology
• The Raymond Margherio, M.D., Endowed Memorial Scholarship Fund

Presentation of certificates to the 50 year (1954) and 25 year (1979) graduates
2:00 – 3:00 P.M.
Tour of the medical school

For more information regarding the 2004 Medical Alumni Reunion, please contact the alumni affairs office at (313) 577-3587.
Notes

1951
Sidney Stone, M.D., received the Homer D. Strong Award on February 9, 2004. This award salutes Wayne State University's volunteer leaders.

1953
Richard Schultz, M.D., writes: "Being 76, I cannot remember if I told you that I finished a Senior Fulbright Lectureship to The University of Upsalla (Sweden) this spring and summer. I was invited by the Department of Plastic Surgery and they had me doing surgery, as well. Regards."

1958
Irving M. Miller, M.D., has been named Pediatrician of the Year 2003 for the State of Michigan by the Michigan Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics.

1959
Phyllis Harrison-Ross, M.D., was the recipient of the Solomon Carter Fuller Award. This award honors an individual who has been a pioneer in an area which has significantly benefited the quality of life for black people. The award is given in honor of Solomon Carter Fuller who was born in Liberia in 1872 and who came to the United States in 1889 and taught pathology, neurology, and psychiatry at Boston University for over 30 years.

1962
Since 2001, Robert Abramovitz, M.D., has been devoting his full time to the Center for Trauma Program Innovation at the Jewish Board of Family and Children's Services (JBFCS). The center was started in 1998 and its primary activities involve trauma program development and training. It has developed six new programs in collaboration with other JBFCS Divisions. It also now has $4 million of federal, state and private philanthropic support which includes: 1) being part of SAMSHA's National Child Traumatic Stress Network, a collaborative program of 4 centers across the country working to improve access and quality of services for abused and neglected children; 2) an NIMH-sponsored RISP project devoted to promoting field-effectiveness in community-based mental health services in partnership with the Mount Sinai School of Medicine's Child and Adolescent Division; and 3) work with colleagues in Israel on a bi-national project studying the impact of terrorism and war on children and developing public health approaches to intervention.

1964
Janette (Bigelow) Sherman, M.D., has been named science editor for the journal, Archives of Environmental Health. She continues to live in the Washington, D.C.-Virginia area where she is active in writing, teaching and consulting.

1965
Carl Lauter, M.D., is president-elect of the Michigan Infectious Disease Society. He is chief of the Adult Allergy-Immunology Division at William Beaumont Hospital in Royal Oak, Mich. He also is a clinical professor at the Wayne State University School of Medicine.

1977
Ellie J. Kleinman, M.D., was recently sworn in as supervising chief surgeon of the NYPD by Police Commissioner Raymond Kelly in a ceremony at One Police Plaza in New York City.

School Hosts West Coast Alumni Receptions

At the receptions, Dean Crissman updated everyone on new, exciting developments at the School of Medicine, and alumni had an opportunity to meet, greet and dine together. Please contact the Medical Alumni Affairs office at (313) 577-3587 or alumni@med.wayne.edu if you would like to get involved in planning future Regional alumni events.

Dean John Crissman visits with Patricia Barron and Dr. David Barron.

Dr. Joseph Veras and Dr. Sidney Levine

Dr. Michael Barker, Dr. Robert Zgliniec, Julia Zgliniec and Dr. Rose Hamad

Dr. Kouichi and Grace Tanaka

Dr. Richard Anslow, Dr. John Crissman and Dr. Arvin Philippart

Dr. Richard Shewbridge, M.D.

Dr. Joseph Weiss and Dr. Sidney Levine

Patricia Barron and Dr. David Barron.

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Dr. Nadeem Chaudry, M.D.

Dr. Joseph Weiss and Dr. Sidney Levine

Dr. Michael Barker, Dr. Robert Zgliniec, Julia Zgliniec and Dr. Rose Hamad

Dr. Kouichi and Grace Tanaka

Dr. Richard Anslow, Dr. John Crissman and Dr. Arvin Philippart

Dr. Richard Shewbridge, M.D.

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Patricia Barron and Dr. David Barron.

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Dear Graduate Alumni

It’s been a long, chilly winter in Michigan and most of us are anxious to see green grass and feel warm spring breezes! However, cold as it may be, research and graduate activities have continued unabated.

Late in the fall, we had an opportunity to acknowledge the academic and research accomplishments of several outstanding graduate students at the School of Medicine’s annual Graduate Student Awards. The accompanying sidebar identifies our thirteen 2003 recipients. Congratulations to each of them. The accompanying sidebar identifies our thirteen 2003 recipients. Congratulations to each on their remarkable successes.

At this point in the academic year, our recruiting and admissions process is well underway. Although applications decreased somewhat in January, compared to previous years, they are showing resurgence in February. Nationally, international applications have fallen off, and we are experiencing a similar decline. Whether it’s potential student concerns over U.S. visa and immigration issues or increased competition from schools in Canada, Britain, Australia and Asian countries is unclear. Applications from China have shown the greatest fall, in part, related to the altered availability of the Graduate Record Exam in that country. Nonetheless, we expect to have a full and highly qualified Ph.D. class entering this fall.

Where are we with the M.D./Ph.D. program? A total of 43 applications were submitted for the four available slots — a great response considering our advertising got a late start this year. We interviewed nine students and made admission offers to four, with two added to an alternate list. I’ll keep you updated on our progress.

As always, your keen interest in the WSU School of Medicine and the progress of our graduate biomedical science training is warmly appreciated.

Kenneth C. Palmer, Ph.D.
Assistant Dean for Graduate Programs

Graduate Student Academic and Research Awards:

| Grant Bleuse  | Pharmacology |
| Michelle Castelli  | Cancer Biology |
| Raymond Esper  | Molecular Biology and Genetics |
| Michael Franklin  | Physiology |
| Selina Giaras  | Cancer Biology |
| Christian Krugue  | Cellular and Molecular Pathology |
| Showrozad Lighvaniz  | Clinical Neurobiology |
| Pamela Olekowsky  | Anatomy and Cell Biology |
| Quinn M. Parks  | Cancer Biology |

Send Us Your News...

Don't Be a Stranger — let us hear from you. Tell us what you’re doing, where you’re at, what’s been happening. We welcome your news to include in class notes or perhaps as a feature.

Send us your news...

I need your photos...

We would be happy to include photos to run with your class note.

(sorry, we cannot return them)

Send us your news...

Wayne State University
School of Medicine
Office of Development
and Alumni Affairs
101 E. Alexandrine
Detroit, MI 48201
(313) 577-1493

Executive Director
of Development
David Lepper
dlepper@med.wayne.edu

Manager,
Alumni Affairs
Lori Ann Haddad Rohitaile
lrobitai@med.wayne.edu

Alumni Officer,
Alumni Affairs
Lisa Ramos
lramos@med.wayne.edu

Manager,
Donor Relations
and Communications
Michael Gentile
mgentile@med.wayne.edu

Kenneth C. Palmer, Ph.D.
Assistant Dean for Graduate Programs

Graduate Alumni Profile: Dr. Maria Worsham

Persistence is a character trait that Dr. Maria Worsham has used to her advantage.

Her career in pathology was postponed for nearly 15 years as she made time for marriage and a family. All the while, however, she pursued her goal and in her spare time continued to remain on the leading edge of research. “I was already, essentially a cytogenetist by the time I went back to school to finish my degree,” she said. “While I was raising my children, I never lost sight of my work, and I continued my research.”

Dr. Worsham earned her degree in pathology from the WSU School of Medicine in 1993. After graduation, she completed a fellowship in medical genetics and became certified in both clinical medical genetics and clinical medical cytogenetics. After taking a job at Henry Ford Health Systems (HFHS), she quickly made attempts to secure funding for the pathology department. Her efforts paid off as she acquired funding from the American Cancer Society and the National Institutes of Health to help build and improve the department. Quickly advancing, she now serves as the director of research in Otolaryngology at HFHS. “The research projects that we’ve done with breast cancer here have allowed us to construct unique research cohorts to study significant and relevant cancer issues,” she explained.

Dr. Worsham recently received a Department of Defense grant for breast cancer research to study stage specific molecular targets. An even more recent NIH award, titled “Molecular Modeling of Diagnosis and Prognosis of Head and Neck Cancer,” looks at 1,000 patients and struggles to prognosticate cancer, she explained. “Both these grants look at a unique panel of genes implicated in breast and head and neck cancer to determine if they can be used as predictors.”

“I’ve always been very entrenched in the writing of and applying for these grants and I think my success is due to me being very dogged. I really love what I do,” she said “Cancer research begins with attempting to understand the process from the point of a cell going away and what interventions can be made to stop it. And that is something I’ve always been fascinated with. I waited a long time to continue my career and I find myself very fortunate that I’m in this position.”

Dr. Worsham credits her family as a source for her determination. “My family always encouraged me to go back to school. They were very supportive of my work.”

When she returned to school, she found support there too. “I had very good mentors. I worked very hard because there was reason to. The faculty at the School of Medicine was always on top of things and I was never allowed to slip. I was cognizant of the fact that I needed all of the necessary foundation to be successful,” she said. “While at Wayne, I was recognized as a student but I also had a unique perspective. There was an atmosphere of mutual respect and everyone’s input was valued. I felt like I was being supported intellectually and professionally. I was acknowledged as a peer.”

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