Midwestern University is committed to providing a safe and secure learning and working environment for its students and employees. To help meet that goal, the University established an Emergency Response Team (ERT) on both campuses in 2001 to address and handle emergencies and to establish protocols for emergency situations.

“In light of the past tragedies on educational campuses, we can no longer operate under the premise that it can’t happen here. We want to do our best to make sure we’ve done everything we can to prepare for emergency situations,” said Angela Marty, Vice President of Human Resources & Administration, who oversees ERT on both campuses.

ERT also ensures compliance with new federal, state, and local regulations related to safety and security in higher education. The team developed a comprehensive emergency response plan and meets monthly to discuss any campus incidents. The team also continues to work to identify and assess risk and hazards and investigate how to leverage technology to enhance the safety efforts.

With the cooperation of local authorities, ERT has begun to conduct several campus drills to help the University community prepare for a variety of emergencies. In addition to fire drills, announced lock-down drills have already taken place in several buildings and more are on the way. “We are going to do an announced drill in every building on campus,” Ms. Marty said. “During the first round, everyone will have full knowledge of the drill. We’ll talk about it, provide education, and supply instructions so that nobody is surprised.” ERT will then assess the effectiveness of the campus response and determine if any new procedures need to be put in place to
Dear Faculty, Staff, and Students,

This edition of Vital Signs supports the mission and values of Midwestern University on every page. The message is one of great importance to me, focusing on our commitment to a safe and secure campus, a healthy and happy faculty and staff, and community service. I hope you take the time to read and reflect on these messages.

The Emergency Response Team was enacted before the more recent rash of tragic events on college campuses around the country. We began the committee in response to our growing need to prepare our faculty and staff for any disaster, be it a heavy rain storm in Downers Grove or a dust storm in Glendale. The team coordinates all staffing areas of the campus, along with faculty representatives for the many campus buildings, and ERT has grown over the years as it has addressed more local and national concerns. Members of the ERT team are now equipped with technology, information, and education to help us respond to any danger or concern on our campuses. Their mission, along with mine and every member of our community, is to keep our campuses safe and secure for everyone. This means every member of the community must be aware of our surroundings and help us keep our buildings secure and guests identified.

Beyond safety and security is your health. We have put many resources into our wellness program, and were very pleased that this spring we were named one of the “Healthiest Employers in 2011” by the Phoenix Business Journal. I was interviewed extensively by the judges of this award about why we commit our resources, time, and energy into programs that may not have a financial return on the investment. I was careful to explain that it was never a financial motive, as it is in other organizations, but an offshoot of our curriculum and philosophy. How can a healthcare university not teach, mentor, and assist members of the community to live healthier, happier lives?

This leads me to the final part of our Vital Signs message – service. Reading the articles, looking at the participation, and honoring the students, faculty, and many organizations that give back to the community is amazing. It makes me proud to read of the faculty publications, to think about the past 20 years of service of the Chicago College of Pharmacy, and to recognize the members of our communities that benefit from Midwestern University. By reaching out, we are indeed helping to promote a healthier community and educate others.

I thank you for being part of our mission. Every member of the community plays an important role is making Midwestern University a very special place. I am honored to serve.

Kathleen H. Groeger, Ph.D.

Emergency Response Team Aims to Keep Campus Safe

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keep the campus safe. Unannounced and campus-wide drills are also in the future. “We want to create a culture of prevention and preparedness,” Ms. Marty added.

In addition, ERT is working closely with local police and fire departments to make certain that the local authorities have the tools and information they need to respond quickly and effectively to emergencies on campus. In the event of an emergency, the campus will first be alerted through the emergency notification speakers, located both inside buildings and outside near major walkways, and then through email and the University’s website.

In addition to participating in the drills, students, faculty, and staff can enhance the level of campus preparedness by learning more about the University’s emergency procedures and taking a moment to consider how they would react in case of an emergency. “We will provide as much information as possible, but all individuals need to be aware of their surroundings and know what they would do in case of an emergency,” Ms. Marty said.
Faculty, Staff, and Student Research and Activities Update

APPOINTMENTS, AWARDS, AND GRANTS

Maria Advincula, PS-II (CCP), was appointed to the APhA National Standing Education Committee.

David Applegate, PMS-II (AZPod/CHS-AZ), was elected president-elect of the national student governance organization for podiatric medical students at the winter meetings of the American Podiatric Medical Students Association (APMSA) in February.

Sally Arif, Pharm.D., BCPS (CCP), Assistant Professor, Pharmacy Practice was appointed to the National Association of Boards of Pharmacy Foreign Pharmacy Review Committee.

Kimberly A. Brown, Ph.D. (MWU), Director of Finance, has been elected chair of the Council of Student Financial Aid Administrators for the American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine (AACOM). Dr. Brown has also recently been appointed as a founding board member of National Student Loan Program's Personal Financial Education Advisory Board.

Mae Ciancio, Ph.D. (CHS-DG), Assistant Professor, Biomedical Sciences, received funding from the National Institutes of Health through the University of California, San Francisco Step-Up program in the amount of $750 for research expenses for her mentorship participation.

Chelsea Paskvan Gawryletz, MS-IV (AZCOM), received the Presidential Scholarship on April 8, 2011 at the Arizona Osteopathic Charities’ President’s Gala.

Dawn Knudsen-Gerber, Pharm.D., CGP, FASCP (CPG), Assistant Professor and Geriatric Residency Program Director, Pharmacy Practice, was recognized as a Fellow of the American Society of Consultant Pharmacists.

Andrew Gifford, PS-I (CPG), won $8,000 in tuition reimbursement as part of the 2010 Facts & Comparisons Enhancement Scholarship from Wolters Kluwer Health.

Tyler Golembski, PS-II (CCP), won a National Association of Chain Drug Stores Foundation scholarship.

Anil Gulati, M.D., Ph.D. (CCP), Professor, Pharmaceutical Sciences and Associate Dean, received funding from Novo Nordisk in the amount of $46,618 for his project “Effect of Liraglutide on Permanent Middle Cerebral Artery Occlusion Stroke Model in Normal and Diabetic Rats.” Dr. Gulati also has been awarded fellowship in the American College of Clinical Pharmacology, and had a patent issued for “Diagnostic use of endothelin ETB receptor agonists and ETA receptor antagonists in tumor imaging” by the government of India. In addition, Dr. Gulati organized a symposium titled: “International Drug Development and Collaboration” at the 39th Annual Meeting American College of Clinical Pharmacology, September 2010 in Baltimore, MD.

Frank Licari, D.D.S., Associate Dean (CDMI), received a letter of understanding from Advanced Psychometrics for Transitions, Inc. (aka. ProFitHR) to perform research on novel interview tools for admission into dental school that has a value of $7,550.

Katherine McConnell, DMS-II (CDMA), was awarded the National Institute of Dental and Craniofacial Research (NIDCR) Summer Dental Student Award at the National Institute of Health in Bethesda, Maryland.

Sandra Naegele, PS-II (CCP), was awarded participation in South Africa’s Student Exchange Program (IPSF).

Jonathan Perry, Ph.D. (CCOM), Assistant Professor of Anatomy, received a letter of award from Brooklyn College as part of a subcontract awarded from The Leakey Foundation to support his project “Digital Evolutionary Morphology of the Primate Dentition” with a value of $250.00.

Jennifer Phillips, Pharm.D. (CCP), Assistant Professor, Pharmacy Practice, was named director-elect for the Illinois Council of Health-System Pharmacists Division of Professional Affairs.

Michael Rupp, Ph.D. (CPG), Professor, Pharmacy Practice, received a subcontract from El Rio Community Health Center in Tucson in the amount of $8,607 funded through the Cardinal Health Foundation. Dr. Rupp will direct the evaluation of the project “Improving Medication Safety by Providing Pharmacists with Patient Diagnosis on Electronic Prescription Orders” and estimate the potential impact of documented pharmacist interventions on patient safety.

Marc Scheeetz, Pharm.D. (CCP), Assistant Professor, Pharmacy Practice, was appointed to the editorial board of Clinical Medicine & Research.

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Jonathan Valla, Ph.D. (AZCOM), Department of Biochemistry, received notice of a subcontract award from Columbia University from the National Institutes of Health totaling $46,822 in direct and indirects for the period 9/30/10 through 6/30/12.

Volkmar Weissig, Sc.D., Ph.D. (CPG), Associate Professor, Pharmaceutical Sciences, received the Scientific Contribution Award at the First World Congress on Targeting Mitochondria: Strategies, Innovations and Clinical Applications held in Berlin, Germany on November 18th and 19th by the International Society of Antioxidants in Nutrition and Health (ISANH).

Lon J. Van Winkle, Ph.D. (CCOM), Department Chair, Biochemistry, presented a seminar entitled, “Amino Acid Transport Regulates Development of Mouse Blastocysts and the Embryonic Stem Cells Derived from Them,” at Illinois State University in February 2011.

Susan Winkler, Pharm.D., BCPS (CCP), Department Chair, Pharmacy Practice, served as a judge for the Clinical Skills competition at the American Society of Health System Pharmacists Annual Midyear Clinical Meeting, December 2010 in Anaheim, CA.

Joseph Zankovich, O.D., M.S., Adam Blacker, O.D., Balamurali Vasudevan, Ph.D., Scott Schatz, O.D., Ph.D. (AZCOPT), received funding in the amount of $20,000 from the American Optometric Foundation for their project “Optical Technology: Advanced Optical Technology Application.” The funding is for a two-year period.

PRESENTATIONS, SPEECHES, AND COMMUNITY SERVICE

Seema Briyal, Ph.D. (CCP), Research Associate, Anil Gulati, M.D., Ph.D. (CCP), Associate Dean, et al., presented the poster, “Endothelin-1 Levels and Markers of Oxidative Stress in Regional Atelectasis of the Lung,” at the 40th Critical Care Congress, January 2011 in San Diego, CA.

Kimberly A. Brown, Ph.D. (MWU), Director of Finance, presented “Examining the Impact of Established Financial Literacy Programs on Student’s Financial Decision-Making” at both the Noel-Levitz 2010 National Conference on Student Recruitment, Marketing and Retention in Atlanta, GA and the 2010 Annual Conference of the National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators in Denver, CO.

Jill Burkiewicz, Pharm.D., BCPS (CCP), Professor, Pharmacy Practice, presented “Postmenopausal Osteoporosis in Clinical Updates on Bone-Sparing Therapies for Cancer-Related Bone Disease and Osteoporosis” at the American Society of Health System Pharmacists Annual Midyear Clinical Meeting, December 2010 in Anaheim, CA.

Susan Cornell, Pharm.D. (CCP), Assistant Director, Experiential Education, et al., presented “Inpatient Hyperglycemia in Non-Critically Ill Patients: Challenges and Opportunities for Clinical Pharmacists Throughout Patient Stays” at the American Society of Health System Pharmacists Annual Midyear Clinical Meeting, December 2010 in Anaheim, CA. Dr. Cornell also presented “2010 CVD in Diabetes Pharmacotherapy Update, and “2010 Diabetes Pharmacotherapy Treatment Update” at the Walter Reed Army Hospital Diabetes Symposium for Nurses, November 2010 in Washington, DC.

Joshua R. Edwards, Ph.D. (CCOM), Assistant Professor, Pharmacology, participated in a panel discussion on the role of cadmium and other environmental contaminants in the development of diabetes at a National Toxicology Program workshop on the “Role of Environmental Chemicals in the Development of Diabetes and Obesity” in Raleigh, North Carolina in January.


Anil Gulati, M.D., Ph.D. (CCP), Associate Dean, presented “Modulation of Adrenergic Receptors by Endothelin–Therapeutic Implications” at the National Institute of Pharmaceutical Education and Research, December 2010 in Mohali Punjab, India. Dr. Gulati also presented “Market Hurdles and Global Drug Development” at the 39th Annual Meeting American College of Clinical Pharmacology, September 2010 in Baltimore, MD.

As part of the MWU Community Health Lectures Series, the following Glendale faculty have presented in 2011 at the Glendale Library-Foothills branch: Shefali Gandhi, Psy.D., (CHS-AZ), Assistant Professor, Clinical Psychology Program, Teaching Your Kids How to Deal with Bullies on January 18; David Jenkins, D.P.M., FACFAS, FAAPSM (AZPod/CHS-AZ), Professor, Podiatry, The Truth About Barefoot Running on February 15; Vladimir Yevseyenkov, O.D., Ph.D. (AZCOPT), Assistant Professor, Optometry, Road to Recovery: Vision Rehabilitation and You on March 15.

Kathy Komperda, Pharm.D., BCPS (CCP), Associate Professor, Pharmacy Practice, Jill Burkiewicz, Pharm.D., BCPS (CCP), Professor, Pharmacy Practice, et al., presented the poster, “Prescribing Patterns Before and After the Publication of Literature Describing a Potential Interaction Between Clopidogrel and Proton-pump Inhibitors” at the American Society of Health System Pharmacists Annual Midyear Clinical Meeting, December 2010 in Anaheim, CA.

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Ana Quiñones-Boex, Ph.D., M.S. (CCP), Associate Professor, Pharmacy Practice, presented “Quality Improvement in Pharmacy” at the University of Puerto Rico, School of Pharmacy Alumni Lecture Series, December 2010 in San Juan, PR.

Marc Scheetz, Pharm.D. (CCP), Assistant Professor, Pharmacy Practice, presented on the “Debates in Therapeutics-Vancomycin, When to Call it Quits” at the American Society of Health System Pharmacists Annual Midyear Clinical Meeting, December 2010 in Anaheim, CA. Dr. Scheetz also presented “Utilizing Antimicrobial PK/PD Principles in Practice: the Academic and Clinical Perspective” at the Society of Infectious Diseases Pharmacists in Boston, MA. During the Interscience Conference on Antimicrobial Agents and Chemotherapy 2010 meeting in Boston, MA, Dr. Scheetz was a session moderator for Therapeutic Drug Monitoring of Glycopeptides and Lipopeptides; a presenter, on “Effect of Vancomycin Dose and Treatment Duration on Renal Function”; and contributed the following poster presentations: “Host Model According to BlaOXA Gene and Outbreak Status;” “Genotype and Phenotype Comparison of Inpatient and Outpatient Collected Escherichia coli Isolates Producing Extended Spectrum Beta-Lactamases”; and “Modeling Outcomes of Antibiotic Therapy for Patients with β-Lactam Allergies.”

Midwestern University Earns EPA Conservation Award for Downers Grove Campus

Midwestern University’s Downers Grove Campus has been selected by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and Chicago Wilderness for a 2010 Conservation and Native Landscaping Award. The award recognizes the University’s exceptional restoration of 8.97 acres of wetlands and oak-hickory woods. The award cites a natural area on the north side of the Downers Grove Campus that is home to a variety of wildlife and includes a walking trail that winds its way through native trees, plants, and prairie grasses.

“We strongly believe in the importance of being good environmental stewards of our campus and providing our students with natural areas for recreation and reflection,” said Kathleen H. Goeppinger, Ph.D., President and CEO of Midwestern University. “Our students undertake a rigorous course of study and we feel that a beautiful, safe, and serene campus environment aids them on their journey to becoming future health professionals.”

The Conservation and Native Landscaping Awards specifically commended Midwestern University on restoring the natural communities’ health and sustaining biodiversity while providing a place for students to learn about the natural world. “The Conservation and Native Landscaping Awards are a celebration of conservation success: the recipients are inspiring examples of what can be done to restore and enhance the health of our local nature,” said Melinda Pruett-Jones, executive director of Chicago Wilderness.
Glendale Campus Anesthesia Simulation Lab Expanded

Students in Midwestern University’s Nurse Anesthesia master’s program in Glendale have more resources to help them prepare for their careers.

The expanded and upgraded Anesthesia Simulation Lab in Ocotillo Hall joins the Clinical Skills and Simulation Lab and the Dental Simulation Lab as one of the Glendale Campus’ high-tech skills preparation facilities. The Anesthesia Sim Lab features partial and full mannequins and simulator models to assist students in learning the proper techniques for delivery of safe anesthetics.

The most basic training equipment in the lab are the “Regional Trainers” – partial mannequins that represent sections of the human body such as arms, necks and shoulders, thoraxes, and thighs that allow students to practice techniques such as inserting arterial and central lines, nerve blocks, spinals, and epidurals.

More advanced equipment is available in four “pre-op” anesthesia stations that help approximate the variable equipment and facilities that are found out in the field. From the more basic apparatus of a potential rural environment to state-of-the-art workstations, each station helps students become better acclimated to the variety of experience that awaits them in the workplace.

For realism’s sake, the lab is fully plumbed with standard gas lines for oxygen and anesthetic gas delivery, requiring students to complete real-life equipment preparations prior to beginning work with their simulated patients.

The crown jewel of the new lab is an enclosed observation room mocked up as a surgical suite for student testing and environmental acclimation, and home to the program’s newest fully-automated simulated patient (nicknamed “Pat” by CRNA staff). “Pat,” acquired in September by the CRNA program, is a fully-immersive patient simulator mannequin that responds to stimuli and produces realistic human reactions, from noises to simulated breathing to body fluid secretions. The computers that operate “Pat” register the anesthetic drugs that students use via bar codes, and the software is able to determine the proper levels of anesthetic in the “patient’s” system and whether those levels are exceeded, giving students instant and true-to-life feedback on their techniques.

The students in Midwestern University’s CRNA program spend two hours per week in the new lab – one hour with faculty instruction and supervision, and one for individual practice. CRNA faculty members are also welcome to use the lab to keep current on the latest techniques and procedures in use in the field.
Midwestern University Recognized as “Healthiest Employer”

Midwestern University is in the business of educating tomorrow’s healthcare team, but this year the University is being recognized for keeping its faculty and staff healthy as well.

In January, the Phoenix Business Journal selected Midwestern University’s Glendale Campus as one of the Valley of the Sun’s Healthiest Employers for 2011, citing Midwestern’s “outstanding health and wellness program” and the University’s “innovative strategies” for maintaining a healthy workforce.

Amy Gibson, PHR, Director of Human Resources, Julie Cardinale, SPHR, Assistant Director of Human Resources, and Barbara Williams, PHR, Senior Human Resources Specialist, represented the University at the Healthiest Employers awards breakfast on February 24th. Midwestern University was also featured in a special section of the Phoenix Business Journal on February 25th.

“Midwestern University is committed to the health and wellness of its faculty and staff, as they teach and mentor the next generation of healthcare professionals,” remarked Kathleen H. Goeppinger, Ph.D., President & CEO of Midwestern University. “The University wellness program is unique as a comprehensive program that encourages all members of the community to establish individual goals and objectives.”

Midwestern University’s health and wellness programs are designed not only to promote employee health and serve as a positive example for health professions students, but to motivate employees to pursue their own well-being with enthusiasm. The University offers a health and wellness facility for all members of the MWU community that encourages them to find the right level of exercise, from handball courts to specialized fitness classes. Each member of the faculty and staff is encouraged to use a company-provided pedometer, track their steps daily, and earn cash awards based on the their level of activity, up to $300 annually. The University also conducts a quarterly survey that tracks overall health based on six dimensions of wellness and allows employees to earn extra vacation hours based on reaching their own personal goals. Health lectures, walking and biking clubs, and weight management programs on campus also help fulfill the wellness mission.

In addition to award-winning internal programs, Midwestern University also extends health and wellness efforts to the community at large. Midwestern University faculty members regularly present lectures and discussions for the monthly Community Health Lecture Series at the Foothills Library in Glendale. Midwestern University’s Glendale Campus is also the site of three specialty clinics that offer quality comprehensive medical care: the Midwestern University Multispecialty Clinic, the Midwestern University Dental Institute, and the newly-opened Midwestern University Eye Institute.

“The biggest reward to the comprehensive health and wellness program is the high level of participation, the enthusiasm, and the pride the faculty and staff take in being well,” continued Dr. Goeppinger. “Health and wellness programs are an important part of being part of the community. Success stories abound, from employees that barely walked from their car to the office now spend the lunch hour walking in groups on the University walking paths. Success stories include employees who take pride together in weight loss, those who quit smoking, are eating better and participate in book clubs. All of these amount to a big reward for happier and healthier faculty, staff and healthcare professional students.”

Kathleen H Goeppinger, Ph.D. Midwestern University President & CEO, unveils the Midwestern University “Wellness Cup” trophy at the Glendale Campus Wellness Breakfast in February.

Glendale students, staff, and faculty enjoy weekly yoga classes at Recreation & Wellness Hall.
Counseling Services Help Students Cope with Stress

Higher education can be a rewarding and fulfilling journey, but the road to enlightenment is sometimes filled with unexpected potholes, detours, and hazards. At times students can feel as though they are alone on that road, and the stresses and pressures of their disciplines may feel overwhelming.

Midwestern University’s Office of Students Services is prepared to come to students’ aid with a wide range of specialized counseling services from caring and invested faculty and staff.

Student anxiety is a primary focus on both campuses. Carrie Torgerson, LCSW, Assistant Dean, Student Services in Downers Grove, has developed a two-pronged approach to addressing student stressors. “In March, we ran one group that focused on study strategies and managing anxiety around exams,” explains Ms. Torgerson, “and the other group focused on relationships. We are trying to help our students maintain their lives outside of school and also transition from being students to being professionals.”

In Glendale, Judith DeLorme-Loftus, D.Min., Manager of Student Counseling, recently appealed to Midwestern University faculty and staff to be sensitive to students who need emotional support. Dr. DeLorme-Loftus held an in-service for faculty and staff to help them understand what resources are available for friends, peers, and loved ones of stressed students. “We do an orientation for the significant others of our students in June and August to help them understand the stressors their student may experience while here as well as some resources for them,” she says. “We have support groups throughout the year as needed, do faculty and staff presentations from time to time and are available to consult with faculty and staff regarding student concerns.”

Midwestern University’s Student Counseling Services are ready and willing to provide a helping hand to anyone needing anything from a sympathetic ear to significant counseling and emotional therapy.
Midwestern University Announces New Student Scholarships

Midwestern University recently announced two new scholarship opportunities for current students on both the Downers Grove, IL and Glendale, AZ campuses. The University will award a total of $250,000 for the 2010-2011 academic year in Need-Based and Financial Literacy Scholarships. The scholarship dollars will be split equally between the campuses.

Each campus will be able to offer 50 Need-Based Scholarships of $2,250 per student, for a total of $225,000 to students enrolled throughout each of the colleges and programs. Scholarships will be awarded to those students who demonstrate the highest financial need and who are additionally maintaining satisfactory academic progress.

In addition to meeting the same basic requirements, students wanting to apply for the Financial Literacy Scholarships will be required to submit a 500 word essay describing their efforts to minimize their educational debt, agree to allow their essay to be published, allow their names and photos to be used in promoting these efforts, and agree to participate in at least two events to share their knowledge and experience. For each campus, the University will award one $5,000 Financial Literacy Scholarship and three $2,500 scholarships for a total of $12,500 per campus.

The scholarships are funded by the proceeds from the Midwestern University’s school-as-lender loans. The University’s annual goal is to award between $150,000 and $300,000 in need-based aid from these proceeds. For several years, Midwestern University provided federal student loans through the school-as-lender program which has been discontinued due to federal legislative changes. More information about the two new scholarship programs is available from the Office of Student Financial Services.

Two Midwestern Faculty Members Lead Illinois Pharmacy Practice Organizations

By Damienne Souter, Assistant to the Dean, Chicago College of Pharmacy

Midwestern University’s Chicago College of Pharmacy (CCP) is proud to be leading pharmacy practice in the State of Illinois, as two of its faculty members are currently serving as presidents of the state’s top pharmacy associations. Susan Cornell, Pharm.D., CDE, FAPhA, FAADE, Assistant Director of the Office of Experiential Education, has begun her term as the 130th President of the Illinois Pharmacists’ Association, while Carrie Sincak, Pharm.D., BCPS, Vice Chair of Pharmacy Practice, has embarked on her year as the 47th President of the Illinois Council of Health System Pharmacists.

Both Drs. Cornell and Sincak are assuming leadership in a period of great change. In March of 2010, new healthcare reform legislation was passed that will require the profession to create new pharmacy practice models. According to Dr. Sincak, “Safety and quality will play an even more important role. As such, we can help define and mold the practice model to promote our value, allow innovative practices to be identified, build credibility by manifesting our commitment and involvement in healthcare reform, obtain provider status, as well as focus on quality and safety in high-risk, high-cost, and complex medication therapy plans. Our profession should be recognized as essential providers of these healthcare services.”

Dr. Cornell also sees the role of the pharmacist evolving and expanding. “Pharmacists are working in many different settings, not just in community pharmacy or hospitals as in years past. It is important for the association to reach and serve pharmacists in all practice settings. The Illinois Pharmacists Association must be an inclusive organization, not exclusive. It is time to grow the diversity of where our members practice.”

CCP faculty members Dr. Carrie Sincak (left), President of ICHP, and Dr. Susan Cornell, President of IPhA (right), work together to enhance the pharmacy profession in the State of Illinois.
Midwestern University Occupational Therapy and Physical Therapy students and faculty were treated to an affecting and entertaining presentation from noted disability expert Gary Karp on February 17th, courtesy of the Christopher and Dana Reeve Foundation’s Paralysis Resource Center.

Since sustaining a T12/L1 spinal fracture in 1973, Mr. Karp has become a leader in disability outreach with the Reeve Foundation, focusing on educating professionals at rehabilitation centers and students learning to work with trauma victims about helping those victims achieve an optimal quality of life.

Relating his own experience of losing his lower body function at age 18 after falling 25 feet from a tree, Mr. Karp spoke of the process that he went through to accept his imposed physical limitations and transition to a healthier mindset. The first step on that journey, he said, was facilitated by his family and his support network during 13 weeks of grueling rehabilitation. "(Disability) doesn’t just happen to one person," he said, "it happens to widening circles of people."

Mr. Karp addressed the idea that he had to change his mindset from a “walking mind,” which maintained the open possibility that his situation was only temporary, to a “wheeling mind” – the paradigm that accepted his situation as permanent and shifted his mental focus to living the fullest possible life within the circumstances with which he lived. It is, he said, a “poignant coexistence of belief and hope and acceptance of reality.”

"We are adaptive beings," continued Mr. Karp. "What my fears and doubts tell me is not necessarily what is going to happen."

To the assembled students, Mr. Karp stressed the “collaborative, trusted partnership” between rehabilitation professionals and people with disability, calling the rehabilitation process one of “reemergence.” “Disability is not a determining factor,” he explained. Rather, people’s personalities and the adjustments they make to their condition are the critical aspects. “People’s biggest fear is that they will be treated as ‘damaged goods.’ In reality, they are just like you and me. They want to be treated as the same person they were before.”

Therefore, Mr. Karp said, a caregiver should focus on helping disabled persons to aspire to be the “most optimal” that they can be at every step of the rehabilitation process, allowing them to achieve the greatest level of independence possible.

An accomplished author of four books, a popular speaker, corporate trainer, and even a juggler, Gary Karp emphasized a positive and uplifting outlook for those living with disabilities as well as those who work with them. “We need to meet people where they are,” he said, “and allow them to be who they are in the moment.”

Gary Karp, a lecturer from the Christopher & Dana Reeve Foundation’s Paralysis Resource Center, shared an inspiring message with Midwestern University students and faculty. (Photo: www.charlesamuels.com)
In 1991, the Midwestern University Chicago College of Pharmacy (CCP) founded with a mission to educate highly competent and motivated pharmacists who are responsive to patients’ needs for pharmaceutical care.

“I have such real, fond memories of the beginning of CCP because I was on the Board of Trustees and sat there debating whether we were ready to diversify into pharmacy,” said Kathleen H. Goeppinger, Ph.D., President & CEO of Midwestern University, at the College’s anniversary kickoff event in January. “And here we are 20 years later, celebrating one of the most wonderful colleges in the country when it comes to pharmacy. We have the strongest faculty, impressive research, significant grants, and fabulous graduates all over the state and the entire country serving the profession in honorable, wonderful ways because they were part of CCP.”

In the fall of 1992, the first class of 109 pharmacy students began their studies leading to a Bachelor of Pharmacy degree. This first group of students was a key component in shaping the curriculum for the classes that followed. Robert Chapman, Ph.D., one of the founding faculty members, remembers this class fondly. “These first students were both leaders and risk-takers,” he said. “While we had a strong osteopathic medical school on campus at the time, we could not guarantee that our program would be accredited upon these students’ graduation.” While this is the norm for a new college curriculum, these entering students saw this as their responsibility to put CCP on the map and ensure its success.

Led by then students Sheri Stensland, Timothy Todd (both are now CCP faculty members), and Roman Dobek, this first entering class earned a prestigious grant from Merck to teach cardiopulmonary resuscitation to fellow pharmacy students. This is now a required part of the curriculum. This group of students also worked with pharmacy leaders in developing the APhA Academy of Student Pharmacists.

These first students attended lectures in the basement of a building no longer in existence; and faculty had to wheel their lab equipment across campus for each lab demonstration. The library was also in a basement. In spite of these beginnings, CCP flourished.

As Dr. Chapman put it, “We had places to do things. Now we just have far better places and ways to do things.” The campus has changed tremendously. Accreditation was earned upon graduation of the first class of 1995. Several new buildings have been built, and technology has enhanced the ability of the College to encourage leadership in the pharmacy profession.

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Twenty years may not seem to be a significant milestone to celebrate considering Midwestern University’s founding college, the Chicago College of Osteopathic Medicine, is more than 100 years old. However, given the enormous amount of change in this 20-year span, it is particularly fitting.

“The College has achieved so much in the past twenty years, it is time to set aside some time to reflect on our achievements and to look ahead to the next twenty years,” comments Nancy Fjortoft, Ph.D., Dean of the Chicago College of Pharmacy. “The College will continue to grow in terms of its national reputation, through the work of its faculty, alumni, and students. Curricular innovation will continue, and the use of more technology will be embedded in our activities. The one thing we will not change is our focus on teaching and providing our students with an educational experience that serves as a foundation for the rest of their professional lives.”

AZCOM Hosts National Convention for Osteopathic Surgical Students

On March 4 and 5, 2011, Midwestern University’s Arizona College of Osteopathic Medicine (AZCOM) hosted over 100 students representing osteopathic medical schools around the nation at the annual National Student Osteopathic Surgical Association (SOSA) Convention.

The convention consisted of two days of lectures, discussions, networking, and demonstrations that helped educate aspiring osteopathic surgeons in proper techniques and procedures. Highlights of the convention included a keynote address from James McQuiston, D.O., FACOS, President of the American College of Osteopathic Surgeons, as well as an address from Midwestern University’s Lori Kemper, D.O., FACOFP, Dean, AZCOM.

Day one of the convention was dedicated to lectures and discussions regarding various surgical specialties such as neurosurgery, trauma, pediatric surgery, and cardiovascular surgery. A special Residency Director Panel was also held to educate students and answer questions about surgical rotations and residencies.

On the second day, attendees were treated to a five-hour block of intriguing simulation exercises divided between simulation labs in Ocotillo Hall and the Clinical Skills and Simulation Center in Mesquite Hall. Students got exposure to and practice with procedures such as suturing, cardiac bypass defibrillation, anesthesia, and surgical crisis management.

The Student Osteopathic Surgical Association (SOSA) is the official students’ section of the American College of Osteopathic Surgeons (ACOS). Their annual spring convention’s purpose is to provide students with both the didactic and clinical skills necessary to excel in surgical rotations and to provide them with the knowledge necessary to be competitive applicants for surgical residencies.
Midwestern University welcomed some of Arizona’s top high school students for the annual Arizona Regional Brain Bee, an educational competition similar to a spelling bee that focuses on neuroscience.

Seventy-nine students from thirteen Arizona preparatory and high schools, some of whom came to the Brain Bee from as far away as Kingman, Arizona, converged on Cholla Hall to test their knowledge of the human brain, how it governs human behavior, and the science that helps medical professionals understand brain function. It was the largest turnout for the Brain Bee since Midwestern University began hosting it in 1999.

Midwestern University faculty and students served as judges, question readers, timers, and scorekeepers for the Brain Bee, using the book Brain Facts, published by the Society for Neuroscience, as the source text. Questions ran the gamut from identifying physical features of the brain itself to naming brain disorders and diseases to surgical and medical practices that modify neural behaviors.

The top three Brain Bee finishers, in order, were Kim Artounian (Desert Mountain High School), Brandon Djaja (Desert Vista High School), and Tay Coben (Rancho Solano High School). Rancho Solano High School and Desert Vista High School tied for first place in the team standings and won the coveted “Brain Caps” – hats which feature accurately-positioned maps of the brain where the hat sits on the wearer’s head.

For her performance in the Brain Bee, Ms. Artounian won a $2,000 scholarship towards tuition in any Midwestern University program at either campus, as well as free round trip airfare for two and $500 for expenses to help her as she competes at the National Brain Bee in Washington, D.C.

An impressive 21 of the 79 students made it to the final round of competition at this year’s Brain Bee. All participants received certificates of participation as well as Brain Bee T-shirts. Special guests at the Brain Bee included Janell Daquilante from Wells Fargo, the Brain Bee’s presenting sponsor, and Otilia Husu, who followed her wins in the 1999 and 2000 Arizona Regional Brain Bees and the 2000 National Brain Bee with a master’s degree in Midwestern University’s Physician Assistant program in 2007.
FutureforKIDS Program Teaches Glendale Dental Students Value of Service

By Katherine McConnell, DMS-II, CDMA

Spearheaded by Robert Kramer, D.M.D., Assistant Professor, Dental Medicine, second-year dental students from Midwestern University’s College of Dental Medicine-Arizona are immersed in community service with oral health presentations at local grade schools. Some students are taking this experience further by donating their time and skills with FutureforKIDS, a charitable organization working to provide safe, after-school environments for at-risk children in the greater Phoenix area.

Midwestern University’s dedication to the community is evident. The school hosts countless events promoting health awareness in the community, from the Diabetes Walk to DOCARE missions to Guatemala. The University creates an environment where students can use the skills that they have mastered in class to make a difference in the community. Midwestern University inspired me to help develop and grow the University’s relationship with FutureforKIDS. FutureforKIDS program coordinator Nanna Farrell, Dr. Kramer, and I hope to help over 100 children by the end of our first year together.

Over a dozen first- and second-year dental students have joined forces to help teach children basic oral hygiene skills: how to avoid cavities, the importance of teeth, and development of good oral hygiene habits. The students employ a multi-factorial approach, utilizing slideshows, models, and hands-on activities. The kids, ages 6-12, are provided with toothbrushes, floss, and toothpaste donated by Midwestern University. Many of the children have not had access to some or all of these products. Many have never been to the dentist.

It is easy to see how the children are helped, but equally important is the impact of service on those who volunteer. Bradley Robinson, a second-year dental student wrote, “I had a great time, and especially love to work with youth. I’ve worked with several different organizations trying to make a difference in the life of young kids, and I love the potential they all see in each child. FutureforKIDS is a great example of that! Sometimes when we don’t think we’re making a big difference, one of the kids comes up to us and tells us just how grateful they are we care. That’s what makes it all worth it.” Many of the other volunteers share similar feelings.

On a personal level, I know this service opportunity means a lot to me. I have participated in many types of volunteer programs, from river cleanups to building roofs for houses. Even at places where I have volunteered for years, I never before appreciated how much work goes in to arranging such programs and events. Coordinating schedules has proven to be a tricky affair. One day we found out there was an emergency in the building we were heading to and the program was cancelled for the day. We received word only when we were almost halfway there! Thank goodness for modern technology. One day I had four second-year dental students drop out because we were held late in class. Luckily, the first-year class more than filled the gap. All of my experiences managing this program have taught me that the most important aspect to volunteering is teamwork.

In Dental Ethics, David Rolf, D.D.S., M.S., Associate Professor, Dental Medicine, teaches the second-year class that dentists cannot do everything on their own. Dentists rely on other doctors, specialists, their patients, and staff to provide the best possible patient outcomes. The same holds true volunteering with FutureforKIDS. There is no way this program could have been successful if not for the wonderful individuals generously sharing their time, knowledge, and patience.

From left to right: Second-year College of Dental Medicine-Arizona students Katherine McConnell, Susan Sergie, Perry Joiner, and Robert Kramer, D.M.D., Assistant Professor, College of Dental Medicine-Arizona, serve as dental volunteers with the FutureforKIDS program.
Biomed Students Give Thanks by Giving to Others through Medical Mission

What are the things you think of when you think of Thanksgiving? Turkey with all the trimmings? Spending time with family? Football on TV?

How about a trip to Peru to work with local clinics and orphanages?

It may have not been the traditional method of celebrating the Thanksgiving holiday, but seven Midwestern University second-year students from the College of Health Sciences-Arizona Biomedical Sciences program lived up to the holiday spirit when they traveled to the South American nation on a medical mission over the Thanksgiving break.

The students – Diane Bejerano, Brittany Boger, Allison Burrows, Tommy Cervone, Amanda Gunn, Peter Lewis, and Kaitlin Steffenhagen – organized and planned the trip themselves. Impressed and inspired by Midwestern’s work with DOCARE International and the annual medical missions to Guatemala, the students arranged for a medical placement mission of their own in the city of Cusco, Peru, through International Volunteer HQ.

The students booked a two-week program during MWU’s Thanksgiving break, spending one week observing and assisting at local clinics in groups of two, followed by a week spent assisting at a local orphanage.

During their week of clinic observation, the students looked for ways to assist the local doctors, including cutting gauze, checking vital signs, performing lab work, and weighing babies. At the orphanages, the students helped with parasite treatments and gave advice on nutrition, personal hygiene, and dental care. The students’ goal was to shoulder as much of the workload as they could for the local physicians. “We went there to be their hands,” said Brittany Boger, who helped to arrange the trip through IVHQ.

The students were struck by the compromises that the local clinics had to make in terms of patient care, as well as the unexpected afflictions suffered by those who lived in the region – for example, the prevalence of skin sun-spots because of the extreme altitude at which the Peruvians live. “It is a radically different medical environment there,” Kaitlin Steffenhagen remarked. “We came away with a real appreciation of what we take for granted here.”

It was a memorable trip – from 13 people sharing accommodations with a single host family to traveling to the famed ruins at Machu Picchu to bonding with native children at a group birthday party.

Though their Thanksgiving break certainly was not traditional, the students fully embraced the spirit of the holiday through their service.
H.O.M.E. is Where the Heart is

By Stephanie Schulz, MS-II

An initiative by service-minded Midwestern University students is making a difference in the greater Phoenix area for underserved members of the community. Health Outreach through Medicine and Education (H.O.M.E.) was founded in 1999 by a proactive group of compassionate student doctors from the Arizona College of Osteopathic Medicine (AZCOM) at Midwestern’s Glendale Campus.

H.O.M.E.’s mission is two-fold. Our first objective is to provide medical services and education by hosting clinics at various homeless shelters located throughout Phoenix – including CASS, UMOM New Day Center, and Vista Colina Emergency Family Shelter – several evenings per month. Secondly, we aim to furnish Midwestern University’s medical students and other healthcare professional students with an opportunity to serve their community while simultaneously benefiting from early clinical exposure. Medical, pharmacy, podiatry, and Physician Assistant student volunteers attend the numerous night clinics at the various shelters. Dental, optometry, and biomedical science students are also involved in H.O.M.E., participating in the group’s health fairs and educational workshops.

Each clinic night is supervised by a physician volunteering his or her time and knowledge to serve the community and mentor the students. Practitioners of the other disciplines also attend to supervise their students, creating an interdisciplinary environment which enhances both the students’ learning and the patients’ quality of care.

The clinic nights consist of first-year students partnering with more experienced students to take patient histories and perform focused physicals. The students then present to the supervising physician, who guides them in forming an assessment and plan while sharing clinical pearls. This educational experience has proved invaluable to the students, particularly those first-year students preparing for upcoming rotations. This experience is often augmented by discussion amongst the specialties; for example, information is often shared about which medication would be best prescribed. Each of the clinics has a sizeable variety of medications for acute conditions and simple diagnostic tools available for the physicians to utilize based on patient need.

Since its inception, H.O.M.E. has continuously strived to enhance its ability to improve the health and well-being of our neighbors. As our resources increase so will our ability to care for a greater population in need. Recent improvements include the addition of more clinic nights, of which several are dedicated primarily to providing osteopathic manipulative therapy. In addition, H.O.M.E. is committed to furthering the movement of preventative medicine. To that end, we have been working to educate those residing at the shelters via workshops, health fairs, brochures, and screenings.

H.O.M.E. has always enjoyed the eager support and volunteerism of Midwestern University’s students, due in large part to the caring nature of the student body and the profound benefit that clinical experience brings to those who participate. Our 83 clinic nights this school year will allow approximately 850 students to help around 830 patients. Typically the only limiting factor is the availability of physicians to volunteer. Currently, we enjoy the dedication of about 20 physicians and a few pharmacists, podiatrists, and physician assistants. If you are a primary care physician interested in serving the homeless and helping to further the education of some of Phoenix’s future healthcare professionals, please contact the H.O.M.E. coordinators at coordinator@mwuhome.org.
AZCOPT Lemons 4 Literacy Program Helps Ripen Young Minds with Books

By Nick Gubler, OS-II, AZCOPT

Children across the Valley will soon start benefiting more fully from the citrus trees that surround the Midwestern University Dental and Eye Institutes. The grove of lemon and orange trees blooms in fall and fruit is ready for picking at the end of January.

Students from Midwestern University’s Arizona College of Optometry in Glendale decided that a good use for the ripening fruit would be to help promote literacy for kids across the Valley and throughout Arizona. Thus was born the Lemons 4 Literacy program, as AZCOPT students served fresh, “homemade” lemonade to students and faculty for free in the Glendale Campus cafeteria in the hopes of securing donations for the Arizona Learning and Literacy Center (ALLC) in Phoenix.

The ALLC (www.azlit.org) is dedicated to helping improve literacy in Arizona through comprehensive, research-based screenings, and diagnosis and treatment for individuals with language-based learning disorders and auditory processing disorders.

On February 3rd, students and faculty filed into the cafeteria to enjoy a taste of the fresh citrus juice, speak with AZCOPT students, and share their generosity with Phoenix’s kids. At the end of the day, enough money was raised to buy several children books, which will be donated to the ALLC later this year.

First-year Arizona College of Optometry (AZCOPT) students (back row, left to right) Reema Chokshi, Lizzy Lyon, Natasha Balani, Sheree Fetken and (front row) Rozaliya Shiminova participate in AZCOPT’s Lemons 4 Literacy fundraiser on February 3rd.

Wheelchair Basketball Tournament Nets Support for Local Team

Basketball players of all abilities had the opportunity to test their skills from a wheelchair as part of a tournament sponsored by the Student Occupational Therapy Association (SOTA) on March 26 in the Wellness Center gym on the Downers Grove Campus.

Student teams played in specialized wheelchairs as a way to gain a better understanding of the challenges and physical demands people with disabilities face on a daily basis. The event raised funds for the Windy City Warriors Wheelchair team which are a part of the Western DuPage Special Recreation Association (WDSRA). For the past 10 years, the Windy City Warriors have been at the top of their game in wheelchair basketball earning a conference championship last year. The WDSRA serves more than 8,000 people of all ages with disabilities in over 1,000 annual recreation programs.
The important role Occupational Therapists (OTs) play in promoting health and wellness was the theme of a recent information fair on the Downers Grove Campus. Occupational therapists are trained to provide treatment and services that help individuals of all ages – infants to elderly – regain, develop, or master everyday skills so they may live independent, productive, and satisfying lives.

The fair allowed OT students enrolled in the course, "Work Rehabilitation and Health Promotion" the opportunity to research and present information to the University community. The students presented on a wide range of topics including stress management, dancing as a way to prevent dementia, office exercises for computer users, children’s nutrition, and many more topics designed to keep people healthy.

Second year OT students, Teddy Hsu and Karina Jensen did their presentation on the benefits of therapeutic laughter and the use of humor when treating clients. “Humor brings people together and it can create a bond between a therapist and their client,” Mr. Hsu said. “Humor also increases communication because when you use humor people tend to listen more because it’s non-threatening, fun, and captures their attention. So, you can use humor with a client who is noncompliant about following a home exercise program as a way to engage him and help him be more willing to do the activity,” he added.

Students who presented at the fair received written feedback from visitors at the event on their displays and knowledge of their topics.
Student Physical Therapy Organization Hosts First Winter Olympics

Midwestern University’s Student Physical Therapy Organization (SPTO) hosted their first Winter Olympics event on Saturday, December 4, 2010 on the Downers Grove Campus.

The event was created as a fundraiser for the Marquette Challenge, which supports physical therapy research through the Foundation for Physical Therapy. The SPTO was created at the beginning of the 2010-2011 academic year as a way for all three PT classes to work together to enhance their professional development. As a new member of the College of Health Science (CHS) council, the group wanted to host a campus wide event to introduce their club and help unify the various programs.

Teams consisted of five to eight players, and the cost to play was $5 per player. Participants included: Physical Therapy, Occupational Therapy, Pharmacy, Physician Assistant, and one faculty/staff team.

The Winter Olympics started off with a week-long food drive competition to benefit the Illinois Food Pantry. The team who brought in the most food started the event with a significant advantage. The Olympic games consisted of basketball hot shot, soccer shoot out, wallyball, bags, guitar hero, and dodge ball. Each team participated in each event and accumulated points throughout the day.

At the end of the day, the gold medal went to a second-year PT team: “Who dat Tryin to Get Up in My Crew.” There was also an award for the silver and bronze medal teams, as well as best team name, best team costume, best team spirit, and an overall MVP. The event was a huge success, and the SPTO was able to donate over 200 items to the food pantry.

MWU Lends a Hand at St. James Food Pantry

On January 15, Midwestern University’s APhA-ASP chapter on the Downers Grove Campus extended helpful hands to the St. James Food Pantry in Chicago. Pharmacy students supported public health by performing diabetes screening and blood pressure readings. If anyone was newly diagnosed with diabetes or wanted to learn more on diabetes nutrition, the Collaborative Health Advocate Team (CHAT) was there to inform the public on these issues. The College of Dental Medicine-Illinois also participated in the event by promoting proper dental hygiene and handing out free toothbrushes to the public. In addition, Midwestern University students served this community by preparing bags of food for the food pantry which occurs monthly.
Six Midwestern University College of Dental Medicine-Arizona (CDMA) students attended Dental Day at the State Capitol on February 16 to meet one-on-one with state legislators and express their opinions on legislation affecting access to care, oral health and dental practice issues. From left to right: Timothy Murphy (DMS-II); Elizabeth Coleman (DMS-II); Christen Musuraca (DMS-II); Jaclyn Rivera (DMS-II); Tanner Wallace (DMS-I); Bradley Romsa (DMS-III).

According to final weather reports, 24 inches of snow fell during the blizzard of 2011 resulting in a one-day closure of campus. Many faculty, staff, and students spent the day digging out their cars, shoveling a path to their front doors, or just enjoying the snow. The Campus Facilities team worked around the clock to clear the roads and make the campus safe when classes resumed.

Bobbi Newell, Clinical Education Coordinator, poses with a plant she reclaimed from the construction site at Barrell Student Center II. Plants in the construction zone were offered to faculty and staff free of charge.

Construction crews work between Barrell Student Center II and III on the Glendale Campus cafeteria expansion and renovation.

The finishing touches were put on a new student dining room in The Commons over Spring Break. The improved dining room features additional seating, cozy booths, and an outdoor deck.

The Student Service Office recently moved into their new, expanded offices on the main floor of The Commons. The new offices are located between the Bookstore and the dining room.