Congratulations Class of 2017!

The University of Illinois College of Medicine Rockford hosted its Convocation for the Class of 2017 on Saturday, May 6, at the Coronado Performing Arts Center in Rockford, Ill. Alex Stagner-Brown, MD, MPH, regional dean and professor of medicine, obstetrics & gynecology and medical education at University of Illinois College of Medicine Rockford, provided opening remarks.

P. Mona Khanna, MD '91, was the alumni speaker. She is TV’s “Dr. Mona,” an Emmy-winning medical reporter and correspondent who worked in markets such as Chicago, Dallas-Fort Worth and Palm Springs and has appeared on many national network shows. She is also the expert behind the “Ask Dr. Mona” newspaper column. Her passion for health literacy and her humanitarian work in medical missions and disaster medicine around the globe have earned her more than 50 awards, including the 2016 Ellis Island Medal of Honor.

Also speaking was Larry Tobacman, MD, a physician-scientist and educator, with responsibilities as the senior associate dean for research at the University of Illinois College of Medicine, founding director of UIUC’s NHR-supported Medical Scientist Training Program, one of the two co-directors of UIUC’s Center for Clinical and Translational Science, and professor of medicine and of physiology & biophysics. Additionally, the Class of 2017 chose Glendon Burness, MD, as their faculty speaker. Dr. Burness is a clinical assistant professor in the department of pediatrics and specializes in pediatric gastrointestinal endoscopy at Rockford Health Physicians. He is a graduate of the University of Illinois College of Medicine Peoria and completed his residency and fellowship at the University of Chicago Hospital.

The College of Medicine Rockford bestowed the medical degree on 55 graduating students who will be entering 19 different specialties across 20 states. A number of these students were recognized with honors and awards. A national medical honor society, the Alpha Omega Alpha (AOA) Honor Medical Society, was founded at the University of Illinois College of Medicine in 1902. Its purpose is to recognize and perpetuate excellence in the medical profession. Members are elected on the basis of scholarship, personal character and potential leadership. The following students were elected to AOA:

- Craig W. Forthoefel*
- Matthew J. Sarna
- Johnny R. Lindquist, III
- Vincent C. Spears

Students who have demonstrated outstanding academic achievement earn the distinction of Graduation with Honors. Honors graduates are selected college-wide based on academic performance throughout their four years of medical school. The students below achieved such recognition:

- Kelsey L. Davitt
- Craig W. Forthoefel
- Sonali Khurana
- Anthony L. Logli
- Paige E. Love

Students selected for membership in the Gold Humanism Honor Society exhibit outstanding humanism in medicine and integrity as medical students. The Gold Foundation defines humanism as “encompassing those attitudes and behaviors that emanate from a deep sensitivity and respect for others.” Congratulations to the members of the Class of 2017 who have achieved this selection:

- Sarah M. M. Bunch
- Anthony L. Logli
- Marco A. Martinez
- Vanessa L. Nienhouse

- Jenny R. Schmidt
- Santiago Tovar
- Benjamin R. Weger
- Lawrence L. Yen

The Granville A. Bennett Award was presented to Santiago Tovar. The student body established this award in 1966 in the name of Dr. Granville A. Bennett, professor of pathology, who served with distinction as dean of the College of Medicine. The award is presented to a senior student who has made significant contributions to medical education.

Mitchell E. Daugherty received the Dr. Gary Button Rural Primary Care Medicine Award. This award is named in memory of Dr. Gary Button, a graduate of the College of Medicine and family practice residency program in Rockford. Dr. Button was a well-known family physician in Harvard, Illinois, and a faculty member in the department of family and community medicine and the Rural Medical Education (RMed) program. The award is given to a student who exhibits the qualities and characteristics of Dr. Button, is dedicated to a career in primary care, and committed to practicing in a rural community.

The Dr. Assir Daniel DaSilva Scholarship, established in memory of Dr. Assir Daniel DaSilva, a Class of 2000 College of Medicine Rockford graduate who was killed while doing an international elective in Brazil his senior year, was given to Sarah M. M. Bunch and Alex C. F. Yeung. Both exemplify DaSilva’s outgoing personality and sense of humor, intellectual curiosity, dedication to medicine, sensitivity to patients, and his appreciation for diversity.

LARRY L. DAVITT was the recipient of the Gordon W. Hall Scholarship. This scholarship is a one-time contribution given to a student who is a current employee, or descendent of a current employee, of UTC Aerospace Systems in Rockford, IL (formerly Hamilton Sundstrand). Dr. Hall was the child of a single mother who received a scholarship from Hamilton Sundstrand which made it possible for him to afford a college education. The scholarship was his way of giving back to the community and company that helped him get his professional career started. Prior to retirement, Dr. Hall served on the medical staff at Rockford Memorial Hospital and on the faculty of the University of Illinois College of Medicine Rockford.

Benjamin R. Weger was the recipient of the award established in memory of Dr. Glenn Netto, a class of 1980 College of Medicine Rockford graduate who loved teaching medical students and served in various roles at the Rockford campus. Weger is a compassionate and motivated individual who embodies the attributes Dr. Netto felt were important in being a great physician, a community servant, a life-long learner, an excellent educator, and a great listener. This award is given to a senior who is dedicated to a career in a primary care field.

The Kathy A. Norman scholarship is a one-time award in memory of Kathy A. Norman, who was an employee of the college, serving first as the academic skills specialist and then the assistant dean of student and alumni affairs. The award was given to Sybil L. Agui. This award is granted to a student who displays academic excellence with career goals that reflect Ms. Norman’s interest in helping the underserved.

Continued on page 2
The James E. Rebel Award, presented in memory of James E. Rebel, a member of the Charter College of Medicine Rockford class, who died following an automobile accident during his senior year, was presented to Santiago Tovar, MD. Bunch, chosen by the senior class, exemplifies Rebel’s personal characteristics of dedication and enthusiasm for learning medicine and personal sensitivity towards patients, fellow students, and others.

Matthew J. Sarna was given the Tom C. Reeves Memorial Award, established in memory of Tom C. Reeves, who died in his sophomore year of medical school. This award recognizes an outstanding classmate who demonstrates promise for excellence in the medical profession.

The Winnebago County Medical Society Award was presented to Belinda E. Daniel. This award is in recognition of a student’s demonstrated desire and ability to integrate patient care with community service, and interest in taking an active role in organized medicine.

Department awards were also given. For family medicine, the Dr. L.P. Johnson Scholarship was presented to Philip Carlson-Dexter. This scholarship, in honor of Dr. LeBaron Paul Johnson, is presented to a fourth-year medical student at the College of Medicine Rockford who, during the second and third years of study, showed interest and achievement in family medicine.

Sonali Khurana was the recipient of the Outstanding Performance on Medicine Clerkship Award.

Jonathan S. Aubry was the recipient of the Excellence in Obstetrics and Gynecology Award, in the department of obstetrics & gynecology, was presented to Marco A. Martinez for excellence in the field of obstetrics and gynecology.

In the department of pathology, the David Mortimer Olkon Scholarship was presented to Adam J. Lake, in memory of Dr. David Mortimer Olkon. Alina M. Winans and Santiago Tovar were the recipients of the surgery department’s Excellence in Medicine Award for excellence in the field of emergency medicine.

Kelsey L. Davitt received the Outstanding Performance on the Surgery Clerkship award.

Johnny R. Lindquist, III received the Best Performance Among Students Choosing a Surgical Career, which recognizes a senior who is choosing a surgical specialty, for outstanding performance on the surgery clerkship.

Santiago Tovar received the Urban Health Program’s Servant Leadership Award.

Sarah M. M. Bunch was the recipient of the Urban Health Program’s Student Achievement Award.

The Excellence in Obstetrics and Gynecology Award, continued from page 1
The University of Illinois College of Medicine Rockford wrapped up its successful Bringing Docs to the Rock: Today’s Students, Tomorrow’s Doctors capital campaign. Since the campaign launched in October, the College has raised over $1.5 million thanks to the generosity of its healthcare partners, community organizations, alumni, faculty, staff and friends.

Renovations to existing campus spaces are well underway to develop new M1 learning classrooms, including a gross anatomy lab and team-based learning classroom, with construction to be completed by the August arrival of our first-year medical students. Additionally, seven of eight phenomenal basic science educators have been hired and are working hard to finalize the details of the new, innovative basic sciences curriculum. There’s an overwhelming sense of excitement on campus in preparation for this new chapter in the College’s history.

Gifts to the UI-COMR M1 Expansion Fund will still be accepted through the arrival of the first-year medical students. For more information on how you can help advance the future of medicine in Rockford through a campaign gift, please contact Laura Knight, director of development, at (815) 395-5921 or lewilhe@uic.edu.
Dennis Norem, MD, ’79, was elected vice speaker of the Illinois State Medical Society (ISMS) during its 2017 annual meeting. Dr. Norem received his medical degree from the University of Illinois College of Medicine Rockford and then completed residency at Illinois Masonic Medical Center. Dr. Norem is board-certified in internal medicine and serves on the medical staff at Rockford Health Physicians, consults at Van Matre Rehabilitation Hospital and is a certified wound specialist at the OSF Saint Francis Wound Care Center. He is also a clinical assistant professor of medicine at the University of Illinois College of Medicine Rockford.

A member of ISMS since 1982, Dr. Norem has previously served as an ISMS trustee. He is a member of the Board of Directors of the Winnebago County Medical Society as well as a member of the American Medical Association, the Rockford Regional Health Council and the Association for the Advancement of Wound Care. He received the Community Leader Impact Award from the Rockford Regional Health Council in December.

Bill Gorski, MD, Flex ’80, retired July 1 after 16 years as president and chief executive officer of Rockford, Ill.-based SwedishAmerican Health System, a Division of UW Health. Recently named one of the top 110 physician leaders of hospitals and health systems by Becker’s Hospital Review, Dr. Gorski guided SwedishAmerican through a major expansion effort that included a new heart hospital and regional cancer center in Rockford; a new medical center in Belvidere, Ill.; and a merger with Madison, Wis.-based UW Health. After graduating from the University of Cincinnati College of Medicine, he entered the University of Illinois College of Medicine Rockford (UI-COMR) Family Medicine Residency Program. He remained in Rockford practicing at SwedishAmerican Main Pointe and then became president of the primary care group in 1994 and later the organization’s chief medical officer. He is board-certified in family practice and a member of the American Academy of Family Physicians and the American College of Physician Executives. He’s been a clinical instructor in the UI-COMR department of family medicine and has been instrumental in maintaining a strong partnership between Swedish-American and the medical school.

Gregory O. Meyer, MD, ’87, MSPH ’82, MD(h), CCH, recently self-published a book, Arizona Places: otherwise and fabulously, featuring his own photography of the state he’s called home since 1987. Dr. Meyer completed a master’s degree in public health epidemiology before enrolling in the University of Illinois College of Medicine Rockford. He then completed a residency in internal medicine at St. Joseph’s Medical Center in Phoenix, Arizona, and is board-certified in internal medicine and urgent care medicine. He is an urgent care physician for Cigna Healthcare in Phoenix and teaches medical students from the University of Arizona and Midwestern University. A 2008 graduate of the American Medical College of Homeopathy, he also maintains a homeopathic practice.

Mark Barba, MD, ’91, FAANS, is an orthopaedic surgeon specializing in hip and knee replacement at OrthoIllinois in Rockford. After graduating from the University of Illinois College of Medicine Rockford, he completed an orthopedic surgery residency at Wayne State University and then a joint replacement and research fellowship at the Mayo Graduate School of Medicine. He is board-certified in orthopaedic surgery and is a fellow of the American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons. Dr. Barba is also a clinical assistant professor of both surgery and biomedical sciences at the College of Medicine Rockford where he is active in teaching medical students and conducting research to progress the science of joint replacement. Dr. Mark Barba recently presented a free public lecture on painless joint replacement as part of the College of Medicine Rockford’s Community Seminar Series.

P. Mona Khanna, MD, ’91, MPH, MRD, FACOG, FACOGM, QME, provided the alumni address to the graduates of the College of Medicine Rockford Class of 2017. “Dr. Mona,” as she is known, currently serves as medical director of occupational medicine at Desert Regional Medical Center in Palm Springs, California, but she got her start at the College of Medicine Rockford after growing up in Chicago. Following graduation, she went on to complete a residency in internal medicine at St. Mary’s Hospital in San Francisco; a second residency in preventive medicine and public health at Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health; and a third residency in occupational and environmental medicine at the University of California-San Francisco. She is board-certified in all three of those specialties. She is also TV’s “Dr. Mona,” an Emmy-winning medical reporter who worked in Chicago, Dallas-Fort Worth and Palm Springs television markets, and she is the expert behind the syndicated “Ask Dr. Mona” newspaper column. She has also spent the past 20 years performing medical mission work in more than 14 countries, most notably after worldwide disasters. Her passion for health literacy, humanitarianism and disaster relief efforts has earned her dozens of awards from the government and her peers. She has been honored by Northwestern University, the University of Illinois, Johns Hopkins University, Secretary of State Jesse White’s office, and the American Medical Association and the American College of Physicians. She is a 2015 Chicagoan of the Year and a 2016 Ellis Island Medalist for contributions by immigrants to America.

Katherine M. Tynus, MD, ’93, was named president-elect of the Illinois State Medical Society (ISMS) during its 2017 annual meeting. Dr. Tynus received her medical degree from the University of Illinois College of Medicine Rockford and completed her residency in internal medicine at Loyola University Medical Center. She is board-certified in internal medicine, practicing with Northwestern Medical Group in Chicago. She serves on the medical staff at Northwestern Memorial Hospital and is also a clinical assistant professor at the Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine. Dr. Tynus serves on the American Board of Internal Medicine Test Writing Committee and the American College of Graduate Medical Education Transitional Year Review Committee.

Active in many areas of organized medicine, Dr. Tynus has been a member of ISMS since 2006, serves on its Executive Committee and the Committee on Finance & Medical Benevolence, and has served on the ISMS Council on Membership and Advocacy and the Medical Legal Council. At the local level, Dr. Tynus is active in the Chicago Medical Society, where she has served as its president from 2015 through 2016. She is a fellow of the American College of Physicians and has a long history of community service.

Howard “Howie” Mell, MD, ’04, MPH, CPE, FACEP, recently accepted a new position as a reservist emergency physician for CPE-Ameria and will be assigned to various emergency departments in the Chicago area. Dr. Mell has over 15 years experience practicing with the College of Medicine Rockford. Prior to that, he received a master of public health degree emphasizing environmental and occupational health from the University of Illinois at Chicago School of Public Health while serving as a firefighter/paramedic in the Chicago suburbs. He completed his residency in emergency medicine at the Mayo Graduate School of Medicine, Rochester, Minnesota. Dr. Mell is board-certified by the American Board of Emergency Medicine in both Emergency Medicine (EM) and in Emergency Medical Services Medicine (EMS). He is a Fellow of the American College of Emergency Physicians (ACP) and is a diplomate of the American Board of Executive through the Certifying Commission in Medical Management. Dr. Mell was recognized as one of the Top Peer Reviewers of 2016 for the Annals of Emergency Medicine. He is a frequent contributor to the EMRAPS podcasts and lectures nationally in a variety of settings. Dr. Mell is the current chairperson of the ACP Public Relations Committee as well as the ACEP EMS Education Subcommittee, and he is also the immediate past chairperson for the ACEP Section on EMS and Prehospital Care and a spokesperson for ACEP. He won ACP’s award for “Spokesperson of the Year” in 2014. Highlights of his EMS career include directing the first protocol in the United States to authorize the use of TXA by ALS ground ambulances, serving as a flight physician for Cleveland Metro Life Flight and being the medical director for the official city “after action report” on the shootings in Aurora, Colorado.

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In Memoriam

Matthew Thomas, MD '12, Res '15, passed away unexpectedly in Madison, Wis., in March. Dr. Thomas was a clinical assistant professor of family and community medicine at the College of Medicine Rockford, received a Faculty and Staff Aureus Award from the medical students in March. Dr. Thomas thrived at constantly coming up with ways to continually teach along the way, it definitely would be her. There is never a moment when she is not optimistic or upbeat, and her sheer presence brightens up any room, regardless of the day. It is physicians like Dr. Giamalva, who remind you of why you chose to enter medicine in the first place."

In Memoriam

Tamika Alexander, MD '07, is assistant residency director and an assistant professor of clinical obstetrics and gynecology at the University of Illinois College of Medicine at Chicago where she completed her residency after graduating from medical school at the Rockford campus. Dr. Alexander was a recipient of the prestigious two-year Hispanic Center of Excellence Award for faculty development and she has participated in The Mela Project, a partnership with Mekelle University in Ethiopia to support a new obstetrics and gynecology residency program. She is a member of the American College of Obstetrics and Gynecology, National Medical Association and the American Medical Association.

Dr. Alexander returned to her medical school alma mater as part of a panel discussion at a Road to Residency program for medical students at the College of Medicine in Rockford in April.

Andrea Giamalva, MD '10, Res '13, a clinical assistant professor of family and community medicine at the College of Medicine Rockford, received a Faculty and Staff Aureus Award from the medical students in March. Dr. Giamalva is a family medicine physician at SwedishAmerican Belvidere Clinic. Says her nominator, "If there ever was anyone who embodied the textbook definition of a physician who devoted so much of herself to each and every single patient encounter, demonstrated the empathy to build strong, lasting relationships and thrived at constantly coming up with ways to continually teach along the way, it definitely would be her. There is never a moment when she is not optimistic or upbeat, and her sheer presence brightens up any room, regardless of the day. It is physicians like Dr. Giamalva, who remind you of why you chose to enter medicine in the first place."

Congratulations to the Alumni Who Received Awards at the Dock Doc Faculty Recognition Event!

College of Medicine faculty were invited to the second annual “Dock Doc” event in June for an evening of recognition in honor of their dedication to teaching. Several awards were presented, some serious and some, presented by the students, were a little more fun, such as “Best Ties” (Dr. Michael Potts) and “Strongest Shoe Game” (Dr. Gary Fernando).

With more than a hundred alumni on faculty, several of the awards went to our College of Medicine Rockford alumni and others went to other dedicated community faculty whose commitment to teaching and providing clinical experiences for the next generation of physicians is crucial to the mission of the College of Medicine.

Joe Ross, MD, Res ’82, was presented with an award from the M4 students for being “Nicest” during a celebration of College of Medicine Rockford faculty. Medical student Kelsey LeVault presented some of the “Dock Doc Awards” at Prairie Street Brewhouse.

Medical student Kelsey Wojcik presented Mary Jo Ironside, MD, Res ’86, with the “Most Human” award. Ken Petersen, MD ’83, was voted “The Doctor’s Doctor” by the medical students.

(See Distinguished Award Winners on page seven.)

Students and faculty gathered on the deck at Prairie Street Brewhouse for the awards ceremony.
The UIC Health Sciences Campus – Rockford hosted its 22nd Annual Research Day on Friday, April 21, 2017. Research Day highlights research conducted by Rockford students at the University of Illinois’ College of Medicine (UI-COMR), College of Nursing (UIC CON), College of Pharmacy (UIC COP), and Medical Biotechnology (MBT) Graduate Program, faculty at the UIC Health Sciences Campus–Rockford, and researchers from affiliated and regional institutions.

“Research day is a public event that we understand is being attended by over 200 people including faculty, students, researchers, clinicians and individuals from the broad Rockford community,” said Robert Freidel, UI-COMR third-year student and James Scholar says, “For many medical students, including me, an inherent fascination for learning new things about human health attracted us to the healthcare field. Research Day is a chance to revisit our enthusiasm for discovery, whether we are presenting our findings or learning from our colleagues and friends. It is important that our medical school and community continue to foster curiosity and engagement in research happening right here in Rockford.”

The keynote address, “How to Heal Perfectly: A Blueprint for Skin Regeneration,” was presented by Luisa DiPietro, DDS, PhD, associate vice chancellor for research, and a professor of periodontics, UIC College of Dentistry. A panel discussion, “Regenerative Medicine: Implications for Clinical Practice & Research,” followed. Panelists included Xue-Jun Li, PhD, associate professor, department of biomedical sciences, UI-COMR; Benjamin Mathew, MD, associate professor, and visiting professor, department of oral surgery at Rush University Medical Center, Chicago; and Jalees Rehman, MD, associate professor of medicine and pharmacology, University of Illinois at Chicago. The panel was moderated by Mathew Mathew, PhD, associate professor, department of biomedical sciences and Lawrence L. Yen, fourth-year medical student, both from UI-COMR.

Student research presentations kicked off the afternoon with a project entitled “Assessment of Diabetes Education and Barriers to Self-Management in Chester, IL: A Healthcare Provider and Patient Perspective,” completed by Jenny Schmidt, fourth-year medical student in the Rural Medical Education Program at UI-COMR. Jordan Sharlin, fourth-year medical student and James Scholar at UI-COMR, spoke on “Incidence and Impact of Post-Operative Hypertension on Post-Anesthesia Care Unit (PACU) Outcomes.”

“Optimization of Polymeric-Drug Conjugates Containing the HSP90 Inhibitor SNX-5422” was the topic of Joseph Antonio Suarez Del Pino’s research. He is a PhD student in the department of biopharmaceutical sciences at the UIC COP-Pooja Vinay, MBT student at UI-COMR, rounded out the presentations with her research on “Elucidating Novel and Critical Roles for the Inflammatory Mediator Pentraxin 3 in the Pathogenesis of Basal-Like Breast Cancers.”

“Getting the chance to engage in research is something I truly enjoyed. By rule, most curricula in medical school are pretty standardized. However, one of the places where a student can get some variety in is research. Getting the chance to do some self-directed learning was a great experience. Research is something that helps advance the field of medicine and I feel like I am a better student and will be a better physician because of it. Being able to showcase my research at school was a great experience. I really enjoyed getting to interact with the numerous health professionals who were on hand and also enjoyed getting to walk around and see what my colleagues did for some of their research. I was very humbled to be recognized for my research and am looking forward to coming back to Research Day because of the forum it provides for us students to be able to advance ourselves and showcase what we’ve been able to accomplish,” said Ezekiel Hartman, second-year UI-COMR medical student and James Scholar participant. Closing remarks were provided by Dr. Khare.

There were 94 entries submitted for Research Day. Seventeen student awards were given as follows:

**Best Science Research Award**
Sponsored by Professor Marcy Scientific
Taatular Inzerling, MBT student
“Comparison of Epithelial Mesenchymal Transition Mediated Tki Resistance Nsclc Cells Containing Wild Type EGFR and Mutant EGFR”

**Best Case Report Award**
Sponsored by Rockford Anesthesiologists
Jenny Tumba, UI-COMR student
“Case Report: Hemolobactor Pylori and Hepatitis A Virus Co-infection in an Adolescent Refugee”

**Best MBT Student Research Poster Awards**
Sponsored by Master of Medical Biotechnology Program and Department of Biomedical Sciences
Pooja Vinay, MBT student
“Elucidating Novel and Critical Roles for the Inflammatory Mediator Pentraxin 3 in the Pathogenesis of Basal-Like Breast Cancers”

**Best Clinical Research Poster Award**
Sponsored by Rockford Ambulatory Surgery Center
Adam Lake, UI-COMR student
“Results of a Community Based, Randomized Study Comparing a Clear Liquid Diet to a Low Residue Diet using a Magnesium Citrate Preparation”

**Best Student Technical Poster Award (two awards)**
Sponsored by Winnebago County Medical Society
Adam Lake, UI-COMR student
“Results of a Community Based, Randomized Study Comparing a Clear Liquid Diet to a Low Residue Diet using a Magnesium Citrate Preparation”

**Best Use of Literature in a Student Research Project**
Sponsored by Crawford Library of the Health Sciences
Robert Freidel, UI-COMR student
“Best Practice Alerts in Clinical EHR Workflows to Improve Colorectal Cancer Screening Rates: An Evaluation”

**Biomedical Sciences Best Basic Science Research Poster Award**
Sponsored by Department of Biomedical Sciences, University of Illinois College of Medicine Rockford
Yongchao Mou, UI-COMR research assistant
“Modeling Hereditary Spastic Paraplegias with Patient-Specific Stem Cell-Derived Cortical and Spinal Neuron Co-Cultures”

**College of Pharmacy Outstanding Poster Award**
Sponsored by UI College of Pharmacy at Rockford
Matthew Gilbertson, UIC COP student
“Characterization of Etoposide Hypersensitive Top2 Mutants”

**Dean’s Action Council Award**
Sponsored by Dean’s Action Council, University of Illinois College of Medicine Rockford
Robert Freidel, UI-COMR student
“Best Practice Alerts in Clinical EHR Workflows to Improve Colorectal Cancer Screening Rates: An Evaluation”

**Innovation in Basic Science Research Award**
Sponsored by Office of the Regional Dean, University of Illinois College of Medicine Rockford
Abhijit Segu, MBT student
“Incidence and Impact of Post-Operative Hypertension on Post-Anesthesia Care Unit (PACU) Outcomes”

**Sister Mary Linus Nowak Research Award**
Sponsored by Saint Anthony College of Nursing
Adam Lake, UI-COMR student
“Increasing Colon Cancer Awareness and Education in Litchfield, IL”

**NCIHRP Poster Award for Encouraging Excellence in Rural Health**
Sponsored by National Center for Rural Health Professions
Brock Phillips, UI-COMR student and Brandon Barringer, UIC COP student
“Increasing Colon Cancer Awareness Education in Litchfield, IL”

**NCRHP Poster Award for Encouraging Excellence in Rural Health**
Sponsored by Saint Anthony College of Nursing
Dawn Mosher, Saint Anthony College of Nursing student
“Student Perception of Interprofessional Education Competency Change Following an IPE Immersion Day”

**Supporting Model Public Health Practices – Research Award**
Sponsored by Winnebago County Health Department and its Board of Health
Ezekiel Hartman, UI-COMR student
“Evaluation of Preventative Screening Implementation in Rural Illinois Primary Care Practices”
College of Medicine Rockford Distinguished Awards

OrthoIllinois was the 2017 Distinguished Community Award recipient. OrthoIllinois has been a wonderful partner, pairing students with orthopedics researchers. As part of their involvement with students, OrthoIllinois hosts monthly ‘research meetings’ where physicians and our students gather for a presentation about current research and methods and to share updates on current/upcoming research. Through participation in relevant research, our students are gaining a clear advantage when it comes to matching to their preferred residencies.

In addition to research support, OrthoIllinois physicians and their support staff have been providing various clerkships for medical students during their surgical rotation. OrthoIllinois also offers month long clinical rotations for the family medicine residents in general orthopedics, including joint evaluation and treatment, ranging from medication to physical therapy to operative intervention. The residents complete month long rotations in sports medicine, evaluating sports injuries in the office and learning the correct plan for returning the athlete to competition. In addition, OrthoIllinois provides elective experiences in orthopedic urgent care, including instruction in casting, splinting, and choosing the appropriate physical or occupational therapy program.

Excitingly, OrthoIllinois has also volunteered to offer the family medicine residents the opportunity to collaborate as the team physician for various high school and professional sports teams in the Rockford area. With the start of the program this year, these residents have served as the team physician for the Rockford Ice-hogs. The residents will switch to fall high school sports with the end of the hockey season.

The Distinguished Service Award recipient was Dr. Bill Gorski, CEO of SwedishAmerican Hospital. Dr. Gorski has been a consistent advocate for the family medicine residents the opportunity to come back home to join this amazing group of professionals whose passion for research is contagious as we work together to improve medicine and the health of communities here as well as globally,” said Dr. Gomez.

Prior to joining UI-COMR, Dr. Gorski served as a consulting research instructor and supervisor in the department of biostatistics at West Virginia University School of Public Health. In this role, he provided assistance on research design and biostatistical assistance for faculty, residents and students in the school of public health, the school of medicine, the school of pharmacy, the school of dentistry, the school of nursing, the medical hospital and the local community.

He received his Ph.D. in applied statistics from North Dakota State University in Fargo, North Dakota, and completed an associate’s degree in public relations from Ghana Institute of Journalism in Accra, Ghana. He also holds a bachelor’s degree in communications and master’s degree in mathematics from Roosevelt University in Chicago, Ill.

In support of Dr. Gorski’s hiring, Sherry Falletti, PhD, assistant dean of research, professor and director, Division of Health Policy and Social Research, department of family and community medicine, says, “We are very excited to have Dr. Gorski join our Office of Research team. His knowledge and enthusiasm for working with students and faculty in the areas of study design and biostatistics will be of great value.”

Dr. Gorski can be contacted at (815) 395-5639 or kayeromi@uiuc.edu.

Curricular Renewal Precedes Coming of M1s

As we prepare to welcome our first class of M1 students to the Rockford campus, our faculty have been instrumental in college-wide curricular renewal, many taking a leadership role in curricular development.

Working groups composed of faculty from all three U of I campuses collaborate almost daily, building the integrated Phase 1 curriculum. Leaders from the thematic groups are developing novel ways for students to begin to understand and experience the broad areas of health and society, professionalism, and health care systems. Our Rockford faculty, including eight new recruits, are actively involved in the design of these experiences and will participate in their delivery. Concurrently, faculty improvements are moving along. The Team-based Learning and the Anatomy Lab are almost complete, and Simulation Center construction is underway. The addition of new study space will round out the facility projects. The new M1 class has been recruited, and they will soon begin to review premedical radiation. We will welcome them to campus in early August during a rich orientation week, punctuated by their White Coat Ceremony on Saturday, August 12.

The UIC Health Sciences Campus—Rockford Welcomes New Biostatistician

As biostatistician, Dr. Gomez will provide support and assistance to faculty and students who are conducting research in the College of Pharmacy and the College of Medicine in the areas of study design, data analysis and interpretation of results. Dr. Gomez has extensive experience in small and large health data analyses as well as the interpretation of statistical results to audiences with and without a background in statistics. “I am extremely delighted to direct, Division of Health Policy and Social Research, department of family and community medicine, says, “We are very excited to have Dr. Gorski join our Office of Research team. His knowledge and enthusiasm for working with students and faculty in the areas of study design and biostatistics will be of great value.”

Dr. Gomez can be contacted at (815) 395-5639 or kayeromi@uiuc.edu.

The Office of Research at the University of Illinois College of Medicine Rockford (UI-COMR) and the College of Pharmacy at Rockford are pleased to announce the hiring of Kayéromi Gomez, PhD, biostatistician. The biostatistician position is new to the campus.

Prior to joining UI-COMR, Dr. Gomez served as a consulting research instructor and supervisor in the department of biostatistics at West Virginia University School of Public Health. In this role, he provided assistance on research design and biostatistical assistance for faculty, residents and students in the school of public health, the school of medicine, the school of pharmacy, the school of dentistry, the school of nursing, the medical hospital and the local community.

He received his Ph.D. in applied statistics from North Dakota State University in Fargo, North Dakota, and completed an associate’s degree in public relations from Ghana Institute of Journalism in Accra, Ghana. He also holds a bachelor’s degree in communications and master’s degree in mathematics from Roosevelt University in Chicago, Ill.

In support of Dr. Gorski’s hiring, Sherry Falletti, PhD, assistant dean of research, professor and director, Division of Health Policy and Social Research, department of family and community medicine, says, “We are very excited to have Dr. Gorski join our Office of Research team. His knowledge and enthusiasm for working with students and faculty in the areas of study design and biostatistics will be of great value.”

Dr. Gomez can be contacted at (815) 395-5639 or kayeromi@uiuc.edu.

Curricular Renewal Precedes Coming of M1s

As we prepare to welcome our first class of M1 students to the Rockford campus, our faculty have been instrumental in college-wide curricular renewal, many taking a leadership role in curricular development.

Working groups composed of faculty from all three U of I campuses collaborate almost daily, building the integrated Phase 1 curriculum. Leaders from the thematic groups are developing novel ways for students to begin to understand and experience the broad areas of health and society, professionalism, and health care systems. Our Rockford faculty, including eight new recruits, are actively involved in the design of these experiences and will participate in their delivery. Concurrently, faculty improvements are moving along. The Team-based Learning and the Anatomy Lab are almost complete, and Simulation Center construction is underway. The addition of new study space will round out the facility projects. The new M1 class has been recruited, and they will soon begin to review premedical radiation. We will welcome them to campus in early August during a rich orientation week, punctuated by their White Coat Ceremony on Saturday, August 12.

The UIC Health Sciences Campus—Rockford Welcomes New Biostatistician

As biostatistician, Dr. Gomez will provide support and assistance to faculty and students who are conducting research in the College of Pharmacy and the College of Medicine in the areas of study design, data analysis and interpretation of results. Dr. Gomez has extensive experience in small and large health data analyses as well as the interpretation of statistical results to audiences with and without a background in statistics. “I am extremely delighted to direct, Division of Health Policy and Social Research, department of family and community medicine, says, “We are very excited to have Dr. Gorski join our Office of Research team. His knowledge and enthusiasm for working with students and faculty in the areas of study design and biostatistics will be of great value.”

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EVERY TEN SECONDS, a report of child abuse is made in the United States. Winnebago County has the third highest number of reports in the state with an average of 12 cases reported each day. Less than 25 percent receive an expert and timely medical evaluation.

To address this very unfortunate reality, the University of Illinois College of Medicine Rockford, in collaboration with the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) and Carrie Lynn Children’s Center, created the Medical Evaluation Response Initiative Team (MERIT) to provide children suspected of experiencing physical abuse, sexual abuse or neglect with timely expert medical evaluations and treatment. In addition, MERIT serves the community as a resource for prevention, research and education. The program serves over 300 children each year from Winnebago and 13 other counties in Northern Illinois. Significant barriers exist that prevent suspected victims of child abuse and neglect from receiving expert and timely medical evaluations. This has led to problems in the investigation process, making it more difficult for DCFS to intervene appropriately. In addition, many health care providers have not received adequate training in abuse and neglect, which has led to medical opinions that differ from experts. This often creates difficulties in the prosecution of offenders and frequently requires unnecessary court appearances by physicians inexperienced in child abuse and neglect. By providing an evidence-based, expertly trained referral source, these problems can be addressed.

The MERIT case coordinator receives requests for evaluation of suspected child abuse from DCFS, law enforcement, children’s advocate centers, emergency department physicians and/or primary care providers. The coordinator then assigns the case to one of the medical providers, who collaborates with the multi-disciplinary investigative team as needed. Upon completion of the expert evaluation, the MERIT provider will review results of the evaluation with the appropriate parties. An expert medical opinion will be rendered as to the probability of an injury being accidental, caused by abuse or indeterminate in nature.

The MERIT program will be the beneficiary of the College’s New Orleans Casino Night on Saturday, September 23. Please join us for an evening of fun and fundraising!