The daily lives of the faculty, staff, students and residents of RowanSOM is made up of a flurry of activity. From classes to phone calls, patient-care to operations maintenance, counseling to curriculum—each task we do every day is a meaningful contribution to improving the lives of those we serve. It has been a truly remarkable year for RowanSOM. As Dean, I am proud to share this summary of the year with you, and some of the stories that make up who we are as a community.

Along with featured highlights of accomplishments from this past year, I am pleased to share with you special interviews from each of our mission areas. Dr. Millicent Channell, Assistant Dean for Curriculum, explains our plans for a new, modern curriculum. Dr. Judith Lightfoot, Vice Chair, Department of Medicine, Program Director Residency Program (DOM), Chief of Division of Infectious Disease, details the balance between being a clinical care provider, instructor, and active mentor to our students. Dr. Barry Waterhouse, Chair of Cell Biology & Neuroscience, describes our expanding research enterprise.

We are at the threshold of tremendous growth here at Rowan University School of Osteopathic Medicine. I am grateful for the support of Rowan University, our many alumni, donors, friends, and of course our talented faculty, staff, students and residents. We are proud to continue our commitment to excellence in service.

My best regards,

Thomas A. Cavalieri, DO, MACOI, FACP
Dean

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**Facts & Figures**

- **200 Students**
  - were admitted by the Admissions Committee for fall 2018 entering class; the largest class to be admitted to RowanSOM to date.

- **5057 Applicants**
  - applied to RowanSOM during the 2017-2018 application cycle. This is an increase of 54 applications or +1.1% increase from the number of applications received during the previous cycle.

- **107 Scholarships Awarded**
  - totaling $354,200 for SOM students

- **$10.6 Million**
  - in research funding; 174 GSBS Students- 25 PhD, 149 masters students

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**Message from the Dean**

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When the Class of 2023 enters SOM in July, they will begin learning the art and science of medicine through a new curriculum, one that stays true to our osteopathic heritage and prepares these future physicians to deliver excellence in medical care for the next 30 to 40 years. The revamped curriculum will include new courses, intersessions, and system blocks that reflect more intuitive learning, osteopathic clinical skills and project-based courses.

**A NEW FRAMEWORK FOR LEARNING**

The new curriculum’s pre-clerkship years combine basic science with clinical medicine and feature expanded training on leadership and teamwork, an emphasis on prevention, new electives and Bridge Weeks’ that occur across all four years of medical school.

During the clerkship years, the Tensegrity Curriculum adds new components, including a community service learning group project, a required four-week intensive care unit (ICU/ NICU/PCU/SCU) elective, a residency Clinical Skills Course and the continuation of geriatrics and pain management clerkships.

Bridge Weeks are an entirely new aspect of the revised SOM curriculum. Bridge Weeks occur four times – twice in the first year and once each in the second and third years. These weeks are designed to give formative feedback on knowledge, skills and attitudes and include combinations of several core elements:

- Building skills: Osteopathic Integrated Exam Review and formative Standardized Patient/OSCE (Objective Structured Clinical Exam) with feedback
- Reflecting: Self-reflection, peer-to-peer evaluation
- Integrating: Integrated foundational science, individual and group assessments
- Developing: Formative Biomedical COMAT (Comprehensive Osteopathic Medical Achievement Test) exams
- Goal setting: Academic review with coaching
- Evaluating: Summative Biomedical COMAT exams, Summative Standardized Patient/OSCEs

“One key outcome of the new curriculum is that it brings our faculty and students closer together in both our traditional and our PBL (problem-based learning) tracks,” Dr. Channell said. “It makes better use of our clinical and research faculty by implementing the subject matter in the classroom and during patient interactions.”

Under the new curriculum, the body’s organ systems are presented in blocks that reflect a more intuitive progression of learning. Each block repeats a process that first presents the ideal or normal structure and function, then describes the progression of diseases, their diagnosis and their treatments.

For example, basic science sessions on the normal regulation of blood pressure are followed by clinical sessions that focus on the evaluation and management of hypertension. This allows the relevance of basic sciences to be immediately apparent, offering opportunities for more team teaching by clinical and basic science faculty.

In addition, the new curriculum engages students in activities – such as community service, sexuality and end-of-life care – that affect the health of the whole patient, a bedrock principle of osteopathic medicine.
Creating a hub for neuroscience research, education and clinical care in South Jersey is the vision that Dr. Barry Waterhouse brought to the School of Osteopathic Medicine when he became the Chairman of the Department of Cell Biology and Neuroscience in June 2016.

Already, there are tangible signs that his vision has taken root and is growing on the Stratford campus.

“We have reconfigured and renovated space in the Science Center, hired six new neuroscience faculty, and are about to begin a search to fill remaining faculty positions,” Dr. Waterhouse said.

At the same time, he explained that efforts are underway to bolster the PhD student population through enhanced recruiting efforts that encompass updates to the website, rebranding through marketing and advertising, and attending graduate fairs.

Graduate students are at the heart of a strong research enterprise and recruiting high caliber students into a PhD program is essential to Dr. Waterhouse’s vision. He admits that student recruitment can be challenging, as Rowan competes against several well-known national research universities in its own backyard. But he points to the programs career development training workshops and graduate placement success as a competitive advantage. Within a year of graduation, 94 percent of GSBS doctoral students have secured employment in their field.

**BUILDING A SUCCESSFUL RESEARCH ENTERPRISE**

Dr. Waterhouse, whose research in neuroscience and neurobiology has been continuously funded by federal and private agencies since 1980, believes that an investigator’s job is a lot like that of an independent businessman.

“It is the individual investigator’s responsibility to fill his/her laboratory with the right mix of equipment, procedures and talented individuals, and then make sure that mix is working and focused on questions that are of interest to the scientific community,” he said.

Researchers also need to be prepared for adversity. Even when the lab does everything correctly, experiments will sometimes lead to blind alleys. At the same time, projects can achieve positive results only to run into lapses in funding.

“All laboratories – no matter how productive – are likely to experience downturns in funding that can be offset by endowments to run the lab or support graduate students until funding is restored,” Dr. Waterhouse said. “This helps ensure continuity of the work which is key to long term success.”

A combination of resources, talented faculty and students, and collaborative research with clinical partners will help define the future success of research on the Stratford campus and across Rowan University.

“Neuroscience has always been multi-disciplinary, encompassing all of the other basic and clinical sciences,” Dr. Waterhouse said. “Our goal will be to capitalize on our strengths and carve out our own niche in neuroscience research that has significant impact on clinical care and that expands the scope of neuroscience to all campuses in the University.”
Last January, when she joined SOM as the Vice Chair of the Department of Medicine, Dr. Judith Lightfoot brought with her an enthusiasm and a vision that will help to extend the school’s reach into new communities and its influence on the future of health care in our state.

**A VISION OF GROWTH AND ACCESS**

Formerly a clinical associate professor at SOM, she brings decades of expertise in infectious disease and a sterling reputation for compassion and patient focused care to her new role, which includes Chief of Infectious Disease and Residency Program Director for the Department of Medicine.

In addition to her busy patient schedule, Dr. Lightfoot oversees the training of 54 internal medicine residents, serves on the Admissions Committee and still finds time to mentor medical students and volunteer in underserved communities.

“Helping to prepare the next generation of physicians is as important as it is rewarding,” she said. “Every physician should take time to mentor a medical student. Working with such young talent with their new ideas and thirst for medical knowledge can relight the spark and remind physicians why they chose medicine – or why medicine chose them.”

Finding time to volunteer sets yet another example for the students and residents she mentors. Working with churches in underserved communities, Dr. Lightfoot frequently provides educational programs on the impact of HIV/AIDS in those communities and on topics such as health disparities in mental health, diabetes, hypertension and other health concerns.

**EXPANDING ACCESS THROUGH GROWTH**

New Jersey – and the nation – is racing to avert a critical shortage of physicians that could reach as many as 2,800 doctors in New Jersey alone. The state’s situation is exacerbated by the fact that it has one on the highest percentages of physicians who are 60 years or older.

“The physician shortage will have a huge impact on health care and will hit already underserved areas very hard,” she explained. “Our medical school class size has grown – and will continue to grow – to help meet the needs of our citizens in every community.”

Realizing the kind of growth that can expand health care access will require new resources she acknowledges and points to her program’s recent accreditation from the American Council for Graduate Medical Education as an example of the kind of growth that also expands access.

“As we grow, all the subspecialties will follow,” she says, identifying rheumatology, endocrinology and expansion of neurology services as potential growth areas.

“Being a multi-specialty center that supports other Rowan Medicine departments means we can extend our expertise as an academic medical practice to benefit more people in more communities throughout the region,” she adds. “Instead of searching for care in other areas, patients and their referring physicians will recognize the expertise that Rowan Medicine offers right in their own backyards.”

Dr. Lightfoot knows, too, that realizing this vision of growth can’t be accomplished without collaboration and support.

“In the end, we aren’t one department or even one school,” she says. “We are one. But we are one under Rowan University.”
The Academic Center received much-needed upgrades to conference and breakout room spaces, classrooms and the computer laboratory. New furniture, natural-styled LED light fixtures and plants greet all who enter the building’s atrium. An Interfaith Prayer Room was added to the building for use by the campus community.

The Science Center also underwent cosmetic renovations, including paint, new lighting, furniture and the addition of white boards in several lecture areas and classrooms. These updates create modern and user-friendly spaces for our student body.

The courtyards outside of the Academic Center and University Educational Center were refreshed with the installation of new outdoor tables and umbrellas.

A campus Diversity Lounge was established in our 113 E. Laurel Building to provide a welcoming, open space for our SOM community.

Notable improvements were made to ensure the safety of the campus community, including the installation of 21 emergency blue phones in various outdoor locations, and the addition of a public safety office in the Academic Center lobby.

As per an initiative from the Dean’s Office and the Diversity Task Force, 2018 also saw the conversion of all single-use restrooms across the campus to gender-neutral spaces.
ASHLEY E. SAM '18 was named 2018 National Student DO of the Year by the American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine (AACOM) Council of the Student Government Presidents. We congratulate Ashley on this outstanding achievement.

Congratulations to Dr. Allen Masry, who was recently named a Distinguished Fellow by the American Psychiatric Association (APA).

TARA BECK '19 and SHEILA DE YOUNG '19 were named as recipients of the 2018 Edward J. III Excellence in Medicine Scholarship. The scholarships, created by MDAdvantage Insurance Company and Edward J. III Excellence in Medicine Foundation, are awarded to students who demonstrate remarkable accomplishments in their field of study, and support the future of medicine in New Jersey.

ASHLEY KOONTZ '19 was selected as the 2018-2019 National Student Chair of the American Osteopathic Academy of Sports Medicine (AOASM). As National Student Chair, Ashley hopes to cultivate opportunities for osteopathic medical students to gain exposure to primary care sports medicine.

Dr. Richard Jermyn received the Leonard Tow Humanism in Medicine Award, presented by The Arnold P. Gold Foundation.

DR. LINDA BOYD for receiving the Health Careers Opportunities Program grant. This grant will provide $3 million dollars over five years in stipends and scholarships to disadvantaged students, and create funding for the establishment of a diversity team at RowanSOM.

Rowan Medicine’s CARES Institute was recently awarded $75,000 in grants from the Investors Foundation and Roma Bank Community Foundation, a part of Investors Bank. The grants are awarded to non-profit organizations that enrich the diverse communities served by the grantor. The health care team at the CARES Institute helps over 2,000 children every year, providing a nurturing environment for children and families affected by abuse, and also provides training and education to medical, mental health, child protection and law enforcement professionals.

A feature article in People Magazine discussed a gene therapy developed by Dr. Paola Leone to treat Canavan disease, with the story of a New York family desperate to save their two afflicted children. Canavan disease is a rare, progressive genetic disorder that typically takes a child’s life by age 10. The People Magazine story detailed the family’s efforts to raise funds to support Dr. Leone’s innovative therapy that has shown potential to halt or even reverse the most damaging symptoms of the disease.

Dr. Millicent King Channell was elected to the Board of Trustees of the American Academy of Osteopathy (AAO) at the organization’s annual meeting in Dallas. She will serve a three-year term.

Congratulations are extended to Dr. Magdala Chery on her recent selection as a 2018 Fellow of the New Jersey chapter of the New Leaders Council (NLC).

The creation of the Frank Levin, DO Endowed Scholarship in Emergency Medicine was announced at the 2018 Emergency Medicine residency graduation dinner. A faculty member since 1976, Dr. Levin chairs the Department of Emergency Medicine, and is beloved and respected by many. The scholarship was created by a group of emergency medicine physicians, many of whom were trained by and have worked with Dr. Levin, to benefit a fourth-year SOM student intending to practice emergency medicine in southern New Jersey.

SOM PARTNERS WITH DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

A new partnership between the Wilmington VA Medical Center, SOM, and the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) will provide local veterans with much needed health care resources and medical students and residents with additional training opportunities.

The program, the first of its kind for SOM, rotates residents and medical students through South Jersey VA clinics. The students will work alongside VA providers to gain a better understanding of the unique health care challenges veterans face.

MATCH DAY

RowanSOM students successfully “matched” into both the American Osteopathic Association (AOA) Match and National Resident Match Program (NRMP). We are proud to report that 99% of our graduating students successfully placed in hospital or medical centers where they will continue their training in their chosen specialties.

NEW WEBSITE

Check out our new website: https://som.rowan.edu. Our new site highlights the osteopathic philosophy of healing the whole patient through mind, body, and spirit. This constituent-focused, mobile-friendly digital space is ready to greet prospective DOs and make work more efficient for our SOM community.

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