The face of reconstructive surgery
A MESSAGE FROM
RICHARD A. HOPPMANN
DEAN, SCHOOL OF MEDICINE

THE DIGITAL AGE OF MEDICINE

The world of medicine has changed dramatically since I began practicing more than 30 years ago. Early in my career as an internal medicine physician, I would fill the pockets of my white coat with books such as the Washington Manual of Medical Therapeutics and my Peripheral Brain. These were my points of reference when I needed access to medical information. I relied upon these books to make a careful diagnosis and carried them with me throughout the day.

Today, physicians are still referencing the Washington Manual, but he or she is likely doing so through a smartphone, iPad or electronic reader. The devices we carry with us are reflections of the digital world we live in. Medicine is quickly adapting to this digital age, and today’s doctors have widespread access to information at their fingertips.

In 2012, the School of Medicine and our physician practice, University Specialty Clinics, embarked on one of the most significant technological enhancements in our school’s history. Led by our chief information officer, Dr. Lindsie Cone and his team of information technology specialists, we began an eight-month process of implementing electronic medical records (EMR) throughout our clinical practice.

The days of writing or dictating and transcribing physicians’s notes have been replaced by computerized records that display everything from a patient’s lab reports to medications and allergies. EMR provides our faculty the flexibility to review patient charts from home or while traveling. The expectation is that adoption of EMR will improve health outcomes and patient safety as well as create opportunities to advance the delivery of health care through research.

As our faculty familiarize themselves with EMR software, they are sharing their wealth of knowledge with students and residents who are eager to adopt the new technology. In addition, USC faculty are helping future physicians make sense of the abundance of medical information available and apply it to their medical training.

In this issue of South Carolina Medicine, we open the curtain on the School of Medicine’s EMR implementation. As the digital age of medicine evolves, trust that the School of Medicine will continue to embrace those technologies that are meaningful to our faculty, students and patients.

Richard A. Hoppmann, M.D.
Dean, University of South Carolina School of Medicine
anatomy of a scholar

For neuroanatomy professor Jim Augustine, Ph.D., just about anything can be traced back to the brain — including his own career.

In spring 1966, when Augustine was a sophomore at Millikin University in Decatur, Ill., a pair of professors from Saint Louis University (SLU) medical school showed up on the small Midwestern campus as part of a neuroanatomist recruitment program sponsored by the National Institutes of Health. The professor gave a talk and hosted one-on-one meetings with students who might be interested in careers in the field of human anatomy, especially neuroanatomy, but they also brought along a few props, including an actual human brain, which immediately impressed Augustine.

“You know, I’m from a small town in Illinois, and these distinguished professors came from one of the big medical schools in St. Louis, and they’ve got their white coats and they’ve got this brain,” says Augustine, now in his 75th year at the University of South Carolina School of Medicine. “I was just really bowled over by both of them.”

The keen intellectual curiosity served Augustine well as he pursued a doctoral degree in human anatomy at the University of Alabama at Birmingham medical school, where he was fortunate to work closely with a second mentor, the legendary neuroanatomist Elizabeth Crosby. Towards the end of her career, but still early in his own, Augustine co-authored a pair of papers with Crosby, and years later would be named the 2012 Elizabeth Crosby Visiting Professor in the Department of Neurosurgery at the University of Michigan.

“I was always around really good teachers at SLU and UAB,” says Augustine with a shrug that suggests the progression from student to mentor was all but inevitable. “I just felt comfortable in that environment. I wanted to do what they were doing.”

Because the medical school at Alabama was growing rapidly in the early 1970s, Augustine quickly got exactly what he wanted, being asked to teach not just neuroanatomy but gross anatomy, and not just to medical students but to dental students and optometry students. In fact, his extensive classroom experience proved to be a big reason he was recruited by USC in 1976 to become a course director at the new medical school — at the ripe old age of 30. “I’d had a great variety of teaching opportunities in all the disciplines of anatomy — embryology, gross anatomy, histology, and neuroanatomy with medical, dental, and optometry students,” he says. “It just seemed like a lot of wonderful opportunities presented themselves and I followed that path. I was about as well prepared to do what I started to do when I came here as I could possibly have been.”

In the years since his arrival at USC, Augustine has sat on more than 72 committees, served as president of the Faculty Senate and most recently provided assistance with faculty concerns or conflicts as the university’s ombudsman, a position he has held since its establishment in 2006. However, according to colleagues, it’s the teaching and writing that truly drive him.

“When we’re discussing our profession, he talks about the students,” says Young, who has remained close to his own former student over the years. “They’re the most important part of his professional life — working with them, watching them mature, watching them learn. That’s what keeps him going.”

With almost four decades at USC now in the grade book, Augustine has taught nearly every one of the approximately 2,500 dental and optometry students, “It just seemed like a lot of wonderful opportunities presented themselves and I followed that path. I was about as well prepared to do what I started to do when I came here as I could possibly have been.”

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With almost four decades at USC now in the grade book, Augustine has taught nearly every one of the approximately 2,500 students to pass through the medical school since its founding. And the fact that he’s racked up his share of teaching awards along the way is no surprise to those who know him best.

“The book arose from my interactions with students, and the way they made me think about what I know,” says Augustine, who is currently readying an updated edition. “Constantly being asked questions and being forced to question my own understanding of the nervous system made it a better book. And writing the book made me a better teacher.”

All of which has benefited the students, among them Columbia neurosurgeon Sharon Webb, M.D., ’82, who sought Augustine out on her very first day on campus. As the first School of Medicine student in nearly fifteen years to pursue a career in neurosurgery, Webb worked closely with Augustine — just as Augustine had once worked closely with Young and Crosby. Fifteen years later, Webb counts Augustine not only as a colleague but a friend.

“Jim was already an outstanding faculty member in Birmingham, and he’s an outstanding faculty member here,” Webb says. “He’s extremely analytical and really knows his stuff. He’s one of the best teachers the medical school has had.”

Like any good scholar, Augustine can likewise point to a long list of publications, chief among them his single-author textbook “Human Neuroanatomy,” which came out in 2008 and which Augustine considers the crowning accomplishment of his career not just as a scholar but as an educator.

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Along with death and taxes, another certainty in life has emerged, at least for those in the medical profession: the implementation of electronic medical records.

EMR has the potential for improving health outcomes and curbing health care costs. But before that promised land can be reached, the number of physicians and hospitals using EMRs will have to increase.

The federal government has upped the ante by mandating nationwide EMR adoption by 2015, a deadline that has many health care providers — and medical schools — scurrying to become compliant.

“The medical field has historically lagged behind in information resources, and medical schools, including ours, have lagged somewhat in implementing electronic medical records,” said Lindsie Cone, M.D., chief information officer for the School of Medicine. “We’re on board and moving forward. Implementing an EMR has been a bit of a bumpy ride, but that’s been the case for the entire medical profession.”

Federal guidelines for adopting EMRs call for physicians and hospitals to demonstrate “meaningful use” of digital records systems in order to qualify for funding that partly covers the cost of EMR adoption. After the deadline, the carrot becomes a stick.

“Practices and hospitals that don’t demonstrate meaningful use will see their federal reimbursement decline for Medicare and Medicaid patients,” Cone said.

The Department of Internal Medicine was the first to make the move to the EMR, and clinical faculty members have learned firsthand the upside and downside of digital recordkeeping.

“An EMR eliminates the delay of dictating, transcribing and sending files to referring physicians, and I like that labs and radiology reports come directly back to the EMR — you don’t have to page through pieces of paper because it’s all there,” said Tracy Voss, M.D., assistant professor of clinical internal medicine.

Voss also noted the EMR’s potential for reducing medication errors by eliminating hand-written prescriptions and improving patient safety by highlighting potentially dangerous drug interactions.

Brandi Newsome, M.D., assistant professor of clinical internal medicine, thinks the benefits of EMR adoption outweigh the drawbacks.

“I like that you can pull up the EMR from home if you want. I don’t have to stay here late at night working on charts,” Newsome said. “As a department, we’ve saved a lot on dictation and transcription. And most of our patients are happy that we have it.”

Exposing medical students and residents to EMR has been a fairly natural process, Cone said, because so many of them are digital natives — steeped in electronic gadgetry and software from an early age.

“Subsequent classes will be exposed to EMR as an even more natural thing,” he said. “They will have grown up with technology, and it won’t be a learning curve issue. Besides, students don’t have much challenge [in adapting to EMR] because they’re not engrained in doing things the old way.”

For Newsome, there’s no looking back: “I would not go back to the old way of paper notes. I’m not sure that everyone would say that, but the busiest people would agree with that. It’s just too efficient to use the EMR even if the software systems we have now are not as well developed as they could be. We’ve got to change with the times. Embracing it rather than fighting it is easier to do.”
The year was 2010. In a remote village in Ethiopia, a laboring mother lies on her home’s dirt floor. The nearest hospital is dozens of miles away, but a traditional birth attendant sits near her. The woman’s sister and neighbors surround her. Outside the home, the woman’s husband prepares for the baby’s arrival by making stew and home-brewed beer. Observing the occasion is Anna Handley, a future medical student at the University of South Carolina School of Medicine.

As it is in most cultures, a baby’s pending arrival is cause for celebration in Ethiopia. But deliveries in that African country are often marred by deadly complications. Thousands of Ethiopian women and many more newborns die every year due to inadequate care during labor and delivery.

Handley, now a second-year medical student at the School of Medicine, cites her Ethiopian experience as a classic example in global health where the answers for improved medical care are known, but health services are not reaching people in need. “In our country, it’s really safe to have a baby in the hospital and complications can be managed very well,” Handley said. “In other countries, it’s not so simple. Women often give birth in their homes, where even a small and manageable complication can become deadly for the mother and her newborn.”

In November, Handley was named a global health fellow by the American Medical Women’s Association (AMWA). She is one of four students nationally — and the first USC School of Medicine student — to receive the AMWA’s prestigious Anne C. Carter Global Health Fellowship.

As a two-year fellow, Handley will work to establish a global health project in Columbia, S.C., that connects USC students to the burgeoning health needs of Columbia’s underserved international population. Her second year will include a medical-service learning trip to Engeye Clinic in Uganda.

“This fellowship will allow me to expand my interest in global and women’s health,” Handley said. “I look forward to working with other female medical students who have similar interests to mine and building a network of colleagues who I can keep in touch with throughout my career in terms of mentorship and collaboration.”

Handley, who received her undergraduate degree in anthropology from USC, first developed an interest in global public health during a six-month study abroad experience at the University of Cape Town in South Africa. The time overseas introduced her to many health challenges that people face, including access to quality health care. As a master’s student at Emory University, she returned to Africa as a research associate on a women’s health project examining maternal and newborn health.

While still a year away, Handley can’t help but look forward to a return trip to Africa. She is eager to apply her newly acquired clinical skills in helping the women of Uganda. “I have friends who have children, and it’s such a joyful experience for them; they are so happy,” Handley said. “My wish is that everyone could feel that way no matter where in the world they deliver their child.”
An unending tunnel: that’s what the first two years of medical school might seem like at times. The intensive classroom experience — albeit with exhilarating highs and perhaps humbling lows — is not at all the life most students seek when they decide they want to be a doctor.

Where are the patients, after all?

Six years ago, the USC School of Medicine began to get first- and second-year students into the clinics, meeting with patients earlier in their education as budding physicians. By incorporating a preceptorship, or shadowing, program in the Introduction to Clinical Medicine course, every M-I and M-II student now meets with a practicing physician, follows her through rounds, talks about what questions she asked at the bedside and why, and gets an idea of what a real-life career trajectory in medicine is like.

“I know I would have gotten a lot out of it,” said Jennifer Hucks, M.D., ’04. “During the first two years, I remember thinking, ‘This isn’t why I came to medical school.’ It’s hard to sit in class all day and then study all night.”

Hucks is doing her part to help. Every semester, she serves as a preceptor to students, taking each on a half-day of rounds in USC’s Division of Pulmonary, Critical Care and Sleep Medicine clinic, where she works as a pulmonologist for the School of Medicine and Palmetto Health Richland.

“Getting your feet wet in a clinical scenario is great, especially early on,” said first-year medical student Thomas Barrineau, who shadowed Hucks and geriatrician Craig Maylath, M.D. “And meeting a physician and talking to them about their lives and how they got there — it’s a really good experience.”

Beyond the clinical experience, the shadowing program also helps medical students with one of the most important decisions of their career: selecting a specialty.

“It’s a really nice introduction because most students don’t choose a specialty until the end of their third year,” Hucks said. “The more exposure that you have, the easier it is to make the decision about what kind of residency you might be interested in.”

That’s very much the point. “We ask students for specialty preferences when we match them with preceptors, but we want this to be more than just a shadowing experience for them,” said J. T. Thornhill, M.D., associate dean for medical education and academic affairs, who helps administer the program. “So we encourage them to try specialties or areas that they don’t know a whole lot about.”

Although it may not seem like it, there’s much more to medical school than hitting the books,” Hucks said. “Hopefully, the shadowing program reminds students that all of their hard work in the classroom is just a stepping stone to becoming excellent clinicians.”

The medical school is always looking for ways to expand student options in the preceptorship program, especially with 200 first- and second-year students participating every semester. Physicians and alumni who want to volunteer as preceptors are encouraged to contact J. T. Thornhill at Joshua.Thornhill@uscmed.sc.edu.
It’s a chilly, rainy afternoon in April, but it’s going to take more than cold drizzle to stop Earl Baker from getting up at 0-dark-thirty the next morning to go turkey hunting.

That Baker is able to focus once again on his beloved pastime might seem an ordinary thing. But it required extraordinary skill on the part of Ben McIntyre, M.D., one of the Department of Surgery’s newest physicians, to restore a measure of normalcy to the 86-year-old man’s life.

Baker and his wife met with McIntyre after a previous surgery to remove a cancerous salivary gland had severed a facial nerve. Half of his face — jaw, lips, cheek and eyelid — drooped uncontrollably as if he had had a stroke. In January of this year, McIntyre took Baker to surgery, using small muscles from the lower limb and from around the voicebox to help rebuild his facial structure. The result was nothing short of dramatic.

“I don’t know how Dr. McIntyre could figure out how to fix my face without knowing what I used to look like. But that’s what he did,” said Baker, a retired large animal veterinarian. “It was aggravating and embarrassing for my face to look that way,” he added. “It’s still hard to do some things; there’s no feeling on parts of my face. But I sure look a whole lot better.”

McIntyre, a 2003 graduate of the School of Medicine, has been making people not only look better but also live more functional lives since completing plastic surgery residencies in Virginia and New Zealand and launching his professional practice in the school’s Division of Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery.

For the Rev. Elford Roof, the issue went far beyond looks. A malignant cancer in his mouth required the removal of a section of his lower jaw — the 85-year-old Lutheran pastor spread his thumb and forefinger several inches apart across his jawline to show how much.

“They were going to send me to MUSC for treatment, but I begged them, insisted really, that they find someone to do the surgery here in town,” Roof said.

McIntyre was consulted and agreed to assist in the operation. He removed a piece of Roof’s fibula and fashioned it into a new section of jawbone to fill the missing gap. Roof’s ability to chew solid food — and preach from the pulpit — was restored.

A recent CAT scan showed no sign of cancer. “Right now, I feel like I’ll live to be 100,” Roof said.

McIntyre’s plastic surgery cases run the gamut, from purely aesthetic and cosmetic procedures to complex, multiple-stage surgeries aimed at undoing the ravages of disease or some physical trauma. Recent patients include a person who nearly lost a foot in an all-terrain vehicle accident and another whose facial nerve was destroyed by an infection at the base of the skull.

There isn’t any part of the body that McIntyre doesn’t operate on; facial fractures, hand surgeries, joint replacements and rebuilding of jaws and palates are all on his repertoire. “It used to be that people with these medical problems had to go to MUSC, Duke or Emory for help. Now they don’t,” he said.

During his training in New Zealand, he learned a sophisticated microsurgery technique for breast reconstruction following mastectomy. The deep inferior-epigastric perforator (DIEP) flap technique uses the patient’s own tissue, usually taken from the abdominal area, to reconstruct the missing breast. The surgery has a 95-98 percent success rate and avoids many of the problems associated with traditional breast implants, he said.

“This type of breast reconstruction surgery will last a lifetime,” McIntyre said. “No more surgical intervention is required. In contrast, breast implants typically last about 10 years, then develop capsular contracture, which requires additional surgery. And patients with breast implants need MRIs every two years to monitor the stability of the implant.”

Only two years into his clinical practice at the School of Medicine’s Specialty Clinics, McIntyre is eager to continue building the referrals that are coming from around the state. Now back at his alma mater, he acknowledges the irony that plastic surgery was not his initial choice in medical school.

“Of course I had thought of becoming a doctor to be a cardiac surgeon. But when I actually did that rotation as an intern, I hated every second of it,” he said. “That was a scary period of rediscovery. I had invested eight years of education to get to that point, and I wasn’t interested in the thing I thought all along I wanted to do.”

The turning point came during a residency rotation at a Shriners hospital for burned children. And it continues to shape his philosophy of medicine.

“We had a very young girl who had been injured in a bomb blast in Medellin, Colombia. Her leg was destroyed around the knee, and amputation seemed like the next likely step,” he said. “But the surgeons devised a procedure to cover her knee and prevented the amputation. ‘What a rewarding field to pursue,’ I thought, ‘making a difference in people’s lives.’”

Ben McIntyre, M.D., one of the newest physicians to restore a measure of normalcy to the 86-year-old man’s life.
Lisa Bryant, M.D. ’86 was an expert pharmacist who knew her business from Ability to Zantac. But dispensing pills behind a counter allowed only minimal face time with people she wanted to help. “The main pull that brought me into medicine was the desire for a deeper connection with patients,” said Bryant, a Colombia psychiatrist and now-retired administrator at the School of Medicine. “Medicine provided a way to be more involved in solving their health care problems.”

Most physicians follow a more-or-less straightforward career path: earn a bachelor’s degree, then launch into medical school. It’s the fastest track to medical school. It’s then launch into less straightforward health care problems.”

Eric Rowson, M.D., ’05, knew all along that he wanted to become a doctor. But the Florence, S.C.-family practitioner had to defer his dream for 12 years when his father became ill and Rowson helped care for his family. He worked instead at the S.C. Department of Health and Environmental Control, monitoring water quality. Rowson dreamed of medical school that he thought he could bring new technology to medicine because of his engineering background. He did just that when he invented AxiTrack, a new medical device that enables doctors to more precisely insert needles into deep veins. His achievement garnered numerous accolades, including being named S.C. Physician of the Year.

Bryant’s pharmacy training gave her the foundation to effectively prescribe medications and made her sensitive to handwriting on prescriptions “because I had been on the other end when the writing was often barely legible.”

The leadership and interpersonal skills Bryant acquired in the Navy have been especially helpful to her as a medical student and in her residency. For Ridley, “it was almost a little eerie how things have worked out,” he said. He wrote in his personal statement in medical school that he thought he could bring new technology to medicine because of his engineering background.

He credits the interpersonal and social skills he developed while working at DHEC with helping him deal with complicated or difficult situations and people as a doctor. “Family medicine really is about listening to people and enjoying them. When you do that, you can help but love what you do,” he said. Bryant, Ridley and Mines have found similar fulfillment in medicine.

Eric Rowson, M.D. advises would-be physicians to get a closer look at the profession by shadowing a doctor, asking lots of questions, and talking to practitioners about how the work fits into their personal lives. “In two or three days you can get a good sense of the level of the physician’s satisfaction and how happy you might be in the profession,” he said. “Make sure it’s something you really want to do,” Mines advises. “Make sure it’s something you’ll be able to afford if you’re switching careers, and that it’s something your family can adapt to.”

“Follow your heart. Anybody who is pursuing medicine will know if it’s in their heart and they’ll make the right decision.”

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“For me [the decision to enter medical school] was a gut check,” Ridley said, “something I felt deep down inside that I needed to do. If someone asked my opinion about going to medical school, I’d ask if they feel a need to go. For me, it was more than just that I wanted to go. I really felt as though I was called to go.”
SCHOOL OF MEDICINE OPENS NURSING MOTHER'S LOUNGE

The School of Medicine and Healthy Carolina celebrated Jan. 17 the grand opening of the Nursing Mother’s Lounge on the ground floor of the school’s medical library.

Among those speaking at the ceremony were USC first Lady Patricia Moore-Pastides, School of Medicine Dean Richard Hoppmann, M.D., Emie Bell, Ph.D., director of the S.C. Department of Health and Environmental Control Region 5 public health office, and second-year medical student Nadya Toufou-Fackche.

The lounge provides a dedicated space for new mothers to breastfeed or pump milk in a convenient and comfortable environment. The room features two gliding rockers, a microwave, refrigerator and changing table.

For Toufou-Fackche, the Nursing Mother’s Lounge is a place to escape when she needs to tend her five-month-old son.

“Medical school is a stressful environment, and the last thing a mother wants to worry about is providing milk for her child,” Toufou-Fackche said. “The Nursing Mothers’ Lounge makes it easier for new moms like me to provide quality nutrition for our children in the privacy of our own room.”

Healthy Carolina and Richland Community Health Partners provided grant funding to furnish the lounge.

The School of Medicine's Nursing Mother's Lounge is the seventh lactation room to open at the University of South Carolina. The rooms are provided by Healthy Carolina in connection with the organization's lactation support program.

PLEDGE OF COMMITMENT CEREMONY WELCOMES THE CLASS OF 2015 INTO THE MEDICAL PROFESSION

The School of Medicine recognized 87 second-year medical students with the ceremonial donning of white medical coats during the school’s annual Pledge of Commitment Ceremony held Jan. 11 at the Koger Center for the Arts.

The ceremony recognizes a medical student’s transition from studying basic science to clinical topics. Receiving the white coat symbolizes a student’s entry into the medical profession and recognizes a physician’s responsibility for caring for patients.

Hampton Wade Collins III, M.D., a graduate of the School of Medicine’s inaugural class in 1981, addressed the Class of 2015 during the ceremony. He shared stories from his time in medical school and challenged future physicians to hold the profession of medicine in high regard.

“Wearing your white coat is an honor,” Collins said. “It represents a great university that you attend and demonstrates all you have accomplished over the years.”

For Collins, the ceremony had special meaning. His son, Hampton Wade Collins IV, was among the second-year medical students receiving his white coat.

In addition to Collins, the Class of 2015 recited a pledge of commitment to the medical profession and recognized a physician’s responsibility for caring for patients.

SOUTH CAROLINA BETA CHAPTER OF ALPHA OMEGA ALPHAN HONOR MEDICAL SOCIETY HOLDS SPRING INDUCTION

On March 14, the S.C. Beta Chapter of Alpha Omega Alpha (AΩA) Honor Medical Society held its 2013 spring induction banquet. With more than 100 attendees, 13 students from the classes of 2013 and 2014 were inducted into AΩA, along with three resident physicians, two School of Medicine faculty members and two alumni.

John E. Prescott, M.D., chief academic officer for the Association of American Medical Colleges, was the AΩA visiting professor and guest speaker for the event.

In addition, Michelle L. Tucker, M.D., was recognized with the AΩA Volunteer Clinical Faculty Award.

Inductees to the S.C. Beta Chapter of Alpha Omega Alpha (AΩA) Honor Medical Society include:

Class of 2013
Andrew F. Barnes
Monica Basinger
H. Evan Dingle
Jodi Dingle
Patrick Michael Jackson
Lesley Anne Osborn

Class of 2014
George Boyd Black
Catherine Suzanne Davis
Asha Rachel De
Nathaniel G. Gray
Amitr M. Ingram
Jake Chambliss McMillin
Amanda Ruscin Vartanian

Resident Physicians
Emily Sadeghi Basaly, M.D.
Internal Medicine – Palmetto Health
Jeffrey Mullins, M.D.
Emergency Medicine – Palmetto Health
Sethuraman Ravindiran, M.D.
Medicine/Pediatrics – Greenville Health System

Faculty
Matthew Garber, M.D. – Department of Pediatrics
Francis S. Nathadapalam, M.D. – Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology (GIS)

Alumni
Emile Ziegler Bartlett, M.D. – Class of 1998
Kenneth M. Rogers, M.D. – Class of 1990

FORMER U.S. SURGEON GENERAL’S VISIT HIGHLIGHTS REGIONAL AMA-MSS CONFERENCE AT SCHOOL OF MEDICINE

More than 90 medical students from around the southeastern United States gathered at the School of Medicine Jan. 26-27 for the American Medical Association’s (AMA) Medical Student Section Region 4 meeting.

David Satcher, M.D., Ph.D., the 16th surgeon general of the United States and director of the Salter Health Leadership Institute at Morehouse School of Medicine in Atlanta, was the keynote speaker.

Salter challenged future physicians to think about issues of leadership and health policy. He recommended that physicians expand their roles beyond the clinical setting and work to improve the social community around them. As examples, he highlighted physicians advocating for healthier meals in schools and more grocery stores in underserved neighborhoods.

“To eliminate disparities in health, we need leaders who care enough, know enough, will do enough and are persistent enough,” Salter said.

One of those future leaders is second-year USC medical student Andrew Vaughan.

He said that the former surgeon general’s lesson in leadership will help pave the way for medical students to become better doctors.

“Dr. Salter has been a role model for leadership as a physician,” Vaughan said. “He challenged us to extend our leadership beyond treating patients to think of ways to improve society. His advice is something every medical student can benefit from.”

In addition to Salter’s visit, attendees at the regional AMA conference participated in policy discussions, an ultrasound workshop and a community service project.

This year marks the first time the USC School of Medicine has hosted an AMA Medical Student Section Region 4 meeting.
MATCH DAY CEREMONY MARKS NEW CHAPTER IN THE LIVES OF USC SCHOOL OF MEDICINE STUDENTS

For fourth-year medical students at the USC School of Medicine — and thousands of medical students across the country — Match Day is one of the most anticipated days in their medical careers. During a March 15 Match Day ceremony inside The Zone at Williams-Brice Stadium, students from the School of Medicine’s Class of 2013 learned the fate of their future as physicians.

Members of the Class of 2013 came forward one by one to open envelopes that revealed their future specialty in medicine and the location where they will begin residency training. “Match Day is a reminder of our medical training and a launching point in their careers,” said Richard Hoppman, M.D., dean of the USC School of Medicine. “The Class of 2013 continued a tradition of excellence at the School of Medicine by matching in exceptional residency programs in South Carolina and throughout the country.”

Nearly half of the students who matched did so in the primary care specialties of family medicine, internal medicine and pediatrics. Additionally, more than two thirds matched in primary care, emergency medicine, psychiatry or OB/GYN, which are all underrepresented in South Carolina.

USC medical student Joe Collins matched in internal medicine at Palmetto Health Richland Hospital in Columbia — his first choice. For him, the decision to enter internal medicine is personal. “I lost my father to cancer in 2000,” Collins said. “I want to be an oncologist and must train in internal medicine first.”

To Collins’s benefit, the internal medicine residency training program at USC School of Medicine/Palmetto Health was a perfect fit for his future medical interests. A father of three children, he is ready to start the next chapter in his medical career “Match Day surpassed my expectations,” Collins said. “I was excited to have my family here and share in this news with me.”

Daniel Hindman, a fellow member of the Class of 2013, also plans to enter primary care medicine. He matched at Johns Hopkins Medicine’s internal medicine-pediatrics residency program.

“I have a heart to serve the community and my residency match is a great fit,” Hindman said.

Match Day is celebrated by graduating medical students throughout the country who learn simultaneously where they will complete their residency training. The National Resident Matching Program uses a computer algorithm to match student preferences with residency-training programs in teaching hospitals across the United States.

GRADUATES TAKE CENTER STAGE AT SCHOOL OF MEDICINE COMMEMORATION EXERCISES

The School of Medicine awarded degrees to more than 130 new graduates during its spring commencement ceremonies. The ceremony, attended by hundreds of family members and friends of the graduates, took place May 10 at the University of South Carolina’s Koger Center for the Arts.

Richard Besser, M.D., ABC News’ chief health and medical editor and former acting director of the Centers for Disease Control, delivered the commencement address. As a television news correspondent, he told the crowd that he is in the business of telling stories and using communication to improve health. After sharing some of the experiences that shaped his life as a physician, he left School of Medicine graduates with this piece of advice.

“Find your passion — whatever it is,” Besser said. “Don’t be afraid of challenges because you never know what doors those challenges will open. And if you can find your passion and follow your dreams, you are going to be happy to matter how medicine evolves, and you are going to make the world a better place.”

Following the conferring of degrees, Joe Collins, M.D., graduate of the class of 2013, delivered the graduating class response. In an emotion-filled speech that thanked nurse tutors for their support and faculty and staff for their guidance, he paid tribute to the graduates of 2013, dubbing them “The Class of Awesome.”

Collins said the classmates must be ready to meet the challenges that medicine provides. “We are part of a generation of physicians that will usher in a new health care system,” he said. “Today, our hearts are filled with altruism. We have a hunger to make a difference in the lives of our patients. That can never change. If we are, once again, live up to our name, we have to be awesome in our new profession.”

Among the graduates were 85 students receiving doctor of medicine degrees, two students receiving doctor of philosophy degrees and 45 students receiving master’s degrees.

Meera Narasimhan, M.D., professor and chair of the Department of Neurosurgery and Behavioral Sciences, has been appointed vice dean for innovative health care technologies. She continues in her role as chair of neurosurgery and behavioral sciences, a position she has held since 2011. She is a nationally recognized leader in the field of health care research with a track record of technology-driven health care initiatives to improve access and affordability while providing quality care.

Donald Kenney, Ph.D., director of Student and Career Services, has been promoted to assistant dean for student affairs. Since joining the School in 1995, he has provided leadership in the Office of Student and Career Services. He has helped to develop the 12-Step Seminar Committee for M-I students, initiate the Pride of Commitment Ceremony for M-I students and the Saunders Honors Honor Society for M-IK-IV students. On a national level, he has served in numerous elected positions in the Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC) Group on Student Affairs, chaired the AAMC Southern Regional Group on Student Affairs and currently is an active member of the Steering Committee of the Southern Regional Group on Student Affairs.

R. Caughman Taylor, M.D., professor and chair of the Department of Pediatrics and senior medical director of Palmetto Health Children’s Hospital, has been elected president of the Columbia Medical Society. As president, he leads the society’s more than 550 member physicians. The organization and its members are committed to providing quality health care to citizens living in the Columbia metropolitan area. He is a 1983 graduate of the USC School of Medicine.

Lindsie Case, M.D., has been promoted to assistant dean for information technology and chief information officer. He is also an associate professor of family and preventive medicine and serves as director of Palmetto Health Richland Hospital’s Undersea and Hyperbaric Medicine program. Since 2004, he has led the School of Medicine’s Office of Information Technology. He was project director of the implementation of the Center electronic health record system at University Specialty Clinics in 2012.

Scott Stroyer, M.D., MPH, professor in the Department of Family and Preventive Medicine, was published in the March issue of the Journal of the American Board of Family Medicine. His research involved the creation of a handheld computer software tool for physicians to use in providing smoking cessation counseling to patients at the point of care. The study determined that the computer program increased the likelihood that physicians would advise their patient to quit smoking, increased physician use of the 5 As for counseling (ask, advise, assess, assist, arrange), improved physician self-efficacy in counseling patients and increased their comfort in providing follow-up care to patients.

Moss Blackburn, Ph.D., FACHE, associate dean of continuous professional development and strategic affairs, received both the Distinguished Member Award and Fellowship Award from the Alliance for Continuing Education in the Health Professions (ACEHP) during the organization’s annual conference in January. ACEHP’s Distinguished Member Award recognized his involvement in major and major service contributions, while the Fellowship Award acknowledged his outstanding and meritorious service as well as participation and long-standing membership with ACEHP.

Imesra Hikbar, M.D., assistant professor of clinical internal medicine, was published in the April issue of the Annals of the American Thoracic Society and featured in the society’s monthly news bulletin. A sleep medicine specialist, his research found that continuous positive airway pressure (CPAP) improves insulin resistance in patients with sleep apnea without diabetes. “Insulin resistance is a known risk factor for diabetes and cardiovascular disease, and obstructive sleep apnea has also been linked with cardiovascular disease,” Hikbar said. “Showing an independent link between obstructive sleep apnea and insulin resistance provides yet another connection between obstructive sleep apnea and adverse health outcomes.”
The bond Marsh shared with students would get started at freshman orientation and continue beyond graduation. To her, these aspiring young doctors were like children, and she thanked God for blessing her with more than 200 students every year.

To watch these students mature into medical professionals and become accomplished physicians brought her incredible happiness. “I'm so proud of them,” Marsh said. “They will never know how they fulfilled my life. The joy they brought me was remarkable.”

Marsh retired from the School of Medicine in 2006. A week later she went to medical school overseas rotations. These small tokens of appreciation keep Marsh's memories fresh of the hundreds of School of Medicine graduates every year.

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Marsh retired from the School of Medicine in 2006. A week later she went to work for one of her former students, Lee Carson, M.D., Ph.D., a 1998 graduate of the School of Medicine. Carson was opening her own dermatology practice in north Columbia and offered Marsh a position.

The job, which Marsh continues working on a part-time basis, provides her flexibility and the means to support her retirement travels. In recent years, she and her husband, Haskell, have traveled throughout the United States and Canada visiting places like Alaska, Yellowstone National Park and Niagara Falls. When not on the road, the couple stays busy volunteering at their church.

The reminders of Marsh's 20-year tenure at the School of Medicine are evident throughout her Kershaw County home. A jewelry box engraved with the phrase “the best med school mom” rests on her bedroom dresser. In her living room, she displays the School of Medicine Dean's Distinguished Service Award medal she received in 2002. Her china cabinet and entertainment center include gifts students brought her from overseas rotations.

These small tokens of appreciation keep Marsh's memories fresh of the hundreds of medical students she adopted as her own.
outstanding educator, he has served the mental health assistant professor in the Department of Internal Medicine at cultural and school matters. evaluation services for the Circuit Court of Baltimore. needs of underserved populations throughout his career. His clinical work and research have focused on the need for biomedical informatics from Oregon Health and Science University. He has served the S.C. College of Emergency medicine physician and respect in the community.

In addition, he volunteers as medical director of the free Medical Clinic in Columbia, a position he has held since 2002. A humanist in every sense of the word, he claims his time helping to ensure that those who cannot afford medical services get the care they need. He also organizes fundraisers for the clinic and recruits physician colleagues to volunteer their time and services. His demonstration of selfless service to improve the health status of those less fortunate in the Midlands has earned him much admiration and support in the community.

To nominate deserving alumni for an Alumni Scholarship, visit http://alumni.med.sc.edu/nominations/award10.asp. Non-alumni can be nominated for Honorary Lifetime Membership award.

HUMANITARIAN ALUMNI AWARD

M. Todd Crump, M.D., Class of ’88, is the associate medical director of the emergency department at Covington Medical Center in West Columbia, S.C. and associate professor of clinical surgery at the USC School of Medicine.

In addition, he volunteers as medical director of the Free Medical Clinic in Columbus, a position he has held since 2002. A humanist in every sense of the word, he claims his time helping to ensure that those who cannot afford medical services get the care they need. He also organizes fundraisers for the clinic and recruits physician colleagues to volunteer their time and services. His demonstration of selfless service to improve the health status of those less fortunate in the Midlands has earned him much admiration and respect in the community.

DISTINGUISHED MASTER’S ALUMNI AWARD

James P. Walton, M.B.S., Class of ’91, is the associate headmaster for Athens Academy in Athens, Ga. He is responsible for oversight of daily operations of the 950-student co-educational day school, which ranges from three-yearold kindergarten through 12th grade. During his tenure at Athens Academy, he has worked with the University of Georgia to establish an internship program. Young Dawgs, which offers high school-aged students throughout northeast Georgia the opportunity to work in research labs with top researchers. Active in his community, he has been recognized by the Rotary Club of Oconee County with the Lee Anderson Award for Vocational Excellence and Rotation of the Year award. In addition, he was named one of the 45 under 40 in Athens. Prior to joining Athens Academy, he was a biology teacher at Athens Drive High School in Columbia, S.C.

HONORARY LIFETIME MEMBERSHIP AWARD

Carol L. McNuton, M.D., is the assistant dean for minority affairs and assistant professor in the Department of Pathology, Microbiology and Immunology at the University of South Carolina School of Medicine. She joined the medical school’s faculty in 1994. Two years later, she was appointed the school’s first and only assistant dean of minority affairs. Her dedication and commitment to recruiting minority students is reflected in the dozens of underrepresented minority physicians who have graduated from the school and continue practicing medicine in South Carolina. In addition to recruiting, she has led fundraising efforts to secure scholarship money for minority students and regularly counsels current students. She is a graduate of Harvard University and obtained her medical degree from Harvard University College of Medicine. She completed an internship in obstetrics and gynecology followed by a residency in anesthesiology and clinical pathology, both at Harvard University Hospital.

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DISTINGUISHED YOUNG PHYSICIAN ALUMNI AWARD

William R. Jennings, M.D., Class of ’93, is the system vice president and medical information officer for Palmetto Health and a board-certified emergency medicine physician and chief medical officer for Palmetto Health Richland Hospital. He also is an assistant professor in the Department of Internal Medicine at the USC School of Medicine. He is an expert in the field of health information technology, he is completing a master’s degree in biomedical informatics from Oregon Health-and-Science University. He has served the S.C. College of Emergency Physicians in many capacities and is the organization’s immediate past president.

DISTINGUISHED DOCTORATE ALUMNI AWARD

Misty D. Smith, Ph.D., Class of ’98, is a behavioral pharmacologist and senior investigator in the National Institutes of Health-sponsored Anticonvulsant Drug Development (ADD) Program at the University of Utah. She is responsible for the management of the cosmetics core of the program. She is recognized for her substantial contributions to the ADD Program including recent efforts to explore the anticonvulsant potential of anticonvulsant drugs. A recipient of multiple awards from the Epilepsy Foundation and the American Epilepsy Society, she has spoken nationally and internationally on anticonvulsant drug development. She serves as an executive committee member for the Neuropharmacology Division of the American Society for Pharmacology and Experimental Therapeutics.

DISTINGUISHED MASTERS IN GENETIC COUNSELING AWARD

Campbell K. Brasington, MS, CGC, Class of ’92, is the senior genetic counselor at Levine Children’s Hospital at Carolinas Medical Center in Charlotte, N.C., having served there for more than 24 years. Described by her peers as an outstanding mentor and passionate counselor, she has taken special interest in individuals with Down syndrome. She participates in Down syndrome activities and issues at the local and national levels, including the National Down Syndrome Congress and Down Syndrome Association of Greater Charlotte. As an author of numerous publications, she often discusses the genetic counseling profession’s relationship with the disability community. Several of her recent papers have recommended practice guidelines for communicating genetic information in prenatal diagnosis of Down syndrome to families.

CLASS OF 1982

Paul Rush, M.D. (orthopaedic surgery), was elected to the USC School of Medicine Alumni Board at the full membership meeting Oct. 5.

CLASS OF 1988

Mary Elizabeth Christian, M.D. (surgery), serves on the Louisiana Development Disabilities Council and the Board of Louisiana Behavior Analysts Association. She is active in autism advocacy legislation, triathlons and running races.

CLASS OF 1991

Cindy Mills Snell, M.D. (ophthalmology) — “A special thank you to those who’ve reached out to us following our beloved Bruce’s unexpected death in September 2012. Your prayers, thoughts and touches have meant so much and reconnecting with old friends continues to be a great blessing.”

CLASS OF 1992

H. David Stone, M.D. (allergy/immunology), was elected to the USC School of Medicine Alumni Board at the full membership meeting Oct. 5.

CLASS OF 1993

Joseph DeStefano, M.D. (internal medicine), is currently working for Eagle Hospital Physicians in Georgetown, S.C., where he is a regional medical director. He was previously in Easley, S.C. While living in the Upstate, he is responsible for programs in Georgetown, Murrells Inlet, Little River and Loris, S.C., and a large program in Tyler, Texas.

CLASS OF 1995

Allison Aitchison, M.G.C. (genetic counseling), was elected to the USC School of Medicine Alumni Board at the full membership meeting Oct. 5.

CLASS OF 1998

Paul Aitchison, M.D. (musculoskeletal radiology), was elected to the USC School of Medicine Alumni Board at the full membership meeting Oct. 5.

CLASS OF 2002

Bob Underwood, M.D. (emergency medicine), was accepted to Dartmouth College in the Master of Health Care Delivery Science program. He describes the program as a unique curriculum that Dartmouth developed independently between the Tuck School of Business and the Dartmouth Institute for Health Care Policy.

David Arnedo, M.D. (allergy/immunology), was elected to the USC School of Medicine Alumni Board at the full membership meeting Oct. 5.
CLASS OF 2003
Harikrishna B. Bhatt, M.D. (endocrinology, diabetes and metabolism) joined the Division of Endocrinology, Diabetes and Metabolism at Brown University. He was recently honored with the Warren Alpert Medical School of Brown University Dean’s Excellence in Teaching Award. At Brown, he serves as director of the diabetes program within the Division of Endocrinology, Diabetes and Metabolism. He and his wife have a three-year-old son, Mayur, and reside in Massachusetts.

CLASS OF 2004
Heather Evans-Anderson, Ph.D. (biomedical science), was elected to the USC School of Medicine Alumni Board at the full membership meeting Oct. 5.

CLASS OF 2006
Andrew Delmas, M.D. (hematology/oncology), and Emily Delmas, M.D. (trauma/critical care surgeon), moved to El Paso, Texas, in July 2012. Andrew is stationed as staff hematologist/oncologist at William Beaumont Army Medical Center following completion of a fellowship at Walter Reed National Military Center in Bethesda, Md. In addition, he works as a battlefield surgeon for a deployed infantry unit in Afghanistan. Emily completed her critical care fellowship at Johns Hopkins in July 2012. She works at Texas Tech University Medical Center as a trauma/critical care surgeon.

CLASS OF 2007
Daniel Tegue, M.D. (pathology), is finishing his fellowship in dermatopathology at Wake Forest Baptist Hospital in June. He also completed a surgical pathology fellowship at the Medical University of South Carolina last year. He and his family (five children) will move to Savannah, Ga., this summer where he will begin work for Chatham Pathology Associates.

CLASS OF 2008
Karissa King Wilson, M.D. (family medicine)—“I married Jeremy Wilson, one of my residency classmates, in October 2010. We are now living in Augusta, Ga., and we both work at Christ Community Health Services in family practice.”

CLASS OF 2010
Will Byrum, M.D. (family medicine) was awarded the AAFP Bristol Myers Squibb Excellence in Graduate Medical Education Award in October 2012. He was presented with the award at the AAFP Scientific Assembly in Philadelphia. In addition, he was also recently elected chair-elect of the Organization of Resident Representatives of the Association of American Medical Colleges in his second year as a member of that group. He said, “I give so much of the credit for these awesome opportunities and recognitions to the USC School of Medicine and want to make sure everyone at the school and greater community knows it.”
One of the School of Medicine’s signature events, the annual Black Tie/White Coat Gala, attracted more than 400 friends and supporters this year. Held March 8 at 701 Whaley in Columbia, the gala raised more than $64,000 in support of the Free Medical Clinic and the Alumni Scholarship Fund. Thanks to the generosity of donors past and present, this year’s gala eclipsed the $500,000 milestone in funds raised through the event’s 12 years.
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