Surviving with cystic fibrosis
On Nov. 1, 2013, I assumed the role as interim dean of the School of Medicine. I accepted the opportunity because the School of Medicine is very near and dear to my heart and has been a significant part of my life for nearly 35 years.

My career in medicine began as a first-year medical student at USC in 1979. Like many of you, I chose to attend the School of Medicine because of its small class size and outstanding faculty. Educators like Warren Derrick, M.D., James Stallworth, M.D., and O’Neill Barrett, Jr., M.D., challenged me as a student, mentored me as a future physician and steered me toward a career in academic medicine. Years later, I came to fully appreciate the influence these individuals and others in the school had in defining my career and the clinical and leadership skills they taught me.

As chair of the Department of Pediatrics at the School of Medicine and senior medical director of Palmetto Health Children’s Hospital, I have been afforded the opportunity to be a part of two outstanding organizations committed to improving the health of South Carolinians. I hope my experience in these roles will serve the School of Medicine well as we adapt to the ever-changing health care landscape. From the way we educate students to our research endeavors and our clinical partnerships, we must redefine our priorities and look for new opportunities in collaboration.

My priorities as interim dean include the following:

• establishment of a Florence campus that will support further medical education in our state
• continue to explore a possible clinical integration with Palmetto Health
• rethink and challenge the way we educate our students to improve medical education
• strengthen our collaborations with Palmetto Health and the Dorn VA Hospital, while building new relationships with our academic medical partners in Greenville and Florence
• define what types of research we do best and how we can make a difference in this era of reduced research funding

I very much need, want and ask for your support in this new role. Each of us has a responsibility to ensure the future success of the School of Medicine — an institution that has given so much to each of us.

I believe the School of Medicine’s best days are ahead of us. With your support, we will be able to achieve greater things for our beloved school and the patients, students and communities we serve.

R. Caughman Taylor, M.D., ’83
Interim Dean, University of South Carolina School of Medicine
Cystic fibrosis patients are living longer and faculty at the School of Medicine are preparing to care for patients long into adulthood.

Dr. E.J. Mayeaux Jr. brings a passion for primary care and a love of horses to the Palmetto State.

Rising undergraduate seniors are receiving a preview of medical school and what it takes to be a doctor.

From the battlefield of Vietnam to the halls of the USC School of Medicine, Dr. O’Neill Barrett Jr. has enjoyed a decorated career in medicine.

Professor Francis Spinale paves the way in personalized medicine research.

Ultrasound experts from more than 80 universities and 20 countries descend upon Columbia for the Second World Congress on Ultrasound in Medical Education.

Italian medical student Alessandra Bertone is the School of Medicine’s first Global Health Learning Opportunities exchange student.

HARRIS PASTIDES | President
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Cover photo by Science Photo Library
THE FACTS ON CYSTIC FIBROSIS

CF is the most common fatal genetic disease, particularly among Caucasians.

1 in every 2,000-2,500 births among Caucasians are diagnosed with CF; 1 in every 17,000 births among African Americans are diagnosed with CF.

1 in 31 Americans are carriers of the defective CF gene but do not have the disease.

70,000 children and adults worldwide have CF.

More than 1,000 gene mutations cause CF; screening for all mutations is not possible.
TWO SCHOOL OF MEDICINE CLINICS ARE HELPING PATIENTS WITH CYSTIC FIBROSIS MAKE THE TRANSITION TO ADULT CARE.

If she had been born 50 years ago, Harmony White likely would not have lived long enough to attend college or make the switch from pediatric to adult medical care.

Now a sophomore biology and math major at Wofford College in Spartanburg, S.C., White is one of some 30,000 people in the United States who live with cystic fibrosis, a genetic disease that used to be a childhood death sentence. Improved drug and treatment protocols have substantially lengthened life expectancy for CF patients — nearly half of that population is 18 or older, and the median survival age is approaching 40.

In practical terms, that means a growing contingent of patients are outgrowing the pediatric physicians who have cared for them since infancy but still need specialized care for their condition. Cystic fibrosis is caused by a defective gene whose protein product causes the body to produce unusually thick, sticky mucus that clogs the lungs, obstructs the pancreas and stops natural enzymes from helping the body break down and absorb food.

“When I was in medical school, CF was considered a pediatric disease,” said Dan Brown, M.D., an assistant professor of pediatric pulmonology at USC’s School of Medicine. “But 15 to 20 years ago, the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation saw that more people with CF were surviving childhood and entering adulthood. Now, just about every state has at least one adult CF clinic.”

Brown directs a pediatric CF clinic at University Specialty Clinics with about 70 patients who are seen every three months by clinicians from pulmonology, social work, respiratory therapy, nutrition and pharmacy. The clinic was accredited in 1999, and Harmony White has been one of Brown’s patients for years.

“It is actually daunting to make the transition to adult care,” White said. “I have been seeing Dr. Brown since I can remember. It's a little scary to start over with someone new. I am trusting these doctors to find a new person for me to trust.”

That new person is Jennifer Hucks, M.D., ’04, an assistant professor of clinical internal medicine in the School of Medicine who plans next year to apply for accreditation from the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation for an adult CF clinic. Currently, South Carolina’s only accredited CF clinic for adults is in Charleston — a long drive for patients from the Upstate and Midlands. Hucks has nearly 20 adult CF patients now.

“Every transition from pediatric to adult CF care is different,” Hucks said. “It is not an event, but a process that must be tailored to the adolescent. It starts with monthly visits to the pediatric CF clinic to meet the patients and families who are nearing transition. Some patients are eager to transition but most are weary of change.

“CF is best treated by a team, so it is not just an issue of going to a new doctor, but establishing relationships and building trust with an entirely different team of adult practitioners.”

Patients must also adjust to a new health care system. “The adult hospital is vastly different from the children’s hospital where they have grown up,” Hucks said.

“The biggest hurdle CF patients face at transition is taking ownership of their condition. Traditionally, parents or other caregivers have ensured patients did their treatments, scheduled visits, refilled prescriptions, ensured proper nutrition, dealt with insurance and many other things related to care. This responsibility has to shift to the patient; these are things patients must learn to do for themselves.”

From a clinician’s perspective, caring for adults with CF involves more comprehensive care. “Most pulmonologists only deal with the lung, but a CF physician must evaluate and treat all of the organ systems affected by the disease. While pediatric CF care centers provide expert CF care, there are many conditions that are unique or more prevalent in the adult population such as fertility issues, pregnancy, CF-related diabetes, CF liver disease and osteoporosis,” Hucks said.

Other members of the CF care team have to alter treatment plans based on age of the patient as well.

“Young people with CF often have to eat a lot of calories just to maintain sufficient weight,” said Allison Hanna, a registered dietitian at Palmetto Health Richland who sees patients at the pediatric CF clinic. “But as adults, they might have to deal with the consequences of too many calories just like the non-CF population.”

Adult CF patients also face increased risk for developing diabetes because of chronic damage to the pancreas which affects insulin-producing islet cells.

While 1,000 new cases of cystic fibrosis are diagnosed every year in the United States, new treatments and new drugs are in continuous development and in clinical trials. Cystic Fibrosis Foundation-sponsored research has been ongoing for decades, which has helped extend the median survival age.

“There are more than 1,000 genetic variations of cystic fibrosis,” Hucks said. “Recently, there have been exciting advances with medications designed to fix the problem protein at the cellular level. In some genotypes they have been able to reverse the disease. We believe a cure is on the horizon.”
Although he typically wears a shirt and tie, E.J. Mayeaux Jr., M.D., will always consider himself a “country boy” at heart.

A lifelong Louisianan and Eagle Scout, Mayeaux (rhymes with “bayou”) said when he’s not seeing patients or teaching, he’d prefer to be riding one of his horses through the woods.

“I spent many summers on my uncle’s farm, and once I started working with horses I never looked back,” said Mayeaux, who currently owns two walking horses.

Mayeaux was named chair of the Department of Family and Preventive Medicine in summer 2013. With his move to Columbia, Mayeaux left behind a 100-acre farm in Shreveport, La., where he took care of the horses and tended to the land with his wife, Michelle.

Mayeaux spent the past 23 years of his career at Louisiana State University’s Medical Center Shreveport and is himself a true Cajun, with roots in the Bayou State that go back many generations and can be traced to the migration of French Acadians from Nova Scotia in the late 1700s.

“It’s a tough thing to leave when you have roots that deep. The Acadian culture is a lot like stereotypical Italians — we like to talk with our hands, we love life and we really, really care about our families,” he said.

While the decision to move to South Carolina was difficult, Mayeaux said it was the people he met at USC while scouting out the university that made all the difference.

“When you want to lead a team, you want a team of capable, competent people. But also people of good character and will. When I looked around, I saw that the people here were amazing,” he said. “I could have become a department chair a lot earlier in Louisiana, but I absolutely love teaching — I couldn’t let go of my residents.

“Here, I’ll still help residents, but now it’s time to step up and take care of the faculty. I’ll still teach, coach and nurture.”

Mayeaux’s clinical expertise includes women’s health topics such as cervical disease, HPV disease, HPV vaccination and skin diseases. He is also interested in patient literacy as it relates to pediatrics, family practice and internal medicine.

He has published and edited five books including the Color Atlas of Family Medicine and the Essential Guide to Primary Care Procedures, both of which are available in multiple languages. He is a diplomate of the American Board of Family Practice, a fellow of the American Academy of Family Physicians and a fellow of the American Society for Colposcopy and Cervical Pathology (ASCCP).

He is currently on the executive board of ASCCP and will be president of the society in 2014. He was also the lead editor of Modern Colposcopy, the flagship publication on colposcopy from the ASCCP.

“Dr. Mayeaux brings a passion for educating future physicians and expertise in many areas of primary care medicine,” said Richard Hoppmann, M.D., past dean of the USC School of Medicine. “The School of Medicine will benefit from his academic and clinical leadership, and he will be instrumental in developing new multidisciplinary relationships to improve the delivery of care to patients and advance our mission of providing exemplary health care to the citizens of South Carolina.”

In addition to his interest in horses, Mayeaux is a ropes course devotee who volunteers with the Boy Scouts, the YMCA and other groups in leadership training exercises. He says lessons learned on the course are transferrable to teaching the next generation of primary care physicians.

In an era of poor health outcomes and increasingly expensive specialty care, Mayeaux said USC’s commitment to quality primary care inside and outside the classroom is important. Strengthening the bonds between patients and trusted family physicians, much like the country doctors of old, is essential to improving health in America, he says.

“What we do in primary care is so critical to the health of our individual patients, but also to our country and our health care system. When you have a group of people like we have here at USC, these folks can change individual communities and the world,” he said.
Alumni Volunteers Needed
If interested, contact:
Lita DaSilva, Department of Pediatrics
803-434-7956 or Lita.Dasilva@uscmed.sc.edu
Stellar grades and a passion for healing are always requisite, but medical school admissions committees also prefer applicants who demonstrate familiarity with the field of medicine, an understanding of what they are getting into.

That is why the School of Medicine established a shadowing program for rising undergraduate seniors from several South Carolina colleges and universities in 2008.

“The program is aimed at getting them medical experience and, in some cases, reassuring them about going to medical school,” said James Stallworth, M.D., a professor of pediatrics at the School of Medicine and director of student recruitment.

The four-week program, held in June, began with six undergraduates and now enrolls 20 students from six institutions — Francis Marion University, Furman University, Wofford College, Clemson University, USC, Presbyterian College and Columbia College. It is designed to give the students a competitive edge in the admissions process, and to give them an up-close look at the USC School of Medicine.

The program is a coordinated effort of medical school faculty, Palmetto Health Richland Hospital and previous graduates of the School of Medicine.

“Faculty have told me they like interacting with these undergraduates because of their eagerness to participate and their appreciation for being able to have this experience in medicine,” Stallworth said. “It gives them a boost, too.”

Each year’s shadowing students are nominated for the program by their pre-med advisors. The program consists of four one-week shadowing experiences that expose the students to different medical specialties. In each department, students get to see procedures, patient interaction and education aspects of the clinical area.

The students participate in mock admission interviews, get an orientation to the School of Medicine’s ultrasound program, visit the gross anatomy lab and visit the school’s Simulation Laboratory. They also accompany first-year medical students in the Senior Mentoring Program, which pairs them with elderly patients.

In the fourth and final week, students complete evaluations and receive certificates. They also can request a letter of recommendation for their medical school applications.

Stallworth tells the participants that he expects them to complete the four-week regimen even if they suspect during the experience that a career in medicine is not going to be in their future. If a student reaches that conclusion, which occasionally happens, Stallworth said he believes “we’ve still helped the student and the medical school tremendously.”

It is the exception to the rule that students will have second thoughts about their desire to attend medical school after the shadowing experience. Most are gratified at having the opportunity to get valuable clinical experience, he said.

“I hope to see things that I have never seen before, and to see things that will solidify my desire to go to medical school,” said Kaowao Hasanee, a Columbia College chemistry major from Gaston. “This is going to build up my experience. I had a hard time finding a place to shadow and this program has given me a chance to do that.”

Makiera Simmons, a USC biology major from Gaffney, had some previous shadowing experiences with a Lexington allergist and a Columbia oncologist, but they were only for one day. She enrolled in the June shadowing program to get more time in a clinical setting and to have a broader exposure to different specialties. “I also want to hear more from the physicians about how medicine affects their personal lives,” she said.

“This is probably the only experience where I can be exposed to medicine for an entire month, which will be a cool way of getting a feel for what it’s actually like to be a physician,” said Jacob White, a USC biomedical engineering major.

“It was a great opportunity to see many different areas of medicine,” said Chandler Finney, a second-year med school student from Columbia who completed the shadowing program as a USC undergraduate two years ago and was this year’s summer pediatrics clerk, assisting Stallworth.

“I had done a lot of shadowing and volunteering as an undergraduate, but I never really had the opportunity to see the vast differences in multiple areas of medicine, and the differences between academic medicine and private practice medicine,” Finney said. “This shadowing program really allows you to see what it’s going to be like to attend medical school.”
He does not brag about it — in fact, he won’t mention it unless asked — but O’Neill Barrett, Jr., M.D., keeps pretty impressive company. Glance around the former chairman of the Department of Medicine’s tidy home office in Northeast Columbia and that’s clear from the photographs that line the walls.

There’s King Hussein of Jordan and former First Lady Mamie Eisenhower. There’s General Omar Bradley and General Albert Wedemeyer, followed by Green Beret co-founder Bill Yarborough, followed by Ana Mae Hayes, the first U.S. Army nurse to reach brigadier general — all friends, colleagues or former patients.

“And this one’s my favorite one of all,” says Barrett, pointing to a framed portrait in the corner. “That’s Daniel Inoue, senator from Hawaii. He was awarded the Medal of Honor for his service in WWII in Italy. Dear friend. Took care of him for years.”

But then, Barrett took care of a lot of people during his near 50-year medical career, very few of them famous. Most notably, he helped take care of soldiers during the Vietnam War, first as chief of medical services at the U.S. Army 8th field hospital in Nha Trang and as an advisor at Cong Hua Hospital in Saigon; then, following a 5-year run as chief of hematology and oncology at Letterman General Hospital in San Francisco, he was appointed chief of medicine at Hawaii’s Tripler Hospital just as the Tet Offensive was ramping up.

“When I was in Vietnam on the ground, we did not have a thousand casualties at a time,” he says, dismissing the suggestion that he was any kind of hero. “When I was in Hawaii, those were the bad years. We took care of many, many casualties that came directly from Vietnam — it was just awful. We took care of a lot of other medical problems, too. Malaria was a huge problem, and other infectious diseases that most people don’t even know about.”

Meanwhile, the University of Hawaii launched its new medical school and looked to Tripler for faculty and guidance.

“Somebody came to me — I knew most of the people over there — and we did all the clinical training for the university for the first couple of years,” he says. “The students came out to Tripler and used our patients and my staff to do their training.”
After a stint as chief of medicine at Walter Reed (and a concurrent professorship at Georgetown), Barrett retired as a colonel in 1973 and moved to Tampa to help launch the medical school at the University of South Florida. Three years later, he followed a colleague and friend, Joan Kershner, to Columbia, where she had been named assistant director of the VA hospital. USC’s new School of Medicine was just gearing up, providing another opportunity to help shape medical education.

Two decades and several hundred students later, Barrett retired from USC and the practice of medicine but not before the medical school named its annual teaching award in his honor. It was a fitting tribute, considering he had himself won outstanding faculty and teaching awards multiple times.

“When I’m doing something and doing it well, I know it,” he says matter-of-factly. “When I’m teaching and really in it, I feel it. And what I did, I did very well. I’m not modest about that.”

Now retired nearly 20 years, Barrett continues to serve the medical school, volunteering one day a week, seven months a year for the admissions committee, where his experience and perspective command instant respect.

“It’s kind of like that old commercial, ‘When E.F. Hutton talks, people listen’. When Dr. Barrett talks, people listen,” says Columbia psychiatrist Angie Harper, M.D., ’00 a fellow member of the admissions committee and a close friend. “He has this amazing insight with the students we interview. He picks up on the little things, the nuances. He asks these amazing questions, almost like a psychiatrist.”

When not interviewing prospective students, Barrett pursues a number of hobbies including bird watching and classical music. He also spends time writing and has already published a handful of books, including the memoir “Not Much of a War,” about his time in Vietnam, and “Internal Medicine in Vietnam, Vol. 2: General Medicine and Infectious Diseases” (with Andre Ognibene); his current creative project is a lighthearted work of nonfiction tentatively titled “A Very Short Story about the English Language.”

Barrett says that for many years his “biggest love” was sailing, and though he sold his boat a few years ago following his second knee replacement, he looks back fondly on the years on Lake Murray with his late wife Elois and on sailboat races in Hawaii, San Francisco and Washington D.C. As with his professional life, however, the goal was never glory but simply to challenge himself, mentally and physically, and to rise to the occasion.

“That picture on the wall is of me on the 44-foot Islander, which I sailed on in 1967 in the Trans Pac race from Los Angles to Hawaii,” he says with something just short of pride. “Thirteen days, 23 hours and 59 seconds. Seriously — it took two weeks.”

Asked how the eight-member crew fared, he just smiles: “We finished.”
Once upon a time, the practice of medicine took the individuality of the patient into account only if the patient did not respond appropriately to treatment.

A medication, for example, could be increased or, if side effects were too onerous, the dosage could be decreased or another medication substituted.

But a sea change came to medicine with information made available through genomics. More than a decade ago, the journals Science and Nature detailed early results of mapping the entire human genome. It was an important signpost of progress at the time, and a detailed understanding of the inner workings of human cells and tissues has only accelerated in the years since. Consider the discovery of the tumor-suppressing BRCA1 and BRCA2 genes and the related genetic tests that can predict a woman’s susceptibility to developing breast cancer later in life.

Now Francis G. Spinale, M.D., Ph.D., a professor of cell biology and anatomy and adjunct professor of surgery at the School of Medicine and a staff physician in cardiology at the Dorn VA Hospital, is helping lead the way in a still-underdeveloped area of personalized medicine — cardiovascular disease — and he is going even further downstream than the genetic code of an individual.

That is because genes, while an important part of understanding a patient’s susceptibility to disease or response to treatment, are, in a sense, frozen in time. For example, identical twins are born with the same genetic makeup, but they might lead very different lives. Their diets, environmental exposure, exercise habits and injuries can change the underlying functioning of the biomachinery that runs their bodies.

Rather than studying the unchanging genetic makeup of the individual, Spinale focuses instead on the actual products of genes — proteins and enzymes — that can be measured in the blood. These blood measurements, called biomarkers, can reflect normal and abnormal functions of the body and provide unique insight into these functions on an individual basis. If the genetic code is the blueprint for constructing the parts that allow the human body to function, biomarkers are the actual components as they go about the business of making the body run.

An example of Spinale’s biomarker research is that of heart failure. Specifically, he has shown that one common thread in heart failure is a change in the extracellular matrix. By examining changes in a family of enzymes that regulate the structure of the extracellular matrix, he has uncovered valuable diagnostic information.

Another important example is how to use biomarkers to identify at a personalized level how a patient might respond to a heart failure therapy.

“Cardiac resynchronization therapy, or CRT, is a very effective treatment for heart failure, at least for a subset of patients,” said Spinale. “But it is expensive, at $50,000 to
$125,000, and 50 percent of patients do no better or worse with CRT."

Spinale was part of a team that discovered that a specific set of biomarkers can predict how a patient will respond to CRT, which was a featured presentation at the International Heart Rhythm Society in May and is under review in the Journal of the American Medical Association. The team enrolled 800 patients in a medical trial that examined blood samples before CRT and measured the success of the intervention.

“It was the largest clinical trial of its kind, and we surveyed 170 biomarkers,” Spinale said. “What we found was a unique signature that could predict patients with a high risk of poor response to CRT.”

One of the leading causes of death and disability in South Carolina is cardiovascular disease and heart failure leads the way. Spinale is developing blood tests to not only identify patients early on who are at risk for heart failure but also to develop a blood test to keep these patients out of the hospital.

Success could have a dramatic impact on the longevity of many South Carolinians, Spinale says: “Heart failure affects more people than all cancers combined.”

One of the leading health care costs is early heart failure readmission. In fact, this is a key health care indicator in the new health care affordability act.

“If you have high blood pressure, you have a 50 percent risk for developing the signs and symptoms of heart failure — and that is even if the hypertension is controlled,” Spinale said. “We need to develop a blood test to find those with the greatest risk and work with them because once you present with heart failure secondary to hypertension, there is no treatment.”

Spinale is helping to organize a large-scale study in South Carolina, the first of its kind in the state, to identify and predict patients who are at the greatest risk for heart failure readmission. Working with biomarker panels developed from his earlier studies, Spinale is partnering with Palmetto Health to establish outreach programs and clinics throughout the state to do the blood tests and follow-up clinical work.
The power and promise of ultrasound as an innovative tool in training future generations of physicians and educators, and the School of Medicine’s unique position as a worldwide leader in ultrasound medical education, made Columbia, S.C., the ideal setting for the Second World Congress on Ultrasound in Medical Education.

Held Sept. 27-29, the gathering drew internationally-recognized ultrasound experts from more than 20 countries and 80 universities to teach the latest techniques, explore new advances in technology and discuss the future of ultrasound in medical education.

The conference’s plenary sessions highlighted everything from ultrasound probes to podcasts. Presenters such as Vicki Noble, M.D., director of the Division of Emergency Ultrasound at Massachusetts General Hospital, told the audience that ultrasound had enormous potential for faculty to mentor medical students at the bedside, while Mike Mallin, M.D., ’07, and Matt Dawson, M.D., RDMS, RDCS, described how the digital age of medicine is revolutionizing how ultrasound information is shared. Mallin, director of the emergency ultrasound division and the emergency ultrasound fellowship at the University of Utah, and Dawson, medical director for point-of-care ultrasound at the University of Kentucky, created the Ultrasound Podcast which has been downloaded more than a half-million times in 180 countries.

“The global emergence of ultrasound as an affordable and effective diagnostic device is having a profound impact on the way we educate future physicians and diagnose many health conditions,” said Richard Hoppmann, M.D., director of the School of Medicine’s Ultrasound Institute and the Dorothea H. Krebs Endowed Chair of Ultrasound Education. “The School of Medicine welcomed the opportunity to host many world leaders in ultrasound education, major ultrasound manufacturers and innovators of ultrasound technology. The World Congress presented a unique opportunity to share ideas and map the future use of ultrasound in medical education, while at the same time showcasing the USC School of Medicine and the Columbia community on a world stage.”

Attendees of all skill levels enjoyed 30 hands-on workshops taught by world-renowned ultrasound experts including faculty from the USC School of Medicine. Second-year USC medical student Will Burns relished the opportunity to learn lung ultrasound from the technique’s pioneer, French physician Daniel Lichtenstein, M.D.

“I had never seen a lung ultrasound before,” Burns said. “The event brought together a great collection of ultrasound faculty, and people were able to teach ultrasound here in a way that a second-year medical student could understand.”

Planning is already underway for the Third World Congress on Ultrasound in Medical Education, which will be hosted by Oregon Health & Science University, Oct. 10-12, 2014, in Portland, Ore.
Medical education miles from home

ITALIAN MEDICAL STUDENT ALESSANDRA BERTONE IS THE SCHOOL OF MEDICINE’S FIRST GLOBAL HEALTH LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES EXCHANGE STUDENT

Italian medical student Alessandra Bertone enjoyed her final year of medical school 5,000 miles from home. This University of Pavia (Italy) student spent four weeks this fall in Columbia, studying medicine at the University of South Carolina School of Medicine.

The School of Medicine welcomed Bertone as its first Global Health Learning Opportunities (GHLO™) exchange student.

Established by the Association of American Medical Colleges, GHLO facilitates global learning for final-year medical students pursuing clinical, research, or public health electives outside their home country. More than 35 U.S. and international medical schools have joined the collaboration. Students from these schools can apply for electives using GHLO’s web-based application and member schools work together to ensure a student’s credits will easily transfer.

USC’s School of Medicine was one of the first U.S. medical schools to join GHLO when it was a pilot program.

“GHLO provides medical students the opportunity to go places and see the world of medicine from a different perspective,” said Richard Hoppmann, M.D., director of the School of Medicine’s Ultrasound Institute and the Dorothea H. Krebs Endowed Chair of Ultrasound Education. “Our students will benefit from the study abroad experiences and the interaction with international students we welcome to our campus.”

The School of Medicine’s internationally recognized ultrasound program attracted Bertone to USC. The aspiring OB/GYN physician developed an interest in ultrasound during her hospital rotations in Italy. Her trip to South Carolina coincided with the Second World Congress on Ultrasound in Medical Education where she attended workshops and lectures about the global use of ultrasound. In addition, she worked alongside USC medical students in an ultrasound laboratory session at the School of Medicine’s Ultrasound Institute.

“When I start my residency next year, I expect to use ultrasound to care for my patients,” Bertone said. “My training at USC has prepared me to use ultrasound on patients of all ages.”

Bertone’s elective coursework extended beyond ultrasound. She participated in clinical rotations in pediatrics and women’s health at Palmetto Health Richland Hospital, trained in the simulation lab at University Specialty Clinics and took an advanced cardiovascular life support class. In addition, she enjoyed a road trip to Charleston, visits to the Columbia Art Museum and the S. C. State House, and ate her first corn dog at the S. C. State Fair.

Bertone appreciates the opportunity to study at the School of Medicine. She says the breadth of knowledge she obtained and the experiences she enjoyed left an indelible impression.

“I’m blessed to have this opportunity to see how health care works in other countries and at other universities,” Bertone said. “My time at USC will make me a better doctor.”

Bertone receives ultrasound training from Jeff Hall, M.D., assistant professor of clinical family and preventive medicine.
DEAN’S AWARD WINNERS ANNOUNCED
On Oct. 16, Richard Hoppmann recognized outstanding faculty and staff at the School of Medicine with several distinguished awards, including the Order of the Palmetto, Dean’s Distinguished Service Award and the William C. Gillespie Staff Recognition Award.

ORDER OF THE PALMETTO AWARD
The Order of the Palmetto is considered the highest civilian honor in the State of South Carolina. It recognizes a person’s lifetime achievements and contributions to the state.

Charles S. Bryan, M.D.
Heyward Gibbes Distinguished Professor of Internal Medicine

DEAN’S DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD
The Dean’s Distinguished Service Award recognizes faculty and staff at the School of Medicine who have exhibited outstanding commitment and service to advancing the mission of the school.

Nan W. Barker
Administrative director for the Department of Neuropsychiatry and Behavioral Science
Charles R. Campbell
Director of Facilities Management and Support Services
Shawn A. Chillag, M.D.
Professor and chair of the Department of Internal Medicine
Thomas P. Cook, M.D.
Residency program director for the Department of Emergency Medicine at Palmetto Health
Lynn W. Heard
Administrative coordinator for the Office of Associate Dean of Medical Education and Academic Affairs
Patrick S. Hunt, M.D.
Clinical faculty in the Department of Emergency Medicine at Palmetto Health
Davinder K. Lally, M.D.
Associate professor of clinical internal medicine
B. James McCallum, M.D.
Internal medicine physician at Dorn VA Medical Center
Lynn K. Thomas, Dr.P.H.
Assistant dean for preclinical curriculum

WILLIAM C. GILLESPIE STAFF RECOGNITION AWARD
The William C. Gillespie Staff Recognition Award recognizes an outstanding staff member at the School of Medicine whose work performance stands out as an example for all to emulate.

Stan J. Laraque
Information resource consultant II

RECORD-SETTING CROWD ENJOYS MINI-MED SCHOOL
The School of Medicine’s Mini-Med School program has never been more popular. In 2013, the average attendance at the four weekly October sessions eclipsed 100. The program offers members of the community a glimpse into the lives of medical students while providing valuable health information from School of Medicine faculty. This year’s schedule included an ultrasound demonstration, a tour of the anatomy lab and presentations on back pain, cardiac regeneration and aging.
SCHOOL OF MEDICINE WELCOMES CLASS OF 2017

The University of South Carolina School of Medicine welcomed 100 medical students to its Columbia campus as members of the Class of 2017. These future physicians were selected after the school received more than 3,000 applications. The following is a profile of the Class of 2017:

Academics
3.63 — Average GPA
28.7 — Average MCAT
12 — Colleges and universities attended in South Carolina

Residence
81 — South Carolina residents (from 23 counties)
19 — Out-of-state students

Majors
30 — Different majors
(51 percent biology)

Demographics
59 — Male
41 — Female
23 — Average age
16 — Percent underrepresented minorities

SCHOOL OF MEDICINE ANNOUNCES NEW LEADERSHIP IN THE OFFICE OF CLINICAL AFFAIRS

William D. Anderson III, M.D. Marion Burton, M.D.

William D. Anderson III, M.D., a board-certified family medicine physician and associate professor of family and preventive medicine at the University of South Carolina School of Medicine, has been appointed associate dean for clinical affairs and chief medical officer. In addition, Marion Burton, M.D., associate professor of pediatrics and a 22-year faculty member at the School of Medicine, has been appointed director of community affairs.

Anderson will lead the Office of Clinical Affairs, which is responsible for managing University Specialty Clinics, the School of Medicine’s clinical practice. With more than 150 physicians delivering advanced care in multiple specialties and subspecialties, University Specialty Clinics is one of the largest health care groups in South Carolina.

A native of Charleston, S.C., Anderson joined the USC School of Medicine in 2010. Prior to his appointment at USC, he was in private practice in Charleston. While in private practice, he served as a volunteer faculty member in the Medical University of South Carolina’s Department of Family Medicine. He completed his residency training and received his medical degree from the Medical University of South Carolina.

As director of community affairs, Burton will serve as a liaison between the School of Medicine and various community organizations with the shared goal of improving the health of South Carolinians. In addition, he will continue to serve as director of the Division of Community Pediatrics at the School of Medicine, a position he has held since he joined the school in 1991.

Burton is past president of the American Academy of Pediatrics, the nation’s largest pediatric organization representing more than 60,000 pediatricians. He previously was associate dean for clinical affairs at the USC School of Medicine. He is a senior medical consultant with South Carolina’s Department of Health and Human Services, where he assists with the development of health policy and promotes access to care for medically underserved populations.
Family Medicine Center recognized again as a leader in patient-centered medical care

The Family Medicine Center, operated by the School of Medicine’s Department of Family and Preventive Medicine and Palmetto Health, continues to be recognized as a leader in patient-centered medical care.

The National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA) has again designated the Family Medicine Center as a Level-III Patient-Centered Medical Home — the highest possible designation.

In 2010, the Family Medicine Center was the first primary care practice in South Carolina to achieve NCQA’s Level-III status. The current recognition, which requires the practice to meet even more rigorous standards of care than the original certification, extends until September 2016.

“The NCQA Level-III designation reaffirms that the Family Medicine Center is providing high-quality, patient-centered care that meets the needs of our patients,” said E.J. Mayeaux Jr., M.D., DABFP, FAAFP, professor and chair of the Department of Family and Preventive Medicine. “I’m proud of our team and the collaborative effort put forth to achieve this recognition as one of South Carolina’s leading primary care providers.”

Patient-centered medical homes are health care settings that facilitate partnerships between individual patients and their personal physician. The settings accommodate a team approach to health care, led by the patient’s physician. Other health care team members can include nurses, patient service representatives, social workers, pharmacists and behavioral health specialists.

Patients participating in a medical home model enjoy a plan of care based on the prevention of and care for chronic diseases. Often long-term healing relationships develop with the health care team that is centered on the needs of the patient and their family. Physicians and the care team track a patient’s medical history, exchange health information with other providers and measure patient outcomes and performance.

NCQA is a private organization dedicated to promoting quality in health care. Their Patient-Centered Medical Home recognition program requires medical practices to go through an evolving, rigorous assessment and review process that designates three levels of activity and demonstrated outcomes. Primary care practices that receive a Level-III designation are recognized as having the most developed patient-centered and coordinated care management process.

Department of Neurology receives Gold Plus and Target: Stroke Honor Roll awards for excellence in stroke care

The USC School of Medicine’s Department of Neurology, along with Palmetto Health, has been awarded the Get With The Guidelines Gold Plus award and the Target: Stroke Honor Roll award for excellence in stroke care.

The Gold Plus award represents the highest distinction possible from the American Heart Association and the American Stroke Association’s Get With The Guidelines program recognizing quality improvement within a hospital’s stroke program.

To achieve Gold status, USC and Palmetto Health achieved 85 percent or higher adherence to all Get With The Guidelines – Stroke Quality Achievement Measures for two or more consecutive 12-month intervals. The reporting initiatives are indicators by which hospitals can measure the quality of care physicians and staff are providing stroke patients.

The Target: Stroke Honor Roll award recognizes hospitals that meet the goal of administering tPA, a clot-busting medication, to eligible ischemic stroke patients through door-to-needle times of 60 minutes or less, which can greatly improve patient outcomes.

“These awards demonstrate that USC and Palmetto Health are following the best practices in stroke care in an effective and timely manner that offers patients the best possible outcomes in the event of a stroke,” said Souvik Sen, M.D., M.S., M.P.H, FAHA, chair of the Department of Neurology at the USC School of Medicine. “Our stroke team is incredibly well organized and does a remarkable job providing life-saving stroke care to patients in need.”
Charles A. Blake, Ph.D., professor of cell biology and anatomy, has been named a Fellow of the American Association of Anatomists. Only three new fellows from around the world received this award in 2013. The rank of Fellow of the American Association of Anatomists (FAAA) is designed to honor distinguished members who have demonstrated excellence in science and in their overall contributions to the anatomical sciences.

Allan Brett, M.D., professor of clinical internal medicine, director of the Division of General Internal Medicine and vice chair of the Department of Medicine, received the University of South Carolina’s Clinical Practice Teaching Award. Since joining USC in 1995, he has been a valuable contributor to the School of Medicine’s academic and clinical missions. His primary interests in academia include medical ethics and decision making in clinical practice. He directs the School of Medicine’s ethics course and chairs the ethics committee at Palmetto Health Richland Hospital. He is editor-in-chief of Journal Watch, a medical journal with international readership.

David D. Mott, Ph.D., and Janet L. Fisher, Ph.D., associate professors in the Department of Pharmacology, Physiology and Neuroscience, were published in the October issue of the Journal of Physiology (London). Their research examined the properties of neurotransmitter receptors found in a region of the brain called the hippocampus. This region is important for learning and memory but also for the production of seizures during temporal lobe epilepsy. Their results might help to develop new treatments for cognitive impairment and seizure disorders.

Mitzi Nagarkatti, Ph.D., chair of the Department of Pathology, Microbiology and Immunology, was recognized as a Carolina Distinguished Professor, one of the highest honors that USC bestows to faculty members who are among the best in their field. Carolina Distinguished Professors are selected by their dean and approved by the provost, the University Committee on Named and Distinguished Professorships and the president.

Ruth Riley, M.S., AHP, assistant dean for executive affairs and director of library services, has been named the Academic Librarian of the Year by the Southern Chapter of the Medical Library Association. Her selection was based on the demonstration of excellence in research, instruction and service in health librarianship. She received the award during the 63rd annual meeting of the Southern Chapter of the Medical Library Association in Ridgeland, Miss.

Souvik Sen, M.D., M.S., M.P.H., FAHA, chair of the Department of Neurology, was published in the July issue of the Journal of Stroke and Cerebrovascular Diseases. His research examined the relationship between gum disease and stroke. The study showed that stroke patients with gum disease are at a higher risk of stroke, heart attack and dying. Future study will investigate if treatment of gum disease can lower the risk.

James Stallworth, M.D., professor of clinical pediatrics and director of the Pediatric Clerkship Program at the School of Medicine, received the University of South Carolina’s 2013 Michael J. Mungo Graduate Teaching Award. He is the first School of Medicine faculty member to win this prestigious award. A passionate educator, he believes that teaching is a privilege and the teacher must have the knowledge to convey ideas specific to the learner and the student. Being in the clinical profession, he emphasizes to students the importance of communication and being particular about how things are said, perhaps as much or even more than what is actually said.

R. Stephen Smith, M.D., chair of the Department of Surgery, was published in the October issue of Surgery. His research found that while patients with isolated traumatic brain injury (TBI) are assumed to be at an increased risk for pulmonary embolism, that is not always the case, and patients with isolated TBI might not require early aggressive prophylaxis as is the standard for other high-risk groups.

Lesly S. Wilson, Ph.D., OTR/L, research assistant professor in the Department of Pediatrics, received the American Occupational Therapy Association’s (AOTA) Roster of Fellows Award at the 2013 Annual Conference & Expo in San Diego, Calif. In her position, she works with the Team for Early Childhood Solutions at the Center for Disability Resources within the Department of Pediatrics. She is the part C data manager and statewide technical assistant provider for the BabyNet program that provides early intervention services to children from infancy to three years old. Her professional development and research interest have included early identification, early intervention, autism spectrum disorders and pediatric health disparities.
I’ve had the great privilege of being associated with the University of South Carolina School of Medicine Alumni Association for some years now. It never ceases to amaze me what our graduates are accomplishing, especially given the fact that we are such a young medical school. Our first graduating class was small, and is now barely 30 years old, and especially in the first few years, our classes consisted only of a handful of people. With that in mind, it is tremendous to consider what we have done for the medical care of the people in South Carolina and beyond. We are small in number, but grand in accomplishments.

I also need to point out that given our relatively small number of graduates, every person and every deed makes a difference. For other institutions, if you contribute your money or your time, you are one of the many. For us, by the very nature of our institution, you are one of the few. If you agree to mentor a medical or graduate student, you are providing a tremendous resource. If you support the Alumni Association fundraising activities, your contribution might actually make a difference as to whether we can fully fund a scholarship. If you serve on a committee, it won’t be an honorary position; you’ll be a contributing member of an important group.

You might ask why you would want to do any of these things. Why would you want to come to the Black Tie/White Coat Gala, attend your class reunion or come to a football game? Why would you want to serve on a committee or the Alumni Association board? In answer, I will tell you: medicine is changing. Whether you disagree or agree with the way things are heading, I think we can all agree that things will be very different this time next year. In uncertain times, it helps to have a home. It helps to have a group of people one can rely on. What better group of folks to navigate these times with than the classmates with whom you went through gross anatomy, biochemistry and pathology. Come home to the University of South Carolina School of Medicine.

B. James McCallum, M.D.
ALUMNI ENJOY TAILGATE FESTIVITIES BEFORE GAMECOCKS WIN

An enthusiastic crowd of more than 150 School of Medicine supporters and alumni gathered Nov. 16 for the annual fall football tailgate party. Attendees enjoyed a Barbeque dinner catered by Hudson’s Smokehouse and the opportunity to socialize and reconnect with classmates and friends. The family-friendly atmosphere included face painting and games for the kids. The pregame festivities preceded the South Carolina Gamecocks 19-14 victory over the Florida Gators at Williams-Brice Stadium.
My Carolina Alumni Association awarded School of Medicine graduates M. Todd Crump, M.D., and William R. Jennings, M.D., with USC’s highest alumni honors during the My Carolina Homecoming November 1-2.

M. TODD CRUMP, ’98

Dr. Crump is the 2013 recipient of the Algernon Sydney Sullivan Award, which is given to an outstanding alumnus or alumna who serves others in a manner beyond that required by the individual’s job or profession. Crump is an emergency medicine physician who works full time at Lexington Medical Center. He also volunteers as the medical director of the Free Medical Clinic in Columbia, assisting many in receiving health care which they may not otherwise afford.

“I am honored and humbled to receive such recognition for doing what I am called to do, and love doing,” Crump said. “I went into medicine so that I could apply the knowledge and skills passed onto me by my professors and mentors to make a difference in the lives of others. Nowhere is that more important than in our patients who have limited or no access to health care.

Whether in The Free Medical Clinic or in the Emergency Department, I provide care for patients when they are most vulnerable and in need. It is in those encounters that I have the opportunity to heal, establish trust, provide support, and most of all give hope to those who may be at the end of their rope.

And I strive to treat ‘the least of these’ the way I would want my own family members to be treated: with respect, dignity and compassion. Practicing medicine within that context enables me to provide a positive, patient-focused experience, and it also motivates me to persevere in ensuring that the poor in spirit and health will always have hope in healing.”

Volunteering at the Free Medical Clinic since 1997, Crump works long hours helping to ensure that those who cannot afford medical service get the help they need. He is involved in numerous fund-raising activities for this and other causes. He was also active in the Hurricane Katrina Medical Missions trip to Louisiana in September of 2005, treating evacuees from the disaster while also chartering a jet to transport medical supplies and personnel to assist in the relief efforts.

Crump has served on many boards including My Carolina Alumni Association’s Council of Alumni Societies and USC’s Board of Governors.

WILLIAM R. JENNINGS, ’03

Dr. William R. “Tripp” Jennings, ’03, was honored with the Outstanding Young Alumni Award, which goes to a graduate under the age of 40 who has excelled in his or her chosen field. Jennings is a practicing, board-certified, emergency medicine physician at Palmetto Health Richland Hospital. He currently serves as a system vice president at Palmetto Health and informatics director for the Palmetto Health Quality Collaborative. Additionally, he serves as medical director for the South Carolina Department of Health and Human Services. He has earned numerous awards in his field including the 2013 Young Physician Award from the USC School of Medicine. A national leader in the field of medical informatics, Jennings has lectured all over the United States.

He graduated from the School of Medicine in 2003 after earning his undergraduate degree from the College of Charleston. He has also earned a graduate certificate in biomedical informatics from Oregon Health and Science University in 2011.

“I am sincerely honored to be recognized by an institution that has given so much to me and that I hold in such high regard,” Jennings said.

Jennings was president of his medical school class, chief resident of his emergency residency program at Palmetto Health, and also served as a faculty member for the Palmetto Health’s wilderness medicine course. He is a clinical assistant professor in the Department of Surgery at the USC School of Medicine. In addition to patient care and teaching in the emergency department, he is a fellow of the American College of Emergency Physicians, serving as President for the South Carolina chapter from 2009 to 2011. During that time he helped shape legislation affecting the practice of medicine through his work with state legislators.
CLASS OF 1981

- Claiborne Moseley, M.D. (orthopaedic surgery) — “I have recertified with the American Board of Orthopaedic Surgery. I expect to retire in 10 years. I have also changed practice type. I became the first orthopaedic hospitalist in Arkansas last year. I have given up elective practice to instead care for only injured and ill patients, but I still have a follow-up clinic for those folks. This has taken me back to what brought me to orthopaedics all those years ago. We have our second grandchild on the way in December 2013. Our Elizabeth is a lawyer working for the Social Security Administration in Little Rock, and Catherine is an accountant working for Vanderbilt in Nashville. Life is good.”

CLASS OF 1983

- Gregory H. Branham, M.D. (facial plastic and reconstructive surgery) — “Things are great in St. Louis at Washington University. I have been here ten years now and am enjoying the fellowship program in facial plastic and reconstructive surgery that I started four years ago. While the residents are great, there is no comparison to spending a full year training someone in your subspecialty. We just completed a site visit and received a full five-year accreditation. We are starting a new comprehensive facial nerve center, and I am looking forward to that; having completed the textbook on facial soft tissue reconstruction. As far as family, just one left at home, a senior getting ready to start the college application process. Matt is winding up a BFA at the University of Kansas in the next year and a half and Allison has joined the application process. Cindy is still working as a school nurse.”

CLASS OF 1984

- J.W. Randolph Bolton, M.D., Ph.D. (cardiothoracic surgery), has been promoted to clinical professor at Stanford University and relocated to Henderson, Nev., to serve as medical director of cardiovascular services for Stanford’s St. Rose Dominican Hospitals collaboration.

- Walter E. Connor, M.D., FFAFP (family medicine) — “I have begun a new position as the associate director over the McLeod Family Medicine Residency Program in Florence. I am in charge of our new ultrasound curriculum to teach our residents bedside ultrasound patterned after the School of Medicine’s curriculum which was founded by Dr. Richard Hoppmann. I am also in charge of creating and maintaining our simulation laboratory for teaching and certifying our residents in various procedures for family practice including endoscopy, ultrasound-guided procedures for central lines, thoracentesis, paracentesis, joint and musculoskeletal injections and other sports medicine related procedures. In addition, I am pursuing the development of a hospitalist fellowship in family medicine for our residents interested in doing predominantly inpatient care.”

I am very proud to have my son, Ryan M. Connor, M.D., a 2013 graduate of the School of Medicine as one of our new first-year family medicine residents at McLeod. My wife, Derinda, and I continue to lead one or two medical mission trips yearly to Honduras, which we have been doing since 2005. My daughter Amanda is a registered nurse in the Emergency Department at McLeod and is expecting our first grandchild in March 2014. Our lives continue to be busy, but God has blessed us greatly, and I am grateful to the School of Medicine for the many doors that have opened in my career and life due to the excellent education and training that I received as a member of the Class of 1984.”

CLASS OF 1985

- Helen M. Stockinger, M.D. (internal medicine), is now serving as medical director for medical student education at Mary Black Hospital in Spartanburg. In addition, she is a member of the faculty at Edward Via College of Osteopathic Medicine in Spartanburg.

CLASS OF 1986

- Allen Meadows, M.D. (allergy/immunology), is president elect of the Joint Counsel of Allergy Asthma and Immunology, the socio-economic/political advocate of the American Academy of Allergy, Asthma & Immunology and the American College of Allergy, Asthma & Immunology.

CLASS OF 1991

- Renee Y. Carter, M.D. (internal medicine), is currently doing a two-year fellowship with the FDA, Center for Devices and Radiological Health. Her fellowship includes an emphasis on the safe and effective use of medical devices in women.

CLASS OF 1995

- Anne L. Broadway, M.D. (family medicine), is currently working as medical director for a large urgent care clinic in Idaho Falls, Idaho. Her son Jonathan is now in the RN-BSN program at Idaho State University. Her youngest daughter, Jordan, is now pre-med. Her oldest son recently returned from Afghanistan.

CLASS OF 1996

- Donald W. Shenenger, M.D., FAAD, FFAFP CDR, MC, USN, CMIO (dermatology), is retiring from the Navy in January after more than 25 years of service. He will be entering private practice at Virginia Dermatology and Skin Cancer Center in Suffolk, Va., and teaching dermatology and family medicine residents at Eastern Virginia Medical School. He also volunteers his services at the Chesapeake Care Clinic, which provides care for local uninsured patients.
CLASS OF 1997

Maeve O’Connor, M.D. (allergy/asthma/clinical immunology) — “My husband, Richard Barnes, and I are enjoying time with our two-and-a-half-year-old son. I opened up a solo practice earlier this year: Allergy Asthma & Immunology Relief (AAIR) of Charlotte. I was elected to the Board of Regents for the American College of Allergy, Asthma and Immunology for 2013-16. It has been an exciting year for sure. We are looking forward to some R&R in January when we will visit Maui, Hawaii, for a much deserved vacation. Hope all USC School of Medicine alums are doing well!”

CLASS OF 2001

Timothy Austin, M.D. (ophthalmology) — “Catherine and I have five children now (three biological and two adopted), Laura (12), James (10), Thomas (7), Caroline (5), and Benjamin (2). We are enjoying living and practicing (ophthalmology) in Greenwood, S.C. We’ve been to China (for adoption) twice in the last two years and to Kenya (mission trip with my twin brother, Tom, and our families) last year.”

CLASS OF 2002

Manisha Shroff Chikhliker, M.D. (psychiatry) — “My sons Nikhil (7) and Kiran (4) had fun meeting Coach Spurrier at USC’s Fan Fest Day in Atlanta. Go Gamecocks!”

Anna-Kathryn Rye, M.D. (pediatric infectious diseases) — “I am the medical director for the Palmetto Health Pediatric Antimicrobial Stewardship Program (ASP). This program was the first pediatric program in the tri-state area and the first program in South Carolina. Over 4.5 years, we have significantly decreased the usage of antimicrobials per 1,000 patient days without increasing patient morbidity and mortality. Also, we have saved approximately $1 million in antimicrobial expenditures in the pediatric hospital over the course of the program.”

Jean Ann Lambert, MRC (rehabilitation counseling), is now the community resource director at Mental Health America of S.C., a non-profit advocacy and education agency helping persons with disabilities navigate through life and decrease stigma in society. In her new position, she will be a trainer and presenter for suicide prevention programs, the Don’t Duck Mental Health in Schools program, health fairs and coordinating special events throughout the state.

Andrea Johnston Mass, M.D. (pulmonary, critical care and sleep medicine), and her husband, Emmett, welcomed a baby girl, Cara Kay, on Election Day, Nov. 6, 2012.

CLASS OF 2003

Eric L. Cole, M.D. (family medicine), is working for Mary Black Physician’s Group in Spartanburg, S.C. She is in a group of five family physicians that do both inpatient and outpatient family practice. In addition, he serves as a team physician for Wofford College and is on faculty at Virginia College of Osteopathic Medicine where he teaches and serves as a clinical preceptor for third- and fourth-year students.
CLASS NOTES: We want to hear from you! Send your updates to the Alumni Office. Debbie Truluck 803-216-3303, debbie.truluck@uscmed.sc.edu, or online at alumni.med.sc.edu

CLASS OF 2005
- **Tyler K. Smith, M.D.** (pediatrics) — “I am currently employed at a community health center in Baltimore affiliated with the University of Maryland Medical Center. I enjoy working with and teaching residents and medical students. I currently serve as co-editor of the Young Physicians Newsletter for the American Academy of Pediatric (AAP), the District II representative to the Committee on Membership for the AAP, and I am the incoming District III Section on Young Physicians Representative for the AAP. I am pleased to announce that my mentee from my college alma mater, Hampton Institute, has graduated from medical school and is a second year pediatric resident. On a personal note, in July 2013, I painted the town red with my sorority sisters of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Incorporated at our Centennial Celebration in Washington, D.C.”

- **Joyce Lee-Iannotti, M.D.** (neurology) is living in Scottsdale, Ariz., with her husband, Chris Iannotti (private practice neurosurgeon), and her daughter, Sofia (age 2.5 years), and working as a stroke and sleep neurologist at Mayo Clinic.

CLASS OF 2006
- **Robert Hartman, M.D.** (pediatrics), recently completed his pediatric cardiology fellowship at the Children’s Hospital of Michigan in Detroit. He accepted a position as a clinical assistant professor of pediatrics in the section of pediatric cardiology at the Brody School of Medicine in Greenville, N.C. He welcomed his first son, Benjamin Laurence, on Aug. 10.

- **Allen Jones, M.D.** (internal medicine), is married with three kids Copeland (11), Preston (9) and Eveleigh (7). He recently moved to Greenville and joined a GI practice.

CLASS OF 2007
- **Jacob F. Riis, M.D.** (orthopaedics), is in year two of his orthopaedic surgery residence at Virginia Commonwealth University. He previously served four years as a flight surgeon with USAF special operations. He and his wife, Laura, have three daughters and enjoy living in Richmond.

CLASS OF 2008
- **Dede Norungolo, MRC** (rehabilitation counseling), recently became a nationally certified counselor and continues as a certified rehabilitation counselor. In her current role, she is a disability specialist with Clemson University’s Student Disability Services. Norungolo is presently on the board of directors for the Brain Injury Association of S.C. working to promote the annual Run for Thought 5K and 1-mile walk/run.

- **Garrick Messer, M.D.** (emergency medicine), works in Columbia with Carolina Care. He serves in the South Carolina Army National Guard and is married with four kids.

- **Walter W. Valesky, M.D.** (emergency medicine), finished his residency last year and is pursuing a fellowship in sports medicine. He went to India to lecture at INDUS-EM, an international meeting dedicated to trauma, emergency and disaster medicine.

CLASS OF 2009
- **Scott Weitzel, M.D.** (anesthesiology), and his wife, Mindy, welcomed the birth of their daughter, Abigail Brooke, on March 28th.

- **E. Jo Mason, M.D.** (psychiatry), and her husband, Wayne Ervin, welcomed a baby, Esther Olivia Ervin, on Aug. 18, 2012.
Greyson Thomas, M.D. (internal medicine) — “Everything is great on my end. I reside here in Ocala, Fla., and just recently became a sole proprietor and owner of my own primary care practice in an underserved and rural area of the state, Fort McCoy. I would have never imagined such an opportunity would be my passion. The people in this area have become my life, and now I truly appreciate what medicine can do for an entire community. Yes, I have even been offered a goat in return for my services. I would not trade it for the world, and I am honored to serve my loyal patients every day.”

Mitchel Nimmich, M.D. and Elizabeth Nimmich, M.D. (internal medicine) — “Liz is working as an infectious disease fellow. I am working at Lexington Medical Center as a hospitalist and volunteering at the Free Medical Clinic. We now live in Lexington, S.C.”


CLASS OF 2010

Brandi Lanier, M.D. (radiology), recently accepted the Breast Imaging Fellowship position at Wake Forest University beginning in July 2015. She has a new addition to the family, William, born December 2012. Big sister Annabel (3) is delighted.

Kimberly Lui, M.D. (emergency medicine), graduated from her three-year internal medicine residency at Georgetown University Hospital in Washington, D.C., in July 2013. She stayed a fourth year as chief resident and plans to continue working at the hospital for a couple more years.

CLASS OF 2011

Ross W. Hilliard, M.D. (internal medicine) — “I will be staying at Brown as a chief resident next year; beyond that has yet to be determined.”

Khanjan Baxi Shah, M.D. (internal medicine), is completing her internal medicine residency at University Hospitals Case Medical Center and will serve as chief medical resident for the upcoming academic year. Her husband, Samir, is currently administrative chief surgical resident at The Cleveland Clinic and will begin his vascular surgery fellowship at Brigham and Women’s Hospital next year.

CLASS OF 2012


CLASS OF 2013

Kelton Banks-Wigington, M.D. (medicine-preliminary/ophthalmology), married Zac Wigington April 6, 2013 in Charlotte. She is an intern at Palmetto Health in Columbia.
ALUMNI PROFILE: ROBERT SULLIVAN, M.D.

Robert Sullivan, M.D., has seen the world from a perspective that few have.

The 1993 graduate of the School of Medicine and Lynchburg, Va., pediatrician has summited some of the world’s tallest mountains, including a 2012 expedition to the top of Mount Everest.

“It was a phenomenal feeling to stand on the top of Everest,” Sullivan said. “I could see into Tibet and Nepal. I could see the route we climbed. Looking at the horizon I could see the curvature of the Earth. It was a very moving and emotional experience.”

The trip to the top of Everest took two months. Equipped with ropes, ladders, spiked boots, oxygen and a climbing partner, Sullivan ascended to the top of the 29,029-foot mountain. To build up red blood cells and acclimate to the higher elevation change, he would ascend 2,000 feet only to descend lower for rest. The tedious journey included climbs through ice flows, navigating cracks in crevasses up to 1,000 feet deep and punishing weather that included temperatures reaching 70 below zero and wind gusts approaching hurricane force.

The conquest of Everest has Sullivan on course to accomplish one of mountaineering’s most sought after achievements — summiting the highest mountain peak in all seven continents. He has reached the highest points in North America, South America, Africa and Asia and is planning trips to Europe, Australia and Antarctica in the coming years.

“After I climbed Everest, I decided to go ahead and finish the Seven Summits,” Sullivan said. “With Antarctica, just getting to the mountain will be more difficult than climbing it.”

Sullivan is relatively new to mountain climbing. He took up the sport in 2007 with the desire to stay fit after his dad suffered a heart attack. He took a training course in Alaska to learn the skills and initially started climbing mountains such as the Grand Teton and Mount Rainier in the United States. Eventually, he conquered more difficult climbs such as Mount Kilimanjaro in Africa and Mount McKinley in Alaska.

Balancing Sullivan’s career and climbing interests is equally challenging. Trips such as Everest take careful planning and plenty of support from his family and the eight other physicians in his practice. One of those physicians is his wife, Stephanie, also a 1993 graduate of the School of Medicine. The couple married prior to starting medical school at USC. They have always shared an admiration for the great outdoors and in recent years involved their two children in treks and mountain climbs.

As each climb presents a new test of endurance and strength, Sullivan says the mental challenges on the mountain are equally demanding. He equates the trials to the same challenges he faced as a medical student at USC, where the rigors of four years of medical school prepared him for a world of delayed gratification and opportunity as a pediatrician.

“I think the mindset I developed in medical school has helped me in mountain climbing,” Sullivan said. “Something like Everest, where it takes two months to climb, you must take your time and do what is right. If you stay the course and be patient, things will work out O.K.”

Sullivan regularly shares his climbing experiences with civic groups and at school visits. Pictures from his expeditions hang on the exam room walls at his clinic. The photos are often a conversation starter with patients.

“It shows the kids a little bit of my personality,” Sullivan said. “I get a lot of questions. Someday I may inspire a kid to do the same thing. If I do not inspire them to climb a mountain, I might inspire them to get in shape or do something else they want to do.”

For Sullivan, the inspiration to reach new heights fulfills a spiritual mission and presents an opportunity to see the world as few have.

“One of the reasons that I got into climbing was to see some of the wonders of God’s creation,” Sullivan said. “The views from the summit of Mount McKinley and Everest have fulfilled that in some way.”

USC SCHOOL OF MEDICINE WINS SOUTH CAROLINA MEDICAL ALUMNI CHALLENGE

Thanks to the generous support of hundreds of alumni, the USC School of Medicine claimed victory over the Medical University of South Carolina in the first-ever South Carolina Medical Alumni Challenge.

USC finished with a participation rate of 20 percent compared to 15 percent from MUSC graduates.

The friendly competition lasted July 1, 2012 through June 30, 2013. Both USC and MUSC shared the same goal — to increase private giving from alumni physicians. As South Carolina’s two oldest medical schools, both institutions are experiencing declining state funding and continue to need help from alumni and friends to ensure quality medical education remains in South Carolina for generations to come.

“Winning the S.C. Medical Alumni Challenge affirms that our alumni are supportive and generous to their alma mater,” said Mechelle English, senior director of development for the School of Medicine. “We appreciate all of our alumni who responded during the competition.”

If you would like to make a donation or discuss giving options, contact English at 803-216-3314 or email Mechelle.English@uscmed.sc.edu.
Alumni Weekend

Black Tie/White Coat Gala
6 p.m., Friday, March 7

Join us for an unforgettable evening of excitement at the annual Black Tie/White Coat Gala. The event returns to 701 Whaley Street this year. All the proceeds will support the School of Medicine Scholarship Fund and The Free Medical Clinic.

Class Reunions Dinner
6 p.m., Saturday, March 8

Alumni and guests from the classes of 1984, 1989, 1994, 1999, 2004 and 2009 are invited to join their classmates for the annual Class Reunions Dinner at the Hilton Columbia Center hotel. The evening includes dinner, a program and the opportunity to reconnect with friends and classmates.

To make a gift or purchase tickets to either event:
- Visit btwcgala.med.sc.edu
- Contact Debbie Truluck at 803-216-3303