



*Kamin VanGuilder works with Brianne Owens at the University of Nevada School of Medicine Student Outreach Clinic.*

## School of Medicine's Class of 2010 wins acclaim for student clinic

Every few years, most educational institutions can point to a particular class that stands out because of its academic achievements, extracurricular activities or because it embraces a greater sense of the common good.

The University of Nevada School of Medicine is no exception. The Class of 2010, current third-year medical students, have set themselves apart in an entire school of accomplished students.

Whether serving in the Student Outreach Clinic, helping each other in class, writing

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“This class has a drive and cohesiveness as a group I’ve not seen before,” said Dr. Dan Spogen, chair of the department of family and community medicine in Reno and faculty adviser for the Student Outreach Clinic, a se-

grants to fund projects or forming a new association to increase the number of minority students entering medical school, the Class of 2010 has already made a mark on the School of Medicine that will be remembered and admired for years to come.

ries of free clinics held each month to help the medically underserved attain basic care, while giving students clinical exposure. Clinics are run by each class of first-year medical students.

Spogen said when the 57-member Class of 2010 took over the Student Outreach Clinic in 2007, it was limping along with a handful of patients for each clinic and one student who would show up to treat those patients.

“They were able to recruit preceptors (volunteer faculty or community physicians who supervise students in a medical setting) and other students to the clinics so they could see more patients,” Spogen said. “Students John Sutherland, Whitney Law and Danielle Stage started the idea of giving pediatric vaccinations in the clinics and reached out to the indigent population who needed them. They contacted the county health department to get their certification to give those vaccinations to children.”

He added that Law offered her personal contacts with the Redfield Foundation to the class as a source for additional funding for the clinics. Jake Zucker took it upon himself to write a grant proposal in the amount of \$25,000 to cover equipment, operational costs and to set up a patient care fund to help with patients who couldn’t pay for needed medical

services. The full amount of the proposal was granted by the Redfield Foundation.

At the time the Class of 2010 took over the Student Outreach Clinic, they were being held off campus. Class members again initiated contact with the Washoe County Health Department to move the clinic to the Family Medicine Center at University of Nevada where they could see more patients in a better equipped medical setting.

So successful were they in revitalizing the Student Outreach Clinic that for the children’s vaccination clinic in August 2008, the line to get in reached for several hundred yards. The general and children’s clinics now regularly see 40 patients, while the women’s clinic sees 25 patients every month.

The Class of 2010’s passion for helping the underserved extends beyond the local community to the international arena. The class, led by Morgan Richards, held a benefit auction and reception during spring semester of their first year to help raise funds for two teenage sisters from East Timor who needed life-saving surgery from a debilitating form of scoliosis. The successful event raised \$8,500 for the procedure.

For their efforts on these two humanistic projects alone, the *Nevada Business Journal* awarded the Class of 2010 its Northern Nevada “Healthcare Hero” award for entrepreneurialism last summer. It was the first time a class at the School of Medicine had been recognized by the business magazine.

Undergraduate medical education at the University of Nevada School of Medicine offers students a variety of avenues outside the classroom to help anchor their academic instruction to real-world applications.

Carissa Sparrow and Law, both 2006 Nevada graduates, attended a Society of Teachers in Family Medicine conference where they presented a poster on how serving the underserved medical community enhances their education.

“We were pleasantly surprised to see how much we had actually accomplished with the Student Outreach Clinic while also determining ways for improvement,” Sparrow said.

Sparrow attributes her class’s success in their third-year rotations in large part to the

experience gained from running the Student Outreach Clinic. “Most of our early experience predisposes us to a more complete way of interacting with patients, allowing us to address all aspects of patient care.”

A sampling of other opportunities garnered by the Class of 2010 include Mike Krainock being awarded an American Association for Thoracic Surgery research fellowship in Boston; Jason Michaels spending six weeks completing research projects in the department of dermatology at the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minn., and Miren Guenechea-Sola and Wilfredo Torres forming a chapter of the Latino Medical Student Association to increase the number of minority students applying for, and being accepted to, the University of Nevada School of Medicine.

The Class of 2010 has built a reputation for itself as being particularly caring, not only for their patients, but for each other. As the class members fan out across Nevada for their third-year clinical rotations, class president Daphne Scott keeps the entire class informed of each other’s accomplishments and projects via periodic emails.

While the School of Medicine has afforded many opportunities for the Class of 2010, class members are quick to point out specific faculty members who have been particularly influential in their medical education.

Scott believes Peggy Dupey, interim associate dean of admissions and student affairs, has been important to her medical school experience. “She is extremely knowledgeable and always willing to help students. Those qualities combined with her open door policy and extremely understanding and caring nature have made her very influential in my life,” Scott said.

Law said Spogen has had a huge influence on her as well as her whole class. “He was there from the beginning helping run our clinical problem solving class and as an adviser for the Student Outreach Clinic. He is great at encouraging us to move forward with our ideas and dreams, but will also support us until we reach our goals.” She said the most important concept Spogen has taught the class is to find their own “passion in medicine” by following their dreams when choosing a specific career path within the larger field of medicine.

Sparrow calls Kenneth Maehara, associate professor in the department of pathology, “my all-time favorite professor.” She said she greatly respects his knowledge and values his teaching methods. “I have never come out of a classroom learning so much,” she said. “He keeps you at-

attention and truly cares about his students.”

The class’ sense of altruism is also seen within the confines of the classroom by their academic professors.

“This class is prepared for each lecture and lab and are also nice to each other,” said Maehara, who instructs a year-long course to second-year students. “They have a good sense of humor and are willing to help outside the classroom.”

As an example of this willingness to go above and beyond, he recalls when he casually mentioned in class that he was moving across town in a few days. “About 10 of them showed up to help me move that morning and it was the smoothest move I’ve ever done,” Maehara said.

“As with all our medical students, they are very driven, focused, bright people. This class is one where everyone passed their Step 1 national exam, which is necessary to get into the third year of medical school,” Maehara said. He added that their success on that exam will be significant when the class applies for residency programs this year. “We’re very proud of that.”

Jamie Anderson, director of the division of interdisciplinary medical education and a 20-year member of the School of Medicine faculty, teaches first- and second-year students in clinical problem solving. She notes that the Class of 2010 is very empathetic to patients in preceptorships.

“They truly have a sense of altruism, which is a core value of the medical profession. They respect each other, the faculty and their community,” she said, adding that empathy and altruism are the two outstanding characteristics of this class as a whole. “They really shine when it comes to these two things because these characteristics are so important that they make the difference between merely being a competent physician and one who really cares.” **N**



Dr. Dan Spogen works with University of Nevada School of Medicine student Anneka Hoof.



Photo courtesy School of Medicine

School of Medicine winners at the Nevada Business Journal’s 2008 Northern Nevada Healthcare Heroes awards dinner held on July 31 at the Silver Legacy: Dr. Catherine McCarthy, recipient of the Educator Award; Class of 2010 members Whitney Law, Morgan Richards and John Sutherland; Dr. Trudy Larson, recipient of the Lifetime Achievement Award and Class of 2010 members Corey Richardson, Justin Terry and Carissa Sparrow. The Class of 2010 received the Entrepreneurialism Award.