CHRP Students Serve to Learn, Learn to Serve

Whether it’s giving a vision test to a child during a health fair or traveling overseas to boost clinical programs in developing countries, faculty and students in the College of Health Related Professions are engaged in service.

Community service and outreach is an important mission for the institution, said Dean Douglas Murphy, Ph.D. Students in programs across the college participate in class service projects or volunteer time outside of class to work. Faculty members organize service events to provide care to underserved populations or join medical missions that take them places like earthquake-ravaged Haiti.

“We want to graduate students who are conscious of the health needs of the communities they will serve in their career,” Murphy said. “By helping establish a foundation of service, they are positioned to be leaders as both health care professionals and citizens in working to meet those needs.”

Amy Hischier, a student in the ophthalmic medical technology program, said service is fun and rewarding. She joined other ophthalmic medical technology students in providing vision tests and glaucoma screenings during a mall health fair and for children in the community.

“It’s a really good opportunity to practice my skills,” she said, noting that before the mall health fair she hadn’t worked with children, so it gave her experience. She estimated the students provided screenings to a couple hundred children – many of whom may not have access to vision care.

The Department of Dental Hygiene offers two free sealant days for children each year in its Dental Hygiene Clinic. The events give the dental hygiene students more opportunities to practice their skills with actual patients under the supervision of instructors, said Katy Warren, M.Ed., an associate professor in the program. The students provide teeth cleanings then apply protective sealants to the molars.

“It’s that spirit of community service that our students have tended to carry with them following school,” Warren said. “To me I think community service feeds the soul and based on what our students tell me, I think they get more out of it than they give.”

Cindy Saylors, M.Ed., assistant professor in the Department of Imaging and Radiation Sciences, hopes that by the spring, students in the radiologic technology program will have their own service opportunities. The program is working toward a partnership that would allow students to volunteer to perform X-rays using a mobile X-ray unit as part of health screenings at a facility that serves the homeless.

“Community service enhances the clinical experience,” Saylors said. “It will give our students a chance to work with different types of patients and help the community.”

Helping those in need motivated Don Simpson, Ph.D., M.P.H., to travel to Haiti with a UAMS pathologist to help rebuild clinical laboratory services. Simpson, chair of the Department of Laboratory Sciences, and Robert Lorsbach, M.D., Ph.D., received a $29,000 grant from the College of American Pathologists Foundation to support training of Haitian medical laboratory scientists at UAMS as well as equipment to provide timely Pap smears for Haitian women.

Prior to receiving the grant, Lorsbach and Simpson were funding the lab training program and exchange out of their own pockets.

Continued on Page 4
I HOPE YOU ENJOYED THE INAUGURAL ISSUE of our college’s newsletter. It arrived last fall during an exciting time in the life of the College of Health Related Professions. We celebrated the college’s 40th anniversary, honoring the legacy of the institution while looking ahead at the opportunities and challenges to come.

I often refer to my faculty colleagues in the college as a “community of scholars.” To me, it’s a phrase that conveys a call for teamwork and mutual support in our roles as teachers, researchers and academicians.

In this issue of our newsletter, you will find several examples of our community of scholars having a positive impact on the communities we serve. Their service ranges from preparing new allied health professionals to using their skills to help others at home and abroad. Their research adds to the knowledge of their professions while their commitment sets an example that is followed by successive generations.

Douglas L. Murphy, Ph.D.
Dean, College of Health Related Professions
College Names First Associate Dean for Student Success

Tom Pilgreen, Ph.D., joined the college in January, becoming its first associate dean for student success.

Pilgreen’s role is to assist planning and implementation of activities that promote student success and engagement. His work includes recruitment and retention, information systems, diversity and inclusiveness, academic support services, leadership development and campus life enhancement, said Dean Douglas Murphy, Ph.D.

Pilgreen has worked as a student affairs professional for more than 26 years. He most recently served as an assistant professor in charge of the College Student Personnel Administration at the University of Central Arkansas.

Elements of Physician Assistant Program Coming Together

The new physician assistant program is seeking its first two faculty members.

Patricia Kelly, Ph.D., chair of the Department of Physician Assistant Studies, said the program will soon add a director for the classroom portion of the program and one for the clinical phase. When those positions are filled, details about the curriculum, clinical partners and specialty rotations will emerge. She anticipates a medical director for the program to be named soon.

The Coordinating Board of the state Department of Higher Education approved plans for the physician assistant program Oct. 28. The college will seek provisional accreditation and hopes to enroll its first students in summer 2013. The program is expected to be a full-time, 27-month master’s degree program where students will receive classroom instruction and gain experience treating real patients in the clinics and hospitals of clinical partners.

Dean’s Society Awards First Grants

The college’s Dean’s Society recently awarded grants to three projects. The Dean’s Society is a group of college supporters whose unrestricted gifts are used to enhance and strengthen the college’s programs in education, research and service. Dean Douglas Murphy, Ph.D., said the new annual grant program will promote activities in each of the three areas through small grants (each less than $3,000). The first grants went to:

- Development of age-appropriate nutrition presentations for school children – Department of Dietetics and Nutrition (Project Director: Lori Maddox, M.S.; Project Co-Directors: Tina Crook, Ph.D., Dana Gonzales, Ph.D. and Reza Hakkak, Ph.D.)
- Development of a distance education course in dental imaging for dental assistants – Departments of Radiologic Imaging Sciences and Dental Hygiene (Project Co-Directors: Cindy Saylors, M.Ed., and Katy Warren, M.Ed.)
- Inter-professional research project studying the effectiveness of an online education program for improved ventilator techniques – Department of Respiratory and Surgical Technologies and the Colleges of Nursing, Pharmacy and Medicine (Project Co-Directors: Michael Anders, Ph.D., Tonya Cook, M.Ed., Theresa Gramlich, M.S., C. Karen Jeans, Ph.D., Kendrea Jones, Pharm.D., and Tobias Vancil, M.D.)

For more information about the Dean’s Society, please call (501)686-7203 or visit www.uams.chrp.
College Becomes a Family Affair for Some

Radiologic technology instructor Katy Kordsmeier says when she was a student, she joked that one day she’d take the job of one of her favorite teachers, Quinnie Young.

Kordsmeier did not take Young’s job, but the two are now colleagues in the college’s Department of Imaging and Radiation Sciences where Young is an associate professor in a career stretching back to the early 1970s. The two do have something else in common besides their profession: they are both multi-generation students in the college.

With the College of Health Related Professions marking its 40th anniversary in 2011, the college has been around long enough that there are many instances of children following their parents at the college. Or in the case of Kordsmeier, her mother has followed her into the college, where she is now a student in the health information management program.

“I said ‘Really? Do you know what you’re getting into?’” Katy Kordsmeier said she asked her mom, Jane Fletcher, when hearing of her plan to pursue a second career. “But it’s fun now. We see each other about once a week when she’s on campus.”

Fletcher, a former financial advisor, said her daughter was encouraging about her returning to school. “I wanted to work in health care because I knew there’d be a job there,” she said. “And I was interested in records management.”

Young, who graduated in 1960, met her future husband while a student in the radiologic technology program, where he also was a student. Their daughter Susan graduated from the laboratory sciences program in the early 1990s.

The laboratory sciences program also proved a family affair for the Norments. Harriet and her husband both graduated from the program. Anthony Norment works in the clinical lab at Baptist Health but Harriet eventually left the profession to home school their children. Their two daughters, Rashauna and Jennifer, followed them through the program. Rashauna graduated in 2004, then went on to law school. Jennifer graduated in 2010.

“I wasn’t too surprised because we’re a pretty close-knit family,” Harriet Norment said.

Jennifer Norment said her parents encouraged her to consider the laboratory science program when she wasn’t sure what to major in while in college because “the job prospects would be easier.” She has been working in the lab at a Little Rock oncology clinic since a month after graduation.

Health Information Management student Jane Fletcher (left) and her daughter, radiologic technology instructor and UAMS graduate Katy Kordsmeier, are just two of the many multi-generation College of Health Related Professions students.

Service
Continued from Page 1

“We have underserved populations in our own state but this is abject poverty in our own backyard, compounded by a natural disaster,” Simpson said. “Service is a part of the UAMS mission and being able to serve comes back to our humanity and a moral obligation I think we have to help those in need.”

Ophthalmic medical technology student Aubrey Adams conducts a vision test during a health screening.
Dean’s Note: When planning stories for this newsletter in December, we wanted to profile Paula Peacock for her long commitment to her profession and support for this college. We were shocked and saddened by her sudden passing in January. We chose to go forward with this profile as a tribute to her.

When Paula Peacock retired in 1998 after 40 years at UAMS, her coworkers, medical laboratory students, colleagues in her profession and others honored her with a gift to endow a scholarship in her name.

“She was such a well-respected role model to hundreds of employees and students in the UAMS Clinical Laboratory throughout her career that it was a fitting tribute,” said Kathleen Mugan, retired director of the medical technologist program and a longtime colleague of Peacock’s.

Through her career, Peacock had been clinical laboratory manager, chief technologist and an instructor to medical laboratory students. Mugan called Peacock a strong supporter of education, offering her clinical expertise, resources, training and mentoring to countless students.

Donald Thompson, her husband, said Peacock knew from an early age she wanted to work in health care. “She was dedicated to her profession and embraced every aspect of the job,” he said.

Throughout her career, she was active in her profession and in the UAMS community.

She helped establish a clinical pathology residency program at the university. She oversaw an expansion of the laboratory. In 1992, she served as co-chair for the first capital campaign at UAMS. She traveled abroad on three medical missions sponsored by her church.

First awarded in 2005, the Paula Peacock Medical Technology Scholarship goes to a senior student in the medical laboratory sciences program. The recipient is selected based on faculty recommendation and academic achievement.

“She was pleased to have a scholarship endowed in her name upon retirement,” her husband said. “She diligently reviewed the applicant letters each year, attended all the presentations and enjoyed talking with the seven award winners.

“She thought the scholarships were important to help ease the financial burden of education for students.”

Peacock’s early desire to meet the recipient of her scholarship each year led to a reception for all laboratory sciences scholarship recipients. That reception ultimately grew into an annual college wide scholarship reception.

Donald Thompson and Paula Peacock with Omar Goss (center), 2011 recipient of the Paula Peacock Medical Technology Scholarship.
The annual Phonathon of the College of Health Related Professions calls out to alumni and friends of the college to help support the future of modern health care.

Allied health professionals make up more than 60 percent of the national health care workforce. As the demand for care increases, more health care professionals will be needed. More scholarships allow more students to pursue a career in one of the allied health professions.

Fewer than five percent of CHRP students now receive scholarships each year. Many deserving students find it difficult to enroll because of the increasing costs of tuition, fees, equipment and textbooks. Therefore, your support is needed now more than ever.

The Student Phonathon is set for April 9, 10 and 12. College supporters can give to a specific named scholarship or to a general scholarship fund to use where the need is greatest.

The Phonathon, sponsored by Verizon, is a student-driven event. About 50 students volunteer each night to make phone calls to alumni and friends to request support for scholarships. If you will not be available to answer your phone during the Phonathon, you are invited to make a pledge online at uamshealth.com/giving.

In 2011, students raised approximately $10,000 from the Phonathon. One new feature added last year was the opportunity to participate in Dean Douglas Murphy’s Challenge to receive a 1:1 match for every dollar donated to the Joseph R. Bittengle Scholarship and the Ronald H. Winters, Ph.D. Scholarship. Both scholarships were endowed due in large part to this effort. The inaugural scholarship recipients were selected last fall.

This year, the dean will once again offer a special challenge to increase the impact of donations to a scholarship that is not yet endowed. Other individuals and businesses also are invited to sponsor matching gift challenges.

For more information about supporting scholarships, please call (501) 686-7203 or visit uams.edu/chrp.

Fewer than five percent of CHRP students now receive scholarships each year. Many deserving students find it difficult to enroll because of the increasing costs of tuition, fees, equipment and textbooks. Therefore, your support is needed now more than ever.
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