

Alaska WWAMI Students Receive Prestigious Awards



Janelle Dubbins

Two UAA WWAMI medical students received prestigious awards at the annual Arthur Schaible Awards Dinner, which was held this year on Friday, May 12, 2006 at the Sheraton Anchorage Hotel.

- **Janelle Dubbins** received *The Arthur Schaible Anatomy Award*, given to the first-year medical student who best demonstrates excellence in the study of human gross anatomy, as demonstrated by examination scores, quality of dissections, and participation in laboratory activities. Ms. Dubbins also received a generous monetary award.



Sarah Murphy

- **Sarah Murphy** received the *Jon B. Syren Award*. The Syren award was established in 1993 to honor a former Alaska WWAMI student, the late Jon B. Syren, who exemplified the award criteria: a first-year medical student who has demonstrated personal qualities of character, integrity, and compassion, combined with a commitment to and promise of community service in medicine.

The Schaible Awards Dinner is an annual event which concludes the first year of medical school in the WWAMI Biomedical Program at UAA. It is graciously hosted by Mrs. Grace Berg Schaible in honor of her husband. Dr. Arthur Schaible was a prominent surgeon in the interior who came to the state in 1938 to head the Alaska Native Health Services Hospital at Tanana. Dr. Schaible had a long association with the University of Alaska, and he served as a Regent from 1961 to 1969.

Alaska WWAMI Program—2006 Teaching Awards

WWAMI teaching awards were presented to two Alaska physicians who have been instrumental in helping to educate medical students for many years. They received their awards at the Schaible Awards Dinner held May 12, 2006 at the Sheraton Hotel in Anchorage.



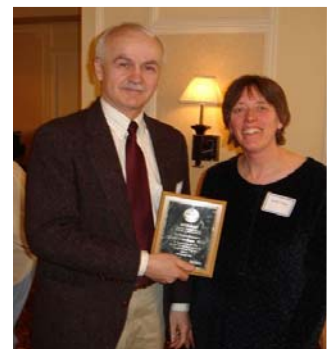
Dr. Robert Fortuine

WWAMI Volunteer Teaching Award—Dr. Robert Fortuine

This WWAMI award was created in 2005 by the Alaska WWAMI faculty to recognize a selected individual who volunteers to teach the first-year class. It recognizes the critically important role played by the myriad of professionals who volunteer their time as guest lecturers and who help to demonstrate the relevance of basic medical science. For many years Dr. Fortuine directed the first-year Introduction to Clinical Medicine course. In recent years he has provided many excellent guest lectures in the course.

WWAMI R/UOP Service Award—Dr. Kevin Creelman

This award was presented for the first time and recognized Alaska’s longest-serving R/UOP preceptor. Dr. Creelman, a Kodiak family practice physician, has been a R/UOP preceptor for ten years. The Rural/Underserved Opportunities Program (R/UOP) began in 1989 with the purpose of providing WWAMI students an early exposure to the challenges and rewards of practicing primary care medicine in rural and underserved settings. Alaska R/UOP students work side-by-side with physicians in rural or underserved communities throughout Alaska for four weeks during the summer after their first year of medical school.



Dr. Kevin Creelman and Janice Troyer,
R/UOP Coordinator



Another Competitive Year for Medical School Applicants

The admissions committee has completed their work again this year, selecting ten candidates and ten alternates from a pool of 78 applicants. Our Alaskan students are very competitive. MCAT scores and undergraduate GPAs of the alternate pool and matriculant pool were indistinguishable.

According to the American Association of Medical Colleges, for the preceding year, there were 73 Alaskan applicants to US Medical Schools. Twenty-nine were admitted. Alaska ranked 44th among the 50 states and Puerto Rico in terms of the success of its applicant pool. These figures do not include osteopathic schools (for which there is no central data base) or students who might have gone to off-shore schools. The two medical schools (not including the University of Washington) who have in recent years admitted the most Alaska students have been the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences and the University of Nevada in Reno.

Introducing the Alaska WWAMI E-2006 Class:

Charles Ross Baldwin, Kenai
Hannah Hawkins, Anchorage
Elise Pletnikoff, Kodiak

Yekaterina Batilova, Anchorage
Melissa Howell, Eagle River
Abraham Tsigonis, Fairbanks
Joshua Zwart, Fairbanks

Katrin Groundwater, Valdez
Jeannette Kenny, Fairbanks
Theodore Wright, Anchorage

Alaska Family Medicine Residency Program Enjoys the Best Match Ever

In a national environment of decreasing interest in primary care, our program enjoyed its most successful year even though the entering class was expanded to twelve. Three of the residents are graduates of the Alaska WWAMI Biomedical Program. Two are Alaska Natives. The list includes: Dustin Cole, Kimberly Corral, Cory Ecklund, Kristen Frank, Tamara Huntington, Allison Kelliher, Trevor Martenson, Jane Moore, Mary Nettlow, Jessica Scott, Kristen Solana Walkinshaw, and Anne West.

Four of this year’s graduating class of residents will be working in the Anchorage area.

Introducing Our New MEDEX/UAA Alaska Students



Sharon Bernard Vandy Cannon Howard Chaitoff Deborah Coolidge Lily Hughes Zachary Kile Hope McGratty Jennifer Nance Seamus Siddall Claire Reilly Lee Ann Wetzel

WWAMI’s “Junior Colleagues” Proceed to Year Two

WWAMI welcomed a new class of ten medical students in Fall 2005; these ten students are currently completing a productive and challenging first year of medical school at the University of Alaska Anchorage. This talented group includes a Harvard graduate, a Master in Public Health from Emory, and closer to home, two UAF and one UAA graduate. This class has several Anchorage-area residents, but also includes members from Kodiak, Juneau and Wasilla.

This cohesive group is very interested in healthcare for disadvantaged populations. For example, a large part of the class (John Heimerl, Evan Jones, Sarah Murphy, Tom Quimby, and Mackenzie Slater) scheduled a trip, at their own expense, to work at a clinic in Cambodia during the summer. The trip, July 8-28, was led by Dr. Jim Gollogly. In addition, most students will be working at sites around Alaska for 4-week stints this summer as part of the Rural/Underserved Opportunities Program in WWAMI. The following is an excerpt from a communication sent by John Heimerl while in Cambodia.



“We would triage the worst cases first and give priority to surgical cases and peds. Each day we would do between 3-7 surgeries. I am getting quite good at field surgery. Our surgical room is not up to American standards. We have a table, place the patient on it and then clean and drape the area. There are between 20-40 observers of the surgeries. It reminds me of the older surgical amphitheatres. I forgot to mention the chickens and the dogs that walk through the area.”

Back Row (L-R): John Heimerl, Evan Jones, Hans Tulip, Thomas Quimby, A. Michal Stevens
Front Row (L-R): Janelle Dubbins, Sarah Murphy, Elisha Gionet, Mackenzie Slater, Erin Lester



2006 Alaska PreMed Summit

Alaska's first PreMed Summit was held April 1, 2006 in Rasmuson Hall on the campus of the University of Alaska Anchorage. One hundred forty-four participants filled the main auditorium of the Hall and an additional overflow room via interactive video connection. Presented by Alaska WWAMI and the UAA Office of Undergraduate Research and Scholarship, the PreMed Summit was created to provide information to anyone interested in a career in medicine. It was especially intended for undergraduate and high school students, but it also provided useful information for high school counselors, college advisors and parents.

The full-day program included sessions that described not only the application process for medical school, but also the experiences and activities that make an applicant as competitive as possible. The keynote address was presented by Dr. Roger Rosenblatt, Vice Chair, Family Medicine, University of Washington School of Medicine, who discussed medical practice in Alaska, past and future.

Breakout sessions were offered for high school students, undergraduates, and advisors. The latter were led by Jane Cary, Director of Health Professions Advising at Montana State University. One undergraduate breakout session was directed, by interactive video, from the University of Alaska Fairbanks campus by Dr. Larry Duffy. Dr. Duffy, Professor of Chemistry and Biochemistry, is the faculty advisor for the PreMed Club at UAF.

Summit participants had the opportunity to question a panel selected from different stages along the continuum of medical education: undergraduate student, medical student, resident, and practicing physician. The session was moderated by Summer Engler, President of UAA's PreMed Club, and it was listed as one of participants' favorite events of the day. In addition, mock medical school interviews were offered to hone students' interviewing skills, and tours of the UAA WWAMI Biomedical Program classroom and gross anatomy lab were offered.

For a virtual tour of the 2006 Alaska PreMed Summit, go to: http://biomed.uaa.alaska.edu/Premed_Summit.htm



Panel Presentation



Lunch Served



Waiting for Mock Interviews



Tour of Gross Anatomy Lab

Assorted Photos From the Year



Dr. Hillary Moore (E-2001) and Dr. Deb Pohlman (Graduation, June 2006)



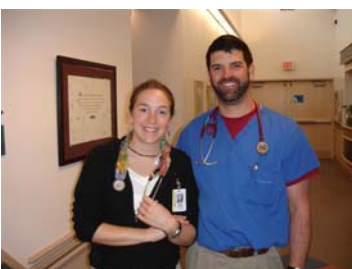
Norm Stevens, CEO and Rose Smith, Director of Nursing— at the newly opened Mat-Su Regional Medical Center



Dr. Tom Gordon, Dr. Dennis Valenzano, Director of the UAA WWAMI Biomedical Program, and Dr. Eric Kraus at AWARE Retreat in Seattle (June 2006)



Hooping Ceremony (June 3, Seattle)

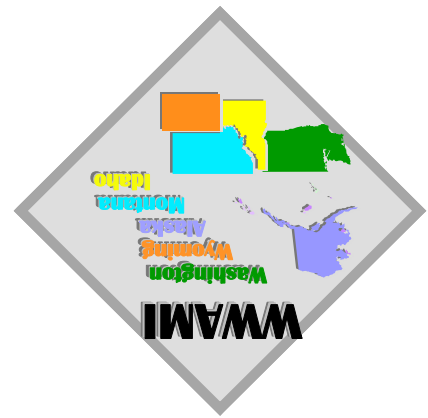


Sarah Murphy and Dr. Paul Forman at Seward R/UOP site (Summer 2006)

Dr. Sven Ebbesson, Dr. Jesse Owens, Grace Schaible, and Dr. Tom Nighswander at the Schaible Awards Dinner (May 2006)



Dr. Kevin Creelman and Erin Lester at Kodiak R/UOP site (Summer 2006)



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UW Medicine
SCHOOL OF MEDICINE

WWAMI—Alaska’s Medical School—Ranks No. 1 Among Primary-care Medical Schools for 13th Straight Year!

The WWAMI medical school partnership has again been ranked first among primary care medical schools in the country, according to annual rankings of graduate and professional schools provided by *U.S. News & World Report*. Alaska is one of five states involved in this unique, collaborative medical school that is administratively centered at the University of Washington in Seattle.

For the 15th consecutive year, the teaching programs in family medicine and in rural health also ranked No. 1. The school ranked fourth in teaching medical students about AIDS, sixth in teaching women’s health, sixth in internal medicine, seventh in geriatrics (health care for the elderly), and tenth in pediatrics. [WWAMI is listed as University of Washington in *U.S. News & World Report* rankings.] WWAMI, an acronym for the participating states, serves as a medical school for the states of Wyoming, Washington, Alaska, Montana, and Idaho. The school has teaching sites for medical students in more than 100 towns and cities across the five-state region. Five state universities, and more than 4,500 volunteer physicians and other clinicians in the region, join in educating and training WWAMI medical students. Alaskans can complete nearly three of the four years of medical school in Alaska through WWAMI.

“Alaska’s medical students have a tremendous opportunity in the WWAMI program. WWAMI is a true collaboration involving faculty at six universities in five states, who work together to devise, plan and deliver top quality medical education. They function as a unit to execute the innovative curriculum that leads to WWAMI’s outstanding reputation in teaching primary care, family medicine, rural health and other specialties that are so much in demand in the region,” said Dr. Dennis P. Valenzano, Director of Alaska WWAMI at the University of Alaska Anchorage and Assistant Dean at the University of Washington School of Medicine.

“Since 1971 Alaska has been fortunate to have a very productive relationship with one of the best medical schools in the country. The long-standing interest, support, and excellence in primary care has served us well,” says Dr. Tom Nighswander, prominent Anchorage physician, Clinical Coordinator for WWAMI in Alaska, and Assistant Dean at the University of Washington School of Medicine. “The Alaska WWAMI program now has 40 medical students enrolled, many with committed interest in primary care who plan to return home to practice.”