Georgia medical examiner, KISS megafan lives with enthusiasm

Dr. James C. Upshaw Downs, Class of 1988

By Allyson Crowell | Office of Development and Alumni Affairs

His philosophy – “Life is meant to be lived” – seems ironic for a doctor whose patients are all dead. But Dr. Jamie Downs, regional medical examiner with Georgia’s Coastal Regional Crime Lab in Savannah and an MUSC College of Medicine ‘88 alumnus, makes good on the credo.

He runs marathons dressed as Paul Stanley from KISS – wig, makeup and all. He is the basis for the male medical examiner character in Patricia Cornwell’s bestselling Kay Scarpetta thriller novels. And he proved all the naysayers wrong when he recovered brain tissue from the crew of the submarine Hunley, eight men entombed in Charleston Harbor from the Civil War until the vessel’s recovery in 2000.

Dr. Downs wanted to go to medical school from the time he was a child, accompanying his father as the elder Downs sold life insurance policies to MUSC doctors. He knew he didn’t want an insurance career but felt drawn to the hospital. As a teenager, he picked up summer landscaping jobs at St. Francis Hospital, moved into maintenance work and eventually became an operating room nursing aid.

He didn’t discover forensic pathology until he began a general surgery rotation during medical school. He loved surgery but noticed that the chief resident, who had a baby the same age as Dr. Downs’ own daughter, never seemed to go home. “I realized that’s not the kind of life I want to lead,” Dr. Downs remembered.

(see DOWNS, page 2)

IN MEMORIAM

DR. JAMES B. EDWARDS, 1927-2014

Celebrating the life of former MUSC President James B. Edwards

MUSC remembers Dr. Edwards, his life and his work. We express our profound gratitude for his countless contributions he made to so many lives during and after his 17 year tenure as president of the Medical University of South Carolina.
Dr. Mary Ann Sens, a class of 1981 College of Medicine alumna and now chair of pathology at the University of North Dakota School of Medicine and Health Sciences, introduced Dr. Downs to the idea of pathology. She was a junior faculty member at MUSC at the time and took his aerobics class in Mount Pleasant.

“I think he considered looking at pathology just to stop me from bugging him about it but found out he liked it and switched career goals,” Dr. Sens said. “He is a stellar forensic pathologist and influential in the national circles.”

So began a goal: Dr. Downs vowed to become a doctor in control of his own schedule, who wore blue jeans to work.

“My wife told me I was crazy,” he said. “She was right, but I do wear a bowtie every day.” Although the bowtie is more a matter of practicality: “You don’t want your ties dangling in the nasty stuff,” he pointed out.

As a forensic pathologist, Dr. Downs performs two or three autopsies a day. He favors classic rock in the chilly examination lab to brush away the somber nature of his work but never forgets his purpose – something that he reiterates to his students.

“The worst that can happen already has happened,” as Dr. Downs puts it, but his work can help a family member to find understanding, if not peace.

He winds up in court often. A man found guilty of killing his wife recently came at him during a trial, and deputies had to rush to restrain the defendant. Dr. Downs had demonstrated how the man’s shoes matched the prints on his late wife’s chest.

Once, when the body of a four-month-old baby landed in his care, he found that a metabolic disease had caused the child’s death. Dr. Downs made an appointment with the baby’s 3-year-old brother for a blood sample. The boy was scared, so Dr. Downs sat on the floor with him to draw his blood. Dr. Downs discovered that the older boy suffered from the same disease as the baby and wrote a prescription to address the problem.

“I don’t know if it saved his life, but I’m glad that some good came out of a bad situation,” he said. Dr. Downs likens an autopsy to the Forrest Gump catch phrase – you don’t know what you’re going to get. Or how you can still help the living.

Dr. Downs said his autobiography, already outlined, would be entitled “I’ve Got a Glass.” “It’s not half full or half empty,” he said. “Life is what you make it, and I have a glass.”

His office – a mini-museum of KISS memorabilia, skull tchotchkes and professional citations – is also a photo shrine to people he admires, from an FBI behavioral sciences instructor to the man who led his church food pantry and, of course, Gene Simmons and Paul Stanley.

You might ask Dr. Downs, Why KISS? And he’ll answer, Why not? “They revolutionized music,” he’ll say. “And they’re fun.” He and his brother, in addition to running races dressed as Paul and Gene, also helped to get KISS on exhibit at the Smithsonian Institution Museum of American History, a first step to their induction into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame.
Downs and his wife, Heather, take KISS cruises, where Gene Simmons routinely draws the iconic KISS makeup on Dr. Downs’ face in permanent marker -- always a treat to explain to the TSA agents on the way home.

Dr. Downs has raised $3,000 for the Wounded Warrior Project, a charity to help veterans, dressed as Paul Stanley and carrying full-sized United States and Wounded Warrior flags. He chose Wounded Warrior Project, because Savannah is home to every military branch, with Hunter Army Airfield, Fort Stewart, Marine Corps Recruit Depot Parris Island and Naval Submarines Base Kings Bay.

“I see the effects,” Dr. Downs said. “Everybody talks about kids who lost a limb. I see the domestic violence, the child abuse, the kids that come back with problems and kill themselves. It’s so much bigger than any one person can do.”

If Dr. Downs sees life as a glass, neither full nor empty, then he also sees the glass as something that he can smash and reassemble to his liking.

When experts concluded that no tissue remained among the bones in the crew of the Hunley, Dr. Downs vowed to find it. He discovered brain matter in the remains of all eight men, tissue that will help to answer the centuries-old question of what happened on that fateful day.

Familiar with his enthusiasm for answers and his dynamic personality, one of Dr. Downs’ mentors referred bestselling author Patricia Cornwell to his lab. Cornwell watched Dr. Downs, observing details of his personality down to how he holds his scalpel, and fashioned her Colin Dengate character in his likeness. Dr. Downs has worked with Cornwell on three novels over the past seven years.

For his most recent adventure, Dr. Downs is considering a role in a reality television show about science and technology. If those producers are looking for characters, they found the right man.

Hard work for the greater good
Chau Dang, MD ’92, makes the most of life after fleeing Vietnam

By Bob Rozycki | WAG Magazine

From the mid-1960s to 1971, black and white TV sets across the nation glowed in the evening with images from the Vietnam War. U.S. forces were shown sloughing through rice paddies and along muddy roads. Blasts from exploding artillery shells punctuated the narrative by war correspondents. Close-up shots of bandaged and bleeding soldiers along with bodies of civilians in small villages conveyed in near-real time the horrors of the war.

As the conflict wore on and American casualties mounted, the antirwar movement grew in the U.S., gaining such momentum that troop withdrawal began in 1971, leaving the South Vietnamese to fend for themselves.

Dr. Chau Dang, chief of Memorial Sloan Kettering’s West Harrison Medical Oncology Service, was an 8-year-old girl in 1975 Saigon. It was a tumultuous time as the North Vietnamese communists began their incursions into the south.

Dang’s father was an executive with Exxon, and he, like the rest of the employees, kept a close eye on the North Vietnamese troops’ movements. With a wife and six children, he made plans to find a safe escape using a boat. With Dang being the fifth of the six children, her parents worried for her and a brother’s ability to survive the sea voyage. They feared they would drown. So they decided to place the two children in an orphanage with the thought they would be flown to the U.S. as the other orphans were.

“So we were in an orphanage for two weeks, (while my parents) prepared the other children to be ready for eventual escape by boat in the middle of the night,” Dang said.

During that time, the sounds of the new conflict grew closer. Exxon decided to

(see DANG, page 4)
evacuate the American personnel and also asked Dang’s father if he and his family would want to join the airlift to the U.S. So he ran to the orphanage to “adopt” his two children and then get to the airport, where he would meet his wife and the rest of the family as well as a few aunts and uncles.

Dang said she slept in fear that night in the terminal hearing gunshots in the distance.

“It was early in the morning, around five or six o’clock, I remember walking in a straight line into the military plane,” Dang recalled with clarity. “I could just see the fear in the parents who were there with other kids.”

Dang said that as the plane took off, she heard gunshots from below.

“It was common for the communists to try to bring down any planes that were escaping. We had soldiers on our plane and they, I guess they shot back and we made it. We made it.”

“My memory was, as a child at 8, that this was being part of a movie. It felt like that. There is a war going on around us, but somehow I felt protected because Saigon wasn’t hit yet, but we were going to be attacked and I just felt safe with my parents and my siblings. … We were lucky. We saw so many families that were torn apart.”

After landing in Guam, the family was then flown to U.S. Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton in California, where they lived with the other refugees.

“We had a grand time. We learned the field of oncology, meeting and having lunch.” Dang declared her fellowship in hematoloy oncology and landed in New York City in 1996.

She said that while flying into John F. Kennedy International Airport on an American Airlines flight, she looked down at the city and asked herself: “Am I cut out for this?” She added, “This is what they say: If you can make it in New York City, you can make it anywhere.”

That sense of being at once overwhelmed and exhilarated continued on the ride to the Upper East Side, where she felt like Marlo Thomas in “That Girl” as she left the taxi. She knew that for the next three years of the fellowship at New-York Presbyterian Hospital, “I had to buckle down, work really hard to know the science and see if I was cut out for this. And I knew that the challenge was going to be great, but I did not know how great it was. And I just kept working harder and harder, learning the field of oncology, meeting

NEW ADVENTURE

After two months in the camp and with their government-approved paperwork in hand, the family loaded their meager belongings into an old sedan bought with money her father had saved up while in Vietnam and headed east.

The first stop was Missouri, where her father had a friend and the family enjoyed the kindness of this man and his family.

From there it was on to North Carolina for her father to find work.

Dang said that even though her father was a vice president with Exxon in Vietnam, he took on any type of work to take care of his family. He eventually reconnected with the oil company and the family moved to Charleston, S.C., where Dang began her education in earnest.

She recalled entering fifth grade at Mount Pleasant Academy in Mount Pleasant, S.C., being the new kid knowing just a little bit of English. It was there, she said, where she learned an important life lesson.

“Back then they had something called ‘reduced lunch’ for families of little means. There was also free lunch and regular lunch. I remember that they would call us in groups. So as part of the reduced lunch group I was standing in back of the line, and I didn’t mind it. I thought wow at least I’m getting lunch.”

The lesson learned?

“You have to earn your keep. … You don’t have to have the best, you don’t have to have the fanciest, you just work for what you want. … Be proud of what you have and have a purpose in life, and give back to humanity. And that has stayed with me ever since.”

It was early on in high school that she discovered she wanted to be a doctor, because she thought the human body was “such a unique, complex machine, a more complex machine than any other machine that we can create.” After high school, it was on to Clemson University and then Medical University of South Carolina in Charleston.

Dang thought that she wanted to be a surgeon.

But it was at Eastern Virginia Graduate School of Medicine that she realized surgery was not for her. So she left that field and went into internal medicine.

ON TO NYC

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incredible people and scientists and physicians who taught me oncology.”

But the greatest lessons came from patients.

“Who will teach a better lesson in life, or any disease, than your patient if you sit down and pay attention? Just sit down and talk to them. They will tell you why they’re sick. You’ll be able to make a diagnosis by just listening to them,” she said.

“I’ve always held it in my heart that I went into this field to be with patients, to take care of them. So when I’m with them, nothing else matters. I don’t look at anything else, not even a computer when I’m with them. … Human contact is so critical. Humanity is so critical.”

Dang knew she wanted to go into breast cancer medicine research. During her last six months of training, she did rotations at Memorial Sloan Kettering to learn breast cancer oncology. It was there she met her mentors, Drs. Clifford Hudis and Larry Norton. “Having rotations with them really sealed my desire to go into research in breast cancer medicine.”

That was 1999. She has been with them ever since.

IMPROVING PATIENTS’ LIVES

Long days of research have helped improve the outcomes for breast cancer patients.

Dang and her fellow researchers have developed less toxic treatments and targeted therapies for women fighting breast cancer and have had treatment regimens endorsed by the National Comprehensive Cancer Network.

“It’s a wonderful feeling that patients with HER2 positive breast cancer, who were doing poorly, are now doing very well,” Dang said.

Where are we heading in the future? “Many times we are in the area of targeted biological therapy to improve outcomes, but these agents are expensive,” Dang said. “We’re looking at biomarkers to help us identify predictors of response and resistance so we can give the right treatment to patients who need their therapy and spare patients who don’t need therapy. We are in the era of precision medicine, to tailor therapy. And also some thoughts about going back to the basics. We need to go back to exercising and eating well as part of the overall package of getting well.”

But for the doctor it’s all about the patients. “They are our inspirations and heroes. They help us to move the research trials forward, because without them we couldn’t do this.

“I want to say I really feel very privileged to have been given this second chance of life in America, and being given the privilege to work with such incredible minds, my colleagues and scientists. But I owe my utmost gratitude to all of our patients, truly. Allowing us to care for them and to continue doing research through them. And it is through the research that we are able to find better drugs for the greater good.”

Forever thankful for her blessed life and ever an optimist, she said:

“Embrace life, work hard, never give up, help others in need and keep on working, keep on working hard. … I think that if you put your mind to anything, you can reach your potential. No matter how hard it is. Even when you think you’re not cut out for it.”

This article was first published by WAG Magazine, the Westchester County Business Journal’s sister publication, on January 5, 2015, and is reprinted here with permission.
ALUMNI HOMECOMING
SATURDAY, MARCH 21, 2015
All College of Medicine alumni are invited home.
Special Class Celebrations for 1970, 1975, 1980,
Weekend events include:
- Reunion Class Gatherings
- Medical School Today, a campus tour
- Reception at the South Carolina Aquarium
Weekend Schedule & Hotels online at
www.musc.edu/alumni

1ST FRIDAY ALUMNI SOCIAL
HOSTED BY MSAC
Halo’s Upstairs Bar
170 Ashley Ave.
Charleston, SC 29403

44TH ANNUAL POSTGRADUATE
COURSE IN SURGERY
THURSDAY, APRIL 30 - SATURDAY, MAY 2, 2015
Double Tree Guest Suites
181 Church Street
Charleston, SC 29401
Learn more online at musc.edu/surgery/events/

COMMENCEMENT WEEK AND GOLDEN
GRADS CELEBRATION
WEDNESDAY, MAY 13 - FRIDAY, MAY 15, 2015
Golden Grads Celebration for the College
of Medicine Class of 1965
View schedule of events, seating, parking, and
additional ticket options online at
www.musc.edu/alumni

www.musc.edu/alumni/

KEEP US UPDATED

We’d love to hear from you.

WHAT’S NEW?
Whether it is about a move, a new job, retirement, an award, a new family member
or anything you would like to share, we’d love to hear what’s new with you.
Please send your professional and personal news (and pictures!) for CLASS NOTES to:
Michaela Coleman • MUSC College of Medicine • 261 Calhoun St., MSC 182 • Charleston, SC 29425
Email: colemamm@musc.edu
Or log on to our website: www.musc.edu/alumni/stay_connected.htm
We hope you’ll plan to join us to celebrate the golden anniversary of your graduation from medical school. Festivities include the welcome reception, campus tour, luncheon with the president of the Medical University of South Carolina, a social and buffet dinner, followed by induction into MUSC’s Golden Graduates group and a privileged place in the commencement processional.

ATTENTION ALL RETIRED MUSC FACULTY

We recently sent out our Save the Date for the 2015 Retired Faculty Luncheon. This luncheon will be held on Saturday, March 14th, 2015, at the MUSC Ashley River Tower Atrium.

The keynote speaker will be MUSC President Dr. David Cole. If you have not received your Save the Date, please contact the Office of Gift Planning to update and/or add your address to our mailing list. We look forward to seeing all of you in March.

MUSC Office of Gift Planning
843-792-0002
fountaine@musc.edu

1ST FRIDAY ALUMNI SOCIAL HOSTED BY MSAC

The Medical Student Alumni Council invites you to join current MUSC students for a local happy hour hosted on the 1st Friday of every month. These events will provide a great opportunity to get to know our students, share your wisdom, network with fellow alumni, and have a great time.

This month's social will be held at Halo.

Friday, May 8
5:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.
170 Ashley Ave
Charleston, SC 29403

We look forward to seeing you there!
Questions? Please contact Sallie Hutton at hutton@musc.edu

CLASS OF 1965 50TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION!
May 13 – 15, 2015

SCHEDULE OF ACTIVITIES

WEDNESDAY, MAY 13
6:00 p.m.  Welcome Reception
Thomas Bennett House, 69 Barre St., Charleston

THURSDAY, MAY 14
11:00 a.m. Campus Bus Tour
Noon  Golden Graduates Luncheon
Charleston Country Club, 1 Country Club Drive, Charleston
5:45 p.m.  Shuttle service leaving from hotel for dinner
6:00 p.m.  Social and Buffet Dinner
Cooper River Room, Mount Pleasant Waterfront Park

FRIDAY, MAY 15
7:00 a.m.  Continental Breakfast and Robing
Courtyard by Marriott Waterfront, 35 Lockwood Dr., Charleston
9:00 a.m.  Commencement and Golden Grads Induction
MUSC Horseshoe
Oscar F. Lovelace, Jr., MD ’85, named 2015 Family Physician of the Year
South Carolina doctor earns prestigious national award for dedication to patients and community

WASHINGTON, Oct. 24, 2014 /PRNewswire-USNewswire/

The American Academy of Family Physicians has named Oscar F. Lovelace, Jr., MD, the national 2015 Family Physician of the Year at its annual Assembly. The award honors one outstanding American family physician who provides patients with compassionate, comprehensive care, and serves as a role model in his or her community, to other health professionals, and to residents and medical students.

Born and raised in Columbia, South Carolina, Lovelace has been a practicing family physician for more than 26 years. In 1988, he founded Lovelace Family Medicine in his grandparents’ hometown of Prosperity, South Carolina, a small, rural farming community in Newberry County.

Currently the practice employs 38 staff, including three board certified family physicians, 11 nurses and three nurse practitioners. Lovelace Family Medicine provides 8,000 patients with the full scope of family medicine services for patients of all ages, from obstetrics to geriatrics, as well as office-based and hospital care. Practice services include comprehensive wellness and preventive care, prenatal care, acute care, chronic disease management, weight management counseling, a full service laboratory and corporate wellness programs.

Lovelace and his colleagues have hosted more than 200 students and residents from all areas of the country for a four-week elective during which they encounter the challenges and rewards of practicing rural family medicine. The goal of this program is to increase interest in practicing in an underserved area. Many of Lovelace’s former students and physician colleagues have served on medical missions, both at home and abroad.

Lovelace is committed to ensuring that all people, especially the underserved, have access to high quality primary care in a patient-centered medical home. During Lovelace’s second year of solo practice, Newberry County’s only OB-GYN died. This left Lovelace as the only physician in three contiguous rural counties practicing obstetrics, and he delivered more than 220 babies.

In 1992, Lovelace and his colleagues completed training in operative obstetrics to meet this critical unmet need. During the ensuing five years, minority infant mortality dropped by 68 percent during a period when only Lovelace’s team of family physicians were delivering infants at Newberry County Hospital.

In 1993, Lovelace established the Living Water Foundation, a non-profit community development organization. Funded solely by donations and grant money, the Foundation has developed services and educational health programs to honor its mission to improve the quality of life of all people by providing medication assistance to the uninsured, health promotion classes to primary and secondary students, and promoting public health policy.

Lovelace has advocated for health care reform in South Carolina. From 1993 to 2006, he was instrumental in the development of the state’s Medicaid Physician’s Enhanced Program to help lower costs while improving the quality of care through a patient-centered medical home. Lovelace Family Medicine, one of three initial pilot sites, enrolled 1,100 patients, and the program resulted in an annual savings of more than $1 million - largely because Medicaid patients were given 24/7 access to their usual physician instead of seeking care in costly emergency rooms.

In 2003, Lovelace was appointed by then Governor Mark Sanford to serve as statewide co-chairman of the Health Care Task Force. In 2004, he served on the Lieutenant Governor’s Commission on Aging. Lovelace has served as president of the South Carolina Tobacco Collaborative, which, in 2010, helped coordinate the override of Governor Sanford’s veto in South Carolina’s General Assembly and raised the state’s lowest-in-the-nation cigarette tax by 50 cents. Lovelace currently serves on the state’s Obesity Advisory Council.

Lovelace’s role as a family physician extends beyond community service and caring for patients. He currently serves as a clinical assistant professor in the departments of family medicine at the University of South Carolina School of Medicine, the University of Virginia School of Medicine and the Medical University of South Carolina. He also serves as associate professor at the Edward Via Virginia College of Osteopathic Medicine, Carolinas Campus.

Lovelace earned his medical degree from the Medical University of South Carolina, Charleston, and completed his family medicine residency at the University of Virginia School of Medicine, Charlottesville. In addition, he completed a fellowship in operative obstetrics at the Medical University of South Carolina. Lovelace is board certified by the American Board of Family Medicine.
Craig Evans, MD ’74 honored for contributions to breast cancer research and care

The Charlotte Chapter of the Hadassah Medical Organization, which supports breast cancer research worldwide, honored Dr. E. Craig Evans at its October 30 event, The Big Reveal, for his contributions to breast cancer care in the Charlotte area. Dr. Evans was presented with the “Bust Award”, a raised relief of a woman’s upper body by artist Paul Rousso.

A native of South Carolina, Dr. Evans earned his medical degree from the MUSC College of Medicine in 1974 and completed his surgical training at the Emory University Hospitals in Atlanta, Georgia, serving as chief resident of general surgery in 1979. After practicing in Spartanburg, South Carolina for 10 years, Dr. Evans moved his family to Charlotte, North Carolina.

Now the Director of Presbyterian Hospital Cancer Center Breast Health Services in Charlotte, Dr. Evans treats over 200 breast cancer patients each year and has operated and lectured on breast cancer internationally. His volunteer work has included medical missions to Congo, Kyrgyzstan, Haiti, Dominican Republic, El Salvador and Argentina.

Dr. Evans and his wife are the proud parents of five children, two of whom are also in health care, one a graduate of the Physician Assistant Program at MUSC and the other soon to graduate from the MUSC College of Nursing this May.

Larry B. White, MD ’68, HS ’78
Retired Spartanburg physician honored by local medical society

By Felicia Kitzmiller

Dr. Larry White quietly served obstetrics and gynecology patients for 38 years in Spartanburg.

He did it without calling attention to himself or seeking recognition, but things changed Friday evening when he was named the D.C. Hull Physician of the Year by the Spartanburg County Medical Society.

The award is given every year by the group of about 400 area doctors in memory of the late Dr. D.C. Hull, a widely respected Spartanburg surgeon who died in 2005.

“Just being mentioned in the same sentence with D.C. Hull is quite an honor,” said White, who retired recently. “He was an icon – a great surgeon, a great physician, and a character.”

White co-founded Carolina Obstetrics and Gynecology in 1975 after graduating from Clemson University and the Medical University of South Carolina. He also served a two-year stint in the Medical Corps at Fort Jackson.

The practice grew from two to 10 physicians, and during White’s 38-year career, he cared for hundreds of patients and delivered about 6,000 babies.

“So many physicians in the community work their whole lives without being recognized,” said Dr. Aaron Toler, who nominated White. “Some people do great things and get their names put on buildings, but there are people who just grind it out every day, and they deserve to be recognized.”

Toler said he and his wife began working with White at Carolina Obstetrics and Gynecology in 1998. He said they were drawn to the practice because of its welcoming environment and dedication to patient service.

“I could not have asked for a better role model, a better mentor,” Toler said. “He was ultimately a team player and always put the patients first. … His drum beat at every staff meeting was, ‘What’s best for the patient? What will make the most sense for the patient?’”

In a time when doctors tend to change practices at least three times in a career and patients are highly mobile, Toler said White was the glue that held Carolina Obstetrics and Gynecology together.

White credited his longevity to excellent co-workers and patients who made going to work fun. Obstetrics and gynecology is a 24-hours-a-day, 365-days-a-year job, White said.

His dedication to patients is simple: “There’s a right way and a wrong way to do anything, and that’s the right way to practice medicine,” he said.

During almost four decades in medicine, White saw many changes.

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ALUMNI AWARDS

Nick Patel, MD ’02, receives Microsoft Most Valuable Professional Award

COLUMBIA, SC (February 13, 2015) - Nick Patel, MD recently received the Microsoft Most Valuable Professional Award for 2015. The Microsoft MVP Award is an annual award that recognizes exceptional technology community leaders worldwide who actively share their high quality, real-world expertise with users and Microsoft.

With fewer than 4,000 awardees worldwide, Patel joins an exceptional group of individuals from around the world who have demonstrated a willingness to reach out, share their technical expertise with others and help individuals maximize their use of technology. He is only the second physician to be named a Microsoft MVP.

“Dr. Patel is driven by a relentless desire to discover novel methods of care delivery to improve the care his patients receive. He is an innovator and a great physician,” said Tripp Jennings, MD, Palmetto Health systems vice president of Medical Informatics.

“MVPs share a deep commitment to community and a willingness to help others,” wrote Steven Guggenheimer, corporate vice president of developer experience and evangelism for Microsoft Corporation. “MVPs are technology’s best and brightest, and we are honored to welcome Nick as one of them.”

MVPs have the opportunity to meet Microsoft executives, network with peers and position themselves as technical community leaders through speaking engagements, one-on-one customer event participation and technical content development.

Patel received his medical degree from the MUSC College of Medicine in 2002 and completed his residency at Orlando Regional Medical Center in Orlando, Florida and Palmetto Health Richland. He is medical director of Midlands Internal Medicine and head of ambulatory informatics. He also serves as chief medical officer and head of research and development of IndeedMD, a health care startup company based in New York. He is married to Swati Patel, and they have two children, Ryan and Ariya.

College of Charleston honors Robert T. Ball, Jr., MD ’70, HS ’75

The award recognizes a College of Charleston graduate whose practice of medicine represents remarkable achievement, and who demonstrates an enduring commitment to the College and his or her community.

Robert Ball is a 7th generation Charleston physician specializing in Infectious Diseases, as did his paternal grandfather. In 1982, while in internal medicine and infectious diseases private practice and Adjunct Professor at his alma mater, Medical University of South Carolina, his life changed after diagnosing and reporting the first case of AIDS in South Carolina. Due to multiple factors (e.g., stigmatization, insurance company non-payments, and others) Ball became a pariah and eventually was forced to sell his practice. He moved to Columbia, earned a master’s degree in public health, became medical director of DHEC’s HIV and STD program and also became adjunct professor at USC’s Schools of Medicine and Public Health. He established SC’s Ryan White AIDS Program and others. For many years he was on the front lines in combatting AIDS and other Emerging Infectious Diseases and their stigma.

Since retiring from DHEC in 2012, Dr. Ball has become Adjunct Faculty in Public Health and Infectious Diseases at both MUSC and his alma mater, the College of Charleston, and mentors students interested in pursuing careers in these vital healthcare fields.

Adding to the already substantial list of honors recognizing his remarkable achievements, Dr. Ball recently received the College of Charleston’s 2014 Pre-Medical Society’s Outstanding Service Award in Medicine.

Watch the interview with Dr. Ball at https://alumni.cofc.edu
1991
Jennifer D. Walker, MD ’91, HSF ’98 and ’05, has been named chief of the Division of Cardiac Surgery and surgical director of the Heart and Vascular Center of Excellence at UMass Memorial Medical Center.

A cardiothoracic surgeon affiliated with Massachusetts General Hospital, Dr. Walker completed her medical education MUSC in 1991 where she also completed her internship and residency in surgery. She completed her cardiothoracic surgery training at MGH and Boston Children’s Hospital. Since 2005, she has been the director of cardiothoracic surgery resident education at Massachusetts General Hospital. Her commitment to both education and mentorship has stimulated many general surgery residents to choose a career path in cardiac surgery.

Her interest in mentoring comes from her own experience in being advised by the late Dr. Carolyn Reed, a thoracic surgeon at MUSC and a nationally known medical and academic leader. “She was a mentor all through my program at the Medical University of South Carolina, and then when I moved to Boston in 1997 to start my cardiac training, she and I remained in touch and were dear friends up until her death from pancreatic cancer (in 2012).”

Starting in 2009, Dr. Walker has also been the director of the cardiac surgical simulation laboratory and training program at MGH, and has received numerous excellence in teaching awards. She has also done a great deal of work on a national level to improve the outcomes of cardiac surgery by educating would-be surgeons through training in simulation laboratories.

2011
Benjamin Kalivs, MD ’11, a fourth year resident in the combined Internal Medicine and Psychiatry program at MUSC, won the 2014 Golden Apple Award in the house staff category. Dr. Kalivas’ current research interests include the relationship between delirium and acute hospitalizations. His long-term goal is to develop a protocol for handling delirium in an acute patient setting.

2003 and 2005
Stephanie Eschenbach Morgan, MD ’05, and Robert J. Morgan, MD ’03 celebrated the arrival of their second child, Piper L. Morgan, last September.
Region’s Health Care Heroes: Michelle Hudspeth, MD ’99, and Robert Schoderbeck, MD ’03 honored at annual event

Each year the Charleston Regional Business Journal and its partners honor the men, women and organizations who contribute to the health and well-being of the community. On November 20, 2014, the nominees gathered at the Francis Marion Hotel the 10th annual Health Care Heroes awards event, where judges chose finalists and Health Care Heroes. Eight categories included Community Outreach, First Responder, Health Care Professional, Health Care Researcher, Nurse, Physician, Trident Construction Health Care Engineer and Volunteer. Awards were based on overall impact each individual or team had on the community.

In the Physician Category, two MUSC College of Medicine alumni were honored.

Michelle Hudspeth, MD ’99, the division chief of pediatric hemotology/oncology and director of the Pediatric Blood and Marrow Transplant Program at MUSC Children’s Hospital, was named a 2014 Health Care Hero Honoree.

Hudspeth earned her medical degree from MUSC in 1999, completing her residency at Johns Hopkins Hospital, followed by a fellowship there in conjunction with the National Cancer Institute. Hudspeth was recruited back to her home state and MUSC in 2007 to lead the stem cell transplant program, the only one of its kind in the state. In just one year the number of pediatric transplants increased by 125 percent, with children not having to leave their home state to receive the best care, an important cause for Dr. Hudspeth.

Hudspeth fights to find and get funding for the best possible treatments for children. Immune reconstitution after bone marrow transplant is one of her specialty areas. On average it takes a patient...
about six months to a year to have a normal immune system after transplant and the subsequent revaccination. In her research, Hudspeth looks for clues to determine the best timing for vaccination after transplant. Based on the quality of that research, Hudspeth was invited to speak at the 2013 American Society of Pediatric Hematology/Oncology combined with the Pediatric Blood and Marrow Transplant Consortium about revaccination strategies after allogeneic hematopoietic stem cell transplant.

Research shows that socioeconomic status is the biggest determinant of survival after transplant. Looking at the children of South Carolina based on zip code and income, MUSC takes care of children who are in the lowest quartile, which should predict a lower survival rate. But that's not what's happening in the Palmetto state. The outcomes are actually just as good as or better than national standards despite all these adverse factors.

Hudspeth provides blood or marrow transplants to approximately 30 patients a year, with her team at MUSC treating patients from almost every county in the state. "Our goal every day is to defy the odds. We are typically dealing with children who are in the worst of worst situations and who are facing a massive amount of obstacles. Our job every day is to get past that and make the impossible possible. There is nothing more gratifying than seeing kids walk through the door who never should've made it. And, that's why our team is here. That's what we focus on."

Robert Schoderbeck, Jr., MD '03, was also named a Health Care Hero for 2014. Dr. Schoderbek is the medical director for the Roper St. Francis Sports Medicine Program, the team physician for a local high school, and a member of the American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons, American Orthopaedic Society for Sports Medicine as well as the Arthroscopy Association of North America. Aware of the seriousness and prevalence of sports-related injuries among high school students, and concerned that Charleston County School District didn't have funding to hire certified athletic trainers, Dr. Schoderbeck helped create a program to employ a sports medicine coordinator and certify seven athletic trainers to work at local high schools. Focusing efforts on injury prevention, evaluation, treatment and rehabilitation for athletes, the program has had a significant impact. During the first summer the program operated, one of the trainers who received certification through the program saved the life of an athlete who suffered heat stroke during practice.
When most think of combat, they think of the front lines — gun blasts and explosions. But Robert “Roddy” Knetsche saw a very different side — the aftermath.

A spine surgeon by trade, Knetsche spent 18 years as a member of the United States Army Medical Corps and about six months on combat assignment at the 14th Combat Support Hospital, Bagram Airfield, Afghanistan.

“We treated people who were blown up, we took care of people who were shot, whatever,” he said.

He was the chief of orthopedic surgery for that hospital.

“It was very intense — very rotten, to tell you the truth. A lot of the people who get shot or wounded are young people or children. When we were in Afghanistan, you would see mostly children, because the children would go into the minefields, because they were too young to understand it. Or they would get caught in the crossfire and weren’t quick enough to get out of the way when the two sides started shooting at each other.”

“A lot of people that you see who are wounded in warfare are young people — 18, 19, 20, 21 — and so you see lots of people who are blasted and blown up. Just all sorts of horrendomas,” he said.

A major when he was deployed to Afghanistan, it was definitely an experience. “I loved it, loved taking care of people,” Knetsche said. “You’re scared of it, but you always wonder how you’ll do when you get in that situation. You train for it — my whole time in the military, I trained to be in combat. … The people I was there with, my comrades and friends, they’re your friends for life. You really get tight with those people.”

“I think of it as the crescendo of my life — the best part was having done that. You’re doing things that really matter,” he said. “We did what people needed.”

While Knetsche was in Afghanistan, a school was blown up by Taliban militants. “They killed about 20 children, and we had about 20 more that were injured. We took care of those children. You save somebody’s life and it gives them the rest of their life to do what they want to do.”

Knetsche was the ortho-surgeon while there, but also did brain surgeries, as there was not a brain surgeon at the hospital at the time. The first one was on a 7-year-old child. “That was my very first brain surgery on my own, was on a child,” he said.

His career in the U.S. Army spans 22 years, beginning in 1986. Initially a tank officer, he was in charge of up to four tanks at a time. “It’s like going four-wheeling with your 68-ton beast that you could probably take over Mexico with,” Knetsche said. While it was a lot of fun to drive one, he said it was also a lot of maintenance. “You spent 80 percent of your time working on the vehicles. It was 95 percent drudgery, putting treads on the tank and mechanic work, and only about 5 percent fun.”

Occasionally, he said, they would take old tanks that were no longer useable, fill them with gas and shoot at them. “It’s a lot of fun,” he said with a smile.

Knetsche opted to go to medical school while in the Army and spent the remaining 18 years as a doctor.

A native of South Carolina, he ultimately graduated from the Medical University of South Carolina in 1994. From there, Knetsche completed his internship in general surgery at the Dwight D. Eisenhower Army Medical Center in Georgia.

He spent the next few years at the Martin Army Community Hospital in Georgia before completing his residency in orthopaedic surgery at the William Beaumont Army Medical Center. From there, Knetsche became a spine surgery fellow at the University of Colorado Health Sciences Center.

After his time in Afghanistan ended, Knetsche returned to his station at the Landstuhl Regional Medical Center in Germany as the chief of the spine and neurologic surgery service, where he and his family — wife Lisa and children Robbie, Jackson and Emily — had been since September 2003.

“In Landstuhl, we saw all the combat casualties from Iraq and Afghanistan,” he said. About 60 people a day would come in as casualties of war.

It was an interesting experience for his children, Knetsche said, because they were living in a foreign country, but were also on an Army base. “That’s where they grew up, really. There were 40,000 Americans and people from everywhere,” he said. “It was a lot different for them to grow up in Europe and at war. Peoples’ fathers are getting killed or wounded, getting deployed. It was very hard on them.

“It was a military community and there are a lot of hard things about it — your friends move all the time.” There were good things, too, he said, as they could just pop over to Paris on the weekends, and it gave the kids a large worldview.

While finishing his tenure in Germany, Knetsche created a video showing his experiences and explaining surgeries that he had completed while in combat. Initially, he said, it was as a mental therapy for himself, but after a few friends saw it, he began showing it more. “It makes you feel just a little, teeny bit of what it feels like to be in and see all of this stuff,” Knetsche said. “Unless you’ve been in combat, you don’t see these kinds of things. That’s the horror of war.”

By 2008, Knetsche had reached the rank of Lt. Colonel in the U.S. Army and had completed thousands of ortho and spine surgeries.

He retired and began looking for a new place to practice medicine. He settled on Danville, working with Ephraim McDowell Regional Medical Center and opening The Spine Center of Central Kentucky, which sees about 7,200 patients a year. It’s a national certified center of excellence.

“i get a lot of fulfillment from what I do now,” he said. “Here, I see people I can fix.”

That said, he admitted it won’t replace what he was able to do while in Afghanistan and Germany. “I loved being in the military, I loved serving my country. I’m proud of what I did.”

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MUSC doctor, once a nontraditional student, supports scholarship campaign

By Allyson Crowell
Office of Development and Alumni Affairs

While about 90 percent of medical students dive in straight from undergraduate college, several physicians in Dr. John Freedy's family took a nontraditional path.

Dr. Freedy's late father, a general physician, retired from the U.S. Navy and started medical school on the GI Bill in his 30s. Dr. Freedy's mother, also a general physician, retrained to become a radiologist in her 40s. Even Dr. Freedy's wife, Melba, began her career in business but enrolled at MUSC to become a pharmacist a decade later.

Dr. Freedy decided to return to medical school at age 36, married with a family and eight years of experience working as clinical psychologist. While his colleagues warned against the decision, his family rallied around the idea. "That seemed the norm," Dr. Freedy said. "It may be a challenge but, if that's what you want to do, you should do that."

Dr. Freedy, a family medicine doctor, recently made the first gift from a faculty alumnus toward the Opening Doors Medical Scholarship Campaign through a planned gift. The Robert J. Freedy and Lucy R. Freedy Scholarship Fund, named in honor of his parents, will provide financial assistance to nontraditional students interested in primary care.

"I want to give them encouragement that other people have gone before you," Dr. Freedy said. "It helps to know someone who did it and also to let them know they are not alone. The symbolic value of someone saying that they believe in you is huge."

Dr. Freedy first came to Charleston in 1985, when he and Melba honeymooned here. The couple met at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and, although Dr. Freedy is originally from Ohio, he promised his wife that they would return to the Southeast eventually.

Dr. Freedy came to MUSC in 1989 for a year-long psychology internship. He remained here on a postdoctoral fellowship until 1991 and then served on the psychiatry faculty until 1998, when he enrolled in medical school. Dr. Freedy graduated from the College of Medicine in 2002, completed his residency years at MUSC and returned to faculty of the Department of Family Medicine in 2005. He is currently an associate professor of Family Medicine as well as associate dean for Student Affairs of the College of Medicine.

In addition to teaching family medicine residents, he also provides guidance to students from enrollment until graduation. As he puts it, "I'm in the business of developing human potential, both of my own and other people."

One of the great obstacles to that development, Dr. Freedy said, is student debt, which averages nearly $200,000 for an MUSC medical student today. "People who will work hard enough to get into and through medical school shouldn't be burdened with that level of debt," Dr. Freedy said. "We have to lower the burden for young people willing to put in the sweat equity."

Dr. Freedy paid for medical school himself, with help from his wife and parents, in addition to some small scholarships.

Dr. Freedy hopes that the Robert J. Freedy and Lucy R. Freedy Scholarship Fund will provide additional support to other nontraditional students who can help to add diversity to the College of Medicine. Medical school is tough enough to tackle immediately following undergraduate college, let alone later in life, he said.

"You don't go into this profession for the perceived prestige. That's a byproduct of being passionate, and it's not guaranteed," Dr. Freedy said. "You do it because you have a burning desire in your heart, and you are called to it."

Wanda Taylor, assistant dean for Admissions in the College of Medicine, said Dr. Freedy distinguished himself during his first year of medical school and received scholarships each subsequent year.

“We all knew he would become a very good practicing physician and, I am happy to report that we were right,” Taylor said. “Needless to say, I have enjoyed working closely with Dr. Freedy again in his role as Associate Dean for Student Affairs. His calm demeanor and strong sense of fairness make him the perfect person to counsel medical students.”

"People who will work hard enough to get into and through medical school shouldn't be burdened with that level of debt," Dr. Freedy said. "We have to lower the burden for young people willing to put in the sweat equity."

Dr. John Freedy with his wife, Melba, and children, Matthew and Madison.
On July 1, 2012, the College of Medicine launched the silent phase of the first campaign in its long history dedicated exclusively to raising money for scholarships. We are making good progress and are encouraged that we will be able to meet our goal of $20 million by 2017.

Since the campaign began on July 1, 2012, 18 new scholarships have been established; a total of 460 donors have made gifts or pledges to new or existing scholarship funds; and the alumni participation rate stands at 6.7%.

Since the start of the campaign, donors have given:
- Current cash gifts totaling $3,269,697
- Current stock gifts totaling $906,681
- Estate gifts / outstanding pledges: $10,064,958
- Gifts of real estate: $357,000

Total amount given as of December 31, 2014: $14,565,336

**THE COLLEGE OF MEDICINE ALUMNI SCHOLARS PROGRAM**

Of the more than $14 million given to scholarships since the start of the campaign, a total of $201,469 (gifts and pledges) was given by 255 alumni to their respective Class Scholarship Funds.

The class scholarship funds are permanent endowments within the MUSC Foundation. Established by each alumni class under the Alumni Scholars Program, the Class Scholarships provide much needed support for deserving medical students. With tuition at the Medical University currently exceeding $35,000 per year, for in-state tuition, and over $62,000 for out-of-state tuition, and 96% of our students depending on financial assistance, the class scholarship funds have become a way for alumni to make small or moderate sized gifts, yet have a large cumulative impact.

For the 2014-2015 academic year, the Class Scholarship Funds that have reached endowment status were able to award scholarships to 33 students totaling $58,350.00 in tuition assistance. The charts adjacent provide a snapshot of the Class Scholarship Funds as of December 31, 2014.
Scholarships are life-changing. In fact, for a medical student, a single scholarship can completely change the trajectory of their life—whether the student is the life of the students or the lives of the patients he or she will someday heal. The generous contributions of many College of Medicine alumni and friends will help keep the medical profession open to the most gifted, hardest working individuals regardless of their financial circumstances. With deep gratitude, we thank the following donors who have responded to the Opening Doors Medical Scholarship Campaign.
On October 11, 2014, scholarship donors and the students they support gathered at the College of Medicine's second annual Scholars and Benefactors Celebration brunch. The event provided an opportunity to recognize the accomplishments of the College's scholarship recipients and to express heartfelt gratitude to the many donors whose generosity and support have been, and continue to be, vital to the College’s missions of medical education, research and clinical excellence. As Dr. John Freedy, associate professor in the MUSC Department of Family Medicine and associate dean for Student Affairs, stated, “Without our scholarship benefactors, many of our students would have been unable to enter medical school.”

More than 200 people attended the event, which was held at the Country Club of Charleston. The College of Medicine’s Opening Doors Medical Scholarship Campaign was publically announced and a brief video was shown to explain the need for a campaign devoted exclusively to raising money for scholarships. The video features several scholarship recipients as well as scholarship donors, including two of the College's emeritus deans, Dr. Layton McCurdy and Dr. Jerry Reves, as well as Dr. Paul Underwood, professor and associate dean for admissions. All stressed the increasingly vital role that scholarships now play in enabling students to attend medical school.

Among those present were more than one hundred scholarship recipients for the 2014-2015 academic year and several donors, including: Dr. Vasiliki Moskos, a class of 1965 alumna who established the Maria and Constantine Moskos Endowed Scholarship; Dr. Cavert K. McCorkle ('72) who established the Cavert Keith McCorkle, MD Endowed Scholarship and the Philip Hunter & Mary Smith McCorkle Endowed Scholarship, in memory of his parents. Dr. Delores Gibbs ('73) who established the Rose Delores Gibbs, MD Endowed Scholarship.

Special guests included Mr. John B. Holloway, program manager of the Medical Society of South Carolina. In 2012, the Medical Society established the Roper St. Francis Physicians Scholars Program to help recruit the state's brightest students to
MUSC and hopefully retain them as physicians in the Lowcountry. The Roper St. Francis Physicians Scholars Program is extremely generous, providing one full-tuition and two half-tuition scholarships to members of each academic class.

Several generous donors to their Class Scholarship Funds also attended the event, including Dr. Maxcy C. Boineau (‘61), Dr. Roy E. Hudgens (‘62), Dr. E. O. Horger III (‘62), and Dr. Teresa Luhrs (‘82). Also joining the celebration was the indefatigable, inimitable Dr. H. Biemann Othersen, Jr. who, as a class of 1953 alumnus, might have been expected to be the most senior alumnus in the room. Not so! This year, the College was honored to have Dr. Peter C. Gazes sponsor the event. Dr. Gazes graduated from the College in 1944, and his countless contributions to MUSC now include the Dr. Peter C. Gazes and Athena C. Gazes Endowed Scholarship.

Scholarship support is among the College of Medicine’s highest priorities and it would be difficult to overstate the impact that our alumni have made to ensure that qualified students can afford to attend medical school regardless of their financial circumstances.

The students and the College of Medicine are profoundly grateful for the generosity and foresight of the scholarship donors who have opened the door to a medical education for so many students who otherwise would not have been able to pursue a career in medicine. We could not do it without you!

To find out more about the Opening Doors Medical Scholarship Campaign, or to see how you can help, go to www.musc.edu/medicine/openingdoors.
W. Curtis Worthington, Jr., MD ’52 retires after 60 years of service

By Mikie Hayes, Public Relations

Curtis Worthington, Jr. Lifetime Achievement Award.

Believing that the foundation of any great organization is rooted in service, the board of directors of the Waring Library Society established an award that would recognize exceptional commitment, loyalty and dedication to the mission of the Waring Library, specifically, developing collections, raising funds for the library’s endowment, promoting membership, and perpetuating interest in the history of the health sciences throughout the recipient’s career.

As the board reflected on the importance of this new award, they immediately raised Dr. Worthington’s name: Walton Ector, MD, past chairman of the board and lifelong friend of Dr. Worthington’s, shared the following during his presentation of the award: “It is very clear that during his 32 years of uninterrupted service to the Waring Library that he epitomizes all of the requisite characteristics. So, the board decided to name the award after Dr. Worthington and to present the first award to him.”

He continued, “Let me tell you a little about this man. We were classmates in medical school at MUSC, so we have been close friends since the fall of 1948. Curtis did not know this award was being developed, and he did not know that he would be the first recipient. He really does not need another award; the list of honors he has attained is long and distinguished. You would think that a person who has received so many awards would be a little conceited, ‘stuck up,’ but you will seldom meet a more humble gentleman than Curtis Worthington. Having known him for 66 years, you would think I would know at least some minor flaw in his character. But I have never heard a remotely bad word spoken about Curtis. In fact, every time I have asked a person if they know Dr. Worthington, the reply is always: ‘Yes, and what a fine man he is.’”

Ector spoke of the many honors Dr. Worthington received over the years and his extensive professional accomplishments. Of the man he calls his best friend, he said, “Over the years, I have been privileged to be invited on a number of occasions to go shrimp seining with Curtis at his favorite place in the world — Edisto Island, on Store Creek. And let me tell you, this skinny guy would wear me out pulling that seine. I thought I was in good shape. Curtis used to respond, when people asked where he lived, ‘I exist on Morton Avenue, in the West Ashley area of Charleston, but I live on Edisto Island.”

A familiar and well–respected presence on campus, Dr. Worthington worked closely with the administration of the Medical University and made many friends and admirers along the way.

Layton McCurdy, MD, Distinguished University Professor and dean emeritus of the College of Medicine, had many complimentary things to say about Dr. Worthington’s time at MUSC. “Curtis and I have been friends and close working partners for many, many years. He is a wonderful gamesman. He loved his place out there on the Edisto — it was a second home. He and I used to pull a seine in the creek behind his house — we would pull it out and see what we got. He loved to fish and loves being out there.” He continued, “I’ve never spent time with Curtis that I didn’t come away with a feeling of having enjoyed it and like I had learned something, and that what I said to him would be held in confidence. I didn’t have to ask him, it’s just who he was and how he operated. He has a subtle sense of humor and can see irony in things. I’ll miss him being at the Waring. I’d go in there at least once a month to chat with him. He is an impeccable scholar and a man with vision.”

H. Biemann Othersen, Jr., MD, professor of surgery and pediatrics and medical director for the Children’s Hospital, considers himself a second-class shrimper compared to Curtis Worthington — Edisto Island, on Store Creek.
to his friend. "Curtis Worthington is a multi-talented individual skilled in anatomy, administration, history, and shrimping. He is kind and generous, but was not with Manse Creek. That muddy creek ran by his dock at Edisto and he considered it his. I once trespassed on that creek and hid below the sides of my boat until I passed his dock. Too much mud in that creek, though," he joked.

Jerry Reves, MD, dean emeritus of the College of Medicine, also enjoyed his chats with Dr. Worthington: "I recall Dr. Worthington as one of the few, but critical, members of the anatomy faculty when we were first-year medical students here in 1965. Through the many succeeding years, it was a privilege to watch him continue to impact our College of Medicine and university. It was reassuring to enter the Waring Library and find Dr. Worthington always at his desk doing work, but more importantly taking time from his work to chat about anything important related to MUSC. I don’t think there is anyone who had his finger on the pulse of this institution more certainly than Curtis Worthington. He will be greatly missed as the keen participant and observer of this place over such a long and distinguished time."

Jim Fisher, vice president for development and alumni affairs, expressed his great respect and admiration for Dr. Worthington. "When I first came to MUSC, Curtis was serving as vice president for academic affairs, so I’ve known him for a long time and in a lot of different roles," Fisher said. "Some people think of him as a teacher, an administrator or a historian, but in many ways, I’ll always think of Curtis as the heart of the Medical University. A Southern gentleman in every respect, he has helped keep this institution grounded in its best traditions of honor, integrity, compassion, and humble service. To me, that has been his most important and enduring contribution to the Medical University."

Waring Historical Librarians Brooke Fox, left, and Susan Hoffius congratulate Dr. Curtis Worthington on his achievements.
MUSC Health and RMC in Orangeburg sign affiliation agreement

Feb 04, 2015 | MUSC Press Release

CHARLESTON, SC - Regional Medical Center (RMC) President and CEO Thomas C. Dandridge announced that the RMC Board of Trustees has approved a clinical affiliation with the Medical University of South Carolina (MUSC/MUSC Health). An enterprise-wide focus on continuously improving the RMC patient experience, including quality of care and doing what’s best for the patient, is at the forefront of this decision.

“The Regional Medical Center has enjoyed an excellent ongoing, albeit informal, relationship with MUSC for many years,” Dandridge said. “This affiliation agreement formalizes that relationship and creates opportunities for expanded interaction between RMC and MUSC physicians, staff, boards and leadership.”

The affiliation will allow RMC to enhance specific specialty services, initially targeting specific specialty services, initially targeting comprehensive portfolio of primary, specialty and subspecialty healthcare services delivered by MUSC Health. It is the state’s most nationally recognized health system consisting of four inpatient facilities and more than one hundred care settings across the state of South Carolina. It is the state’s leading provider of cancer treatment, orthopaedics and mental health.

Patrick J. Cawley, MD, Executive Director/Chief Executive Officer, MUSC Health Medical Center, said “Today’s dynamic healthcare environment calls for new and different collaborations and clinical integrations to deliver the best care at the best location for the patient.

Sometimes that means care delivered in the local community close to home and family, and other times the best outcome may require better access to the highly specialized services delivered by MUSC Health.”

MUSC Health, MUSC’s clinical enterprise, is the state’s most nationally recognized health system consisting of four inpatient facilities and more than one hundred care settings across the state of South Carolina. It is the state’s leading provider of telehealth services, and one of only 68 NCI-designated cancer centers in the country.

In collaboration with local care providers, MUSC Health develops and implements innovative models of care delivery with the common goal of enhancing the health of all South Carolinians. Annually residents of Bamberg, Calhoun, and Orangeburg counties benefit from innovative, integrated care provided by local care givers at RMC and MUSC Health.

Dandridge concluded, “The RMC healthcare system’s affiliation with MUSC Health further strengthens RMC’s comprehensive portfolio of primary, specialty and subspecialty healthcare services provided throughout the multi-county region.”

Interprofessionalism Outside of the Classroom

By Kayla and Kellie Bingham, College of Medicine (M1)

This year, the College of Medicine at the Medical University of South Carolina has placed a focus on interprofessionalism. Students from every college at MUSC are required to take an interprofessionalism course, as well as attend an Interprofessionalism Day that is held in the spring.

The Medical Student Alumni Council (MSAC) decided to fully embrace this focus on interprofessionalism and host an engaging event alongside the Dental Student Alumni Council (DSAC) where both colleges could interact to exchange ideas and form new relationships. The event was a huge success, with almost 40 students participating. One student said during the event that it was so nice to have a gathering where you could interact with people from different colleges in a more relaxed setting. He went on to say that it helped to foster deeper relationships and friendships that would in return benefit the health care community as a whole.

The idea of interprofessionalism is something very personal for the two of us. This past October our 18-year-old cousin was in a horrific car accident on his way back to college. The accident broke most of the bones in his face, crushed his teeth, damaged his left brachial plexus, and destroyed his right leg. Through countless surgeries and weeks in the hospital, we saw for the first time how crucial it is that all health care professionals work as a team. The nurses were there to attend to his minute-to-minute needs. The doctors worked with dentists to realign his jaw so eventually new teeth could be installed. The physical therapy team helped to rehabilitate his right leg, while the occupational therapist taught him to live with one functioning arm. Having just gone through such a personal experience, we were excited to be a part of an organization that is not only embracing the idea of interprofessionalism, but achieving more than what is expected.

To quote Henry Ford, “Coming together is a beginning. Keeping together is a progress. Working together is success.” This ideology summarizes the effort that both MSAC and DSAC have begun. The relationship that has been made between the College of Medicine and the College of Dental Medicine is an example of how working together can lead to success. The MSAC/DSAC social was so successful that another event is being planned between the two colleges. In the future year, we hope to expand this experience to other colleges at the University. Reaching this goal will be a process, but we are proud to be a part of an organization that has decided to be a leader in creating this change.

stroke care through telehealth technology and the surgical weight loss program. In the future, RMC and MUSC Health plan to further explore opportunities for enhanced care in cancer treatment, orthopaedics and mental health.

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Updates in General Internal Medicine for Primary Care 2015
March 13-15, 2015
Charleston, SC
Doubletree Guest Suites Hotel
Credits Offered: AMA PRA Category 1 Credit(s) - 15.00; CEUs

4th Annual Neuroscience Symposium & Annual Neurology Update for the Primary Care Provider
March 20 – 21, 2015
Charleston, SC
Credits Offered: AMA PRA Category 1 Credit(s) - 7.00; CEUs

46th Annual OB/GYN Spring Symposium
April 18-20, 2015
Charleston, SC
Click here to view the course brochure and to register.
You may also call 843-876-1925 or email cmeoffice@musc.edu for more information!
Credits Offered: AMA PRA Category 1 Credit(s) - 14.00; CEUs

2015 Storm Eye Institute Spring Meeting and Alumni Reunion
April 24-25, 2015
Storm Eye Institute
Charleston, SC
Doubletree Guest Suites Hotel
Credits Offered: AMA PRA Category 1 Credit(s) - 18.75

44th Annual Postgraduate Course in Surgery
April 30 - May 2, 2015
Charleston, SC
Doubletree Guest Suites Hotel
Credits Offered: AMA PRA Category 1 Credit(s) - 18.75

Evidence Based Drug Therapy Update
May 14-16, 2015
North Charleston, SC
Crowne Plaza Hotel
Credits Offered: AMA PRA Category 1 Credit(s)

39th Annual Cardiology Update: Evidence-Based Management
May 27-30, 2015
Charleston, SC
Doubletree Guest Suites Hotel
Credits Offered: AMA PRA Category 1 Credit(s) - 17.25

An Intensive Review of Family Medicine
June 22-27, 2015
Kiawah Island Golf Resort - Turtle Pt. Clubhouse
Credits Offered: AMA PRA Category 1 Credit(s); CEUs (Continuing Education Units)

During its most recent session, the South Carolina General Assembly passed a law requiring physicians to demonstrate completion of at least two hours of CME coursework related to the approved procedures for prescribing and monitoring controlled substances. More information on this requirement can be found on the S.C. Board of Medical Examiners’ website at http://www.llr.state.sc.us/POL/Medical/Policies/CME_requirement_general_information.pdf

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Hundreds of people including state dignitaries came to honor and celebrate the life of the late James B. Edwards Dec. 26 in a packed sanctuary at St. Philip’s Church.

Gov. Nikki Haley joined former Govs. Dick Riley, David Beasley and Mark Sanford among a host of other state officials at the funeral in downtown Charleston.

Edwards’ son-in-law Kenneth B. Wingate shared reflections during the service next to the flag-draped coffin. He described Edwards’ sense of humor, and said his humanity and humility really stood out.

“The biblical definition of good is generous with a willing spirit that allows one to put another’s interest above one’s own. It’s rare to find a great man. It’s more rare to find a good man. It’s exceedingly rare to find a great man who is good.”

Wingate also recapped highlights of the former governor of South Carolina’s career, including his military service, his work as an oral surgeon and his 17 years as president of the Medical University of South Carolina.

He said Edwards did more than any other 10 people combined, but would joke that all the things he did in his life just showed he couldn’t keep a job.

“Though he walked with kings and presidents and sat with leaders of commerce and industry, he never let the office go to his head.”

Wingate also described Edwards as a Renaissance man who could do anything well. “His joie de vivre was contagious.”

Following the funeral, H. Biemann Othersen, Jr., MD, professor emeritus MUSC Division of Pediatric Surgery, reminisced about Edwards. The two were longtime friends. “He knew everybody by name and he would greet them with the same enthusiasm. He would greet the president the same way he would greet the janitor.”

Othersen said Edwards knew how to make people feel good, and he did it with sincerity. “It wasn’t put on, it wasn’t false. It was just him.”

During Edwards’ 30 plus years as president and president emeritus at MUSC, he remained a staunch supporter of the institution. Wingate said after Edwards had a stroke in 2013 and could no longer take potential donors out to restaurants, he and his wife Ann would entertain them at home.

Othersen said Edwards had a gift for getting others to give for a good cause. “I always thought he was a good fundraiser because he made you feel good and made you feel good about giving.”

Philanthropy was just one gift of many in a varied career. Edwards was born in 1927 to a pair of teachers in Hawthorne, Florida. After high school, Edwards became a Merchant Marine as World War II was winding down, then headed back to study at the College of Charleston. He married Ann Darlington in 1951, went to dental school and served in the Navy. Edwards opened a practice in oral and maxillofacial surgery in Charleston in 1960.

Edwards became politically active in the 1960s and won election to the state Senate in 1972. Two years later, he became the first Republican governor of South Carolina since reconstruction. Edwards went on to serve as energy secretary in President Ronald Reagan’s cabinet and then was recruited to become president of the Medical University of South Carolina. During his tenure, the university’s budget quadrupled and key construction and renovation projects were completed, including the Institute of Psychiatry, the Student Life Center and Children’s Hospital.

In 2010, the new MUSC dental building and dental school were named in Edwards’ honor.

The Right Rev. Dr. C. FitzSimons Allison said Edwards’ generosity and commendable activities were rooted in a strong faith that he passed along to his family. His favorite verse was Micah 6:8 that reads in part ‘What does the Lord require of you but to do justly, to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God?’

FitzSimons said it was a standard that served as Edwards’ guiding force - one that he lived by.
REFLECTIONS FROM MUSC STAFF AND FACULTY

David J. Cole, MD, MUSC president

Dr. Edwards (President, MUSC 1983-2000) took over the reins as president at a time when MUSC was a locally and regionally respected institution with finite resources, limited impact nationally and a small but dedicated faculty. With his leadership and vision, MUSC started to transform and grow in scope, scale and quality - a legacy and momentum that even today is still evolving.

As an individual he was universally liked and respected. He had a personality that filled the room – truly, he never met anyone that he did not like. I had the privilege of joining the faculty as an assistant professor of surgery in 1994, and from day one he made me feel respected, included and at times like I quite possibly was his long lost younger brother. We, and the patients we care for, owe a huge debt of respect and gratitude to Dr. Edwards for his leadership. He will be sorely missed.

Jim Fisher, vice president for Development and Alumni Affairs

It was a true privilege to work with Dr. Edwards during his tenure at MUSC. I was actually on campus when he arrived in the Fall of 1982. I imagine that in your senior years you will look back on your life and think about those very few and extraordinary individuals who truly shaped and led your life. Other than my own father, Dr. Edwards will be the list-topper for me.

His life story reads like a novel. He accomplished so much throughout his 87 years – enough for ten lifetimes. Yet, throughout it all, he maintained a sincere humility. I had the privilege of seeing him in the presence of national leaders and heads of corporate America. I was also with him through strolls across campus when he would have the opportunity to speak to University employees from all areas. He enjoyed and cherished both interactions. He would make all feel that at that moment they were the most important person in his life – and, they were! He simply loved people, all colors, creed and background. He was so sincere. When he asked, ‘how you doin’, Pal?’, he wanted to know.

All of us who had the honor of working with him knew him as a leader who would address every issue and challenge with a sense of optimism. He was eternally upbeat regardless of the situation.

We will all remember his honesty, his integrity, his unwavering faith, his sense of family, his loyalty to each of us and his humanity. What I will remember most is his smile. It was contagious and it spoke to me: Life is good, let’s work hard and enjoy the ride!

Layton McCurdy, MD, dean emeritus of the College of Medicine and distinguished university professor

I started working with Jim when I came to be dean July 1, 1990. We immediately hit it off. He was friendly and open. Rather quickly I learned that it was fun to joke with him. Early on I learned that many people could just wander into his office for a visit. He would often call me and say “Charlie or Jane Doe need a favor. You busy?” He was eager to do favors. He sincerely enjoyed being helpful.

He had a remarkable memory for names. We would be traveling within the state and people would come up to him and say “Governor, remember me?” And he would say, ‘Yes, Charlie, you are the guy whose sister had problems down in Allendale and I was able to help you get connected.’ I never saw him be unresponsive.

As a leader he was masterful. He could envision things and help those around him see what could be done. You then wanted to get going and get it done. An example was that he and Sen. Hollings envisioned a cancer center at our school. Despite a lot of obstacles, they got it done. There are many more examples. He was a master at making fun of himself and using that again to get things done. His vision was transformative in the history of our school. He started what I have called the era of great progress. His capacity to inspire philanthropic gifts was exceptional. We would not be where we are today as an institution without Jim Edwards leadership and vision.

Lawrence C. Mohr, MD, professor of medicine, biometry and epidemiology

I was lucky enough to know Jim Edwards for many years. He was one of the most remarkable individuals I have ever known. His life was one of high achievement, service to humankind, devotion to the people of South Carolina and
dedication to the nation. However, to those of us who knew him as a friend, it was Jim's character and personal qualities that we cherish and remember the most. Integrity, sincerity, warmth, concern for others, love of family, an ever positive attitude, personal humility and his wonderful sense of humor were the defining characteristics of his life, his friendships and his success. Jim knew instinctively that true leadership was about motivating the human spirit in ways that enabled ordinary people to accomplish more than they ever thought possible. He knew that making a difference was a human endeavor which involved bringing people together in a way that allowed them to achieve more collectively than any one person could accomplish alone.

During Jim's tenure as MUSC president a number of new buildings were built. However, Jim would give us constant reminders that new buildings were only as good as the people who occupy them. The people who comprised his MUSC family were always Jim's main concern. I was blessed to be one of them. Jim's selfless devotion to others was the foundation of his extraordinary success in government and the remarkable transformation of MUSC that occurred during his presidency. In this regard, Jim Edwards leaves a legacy of service and accomplishment that is achieved by very few. However, if you really want to understand Jim's legacy, simply look around you - it is everywhere.

Mark Lyles, MD, chief strategic officer for the Medical University Hospital Authority

I first got to know Dr. Edwards when I led MUSC's Student Government Association in 1992. Dr. Edwards was an incredible mentor to me and he played an instrumental role in educating me about the business and political sides of academic medicine. He was an affable and approachable leader who always made anyone he was talking with feel special and important. Dr. Edwards will be remembered fondly by all.

Gov. Nikki Haley was one of many state dignitaries in attendance at Edwards’ funeral. Edwards remained active in politics throughout his life.
Q&A with Larry Winn, MD ’75, president of the College of Medicine Alumni Association Board

What is your current job description?
I have been practicing family medicine in Easley, SC going on 38 years. I now do primary care but for many years obstetrics and hospital care.

What about family medicine appealed to you for your specialty area?
Medicine is my vocation and avocation. I love family medicine because of the endless variety and relationships with my patients.

How has the practice of medicine changed during your career?
Medicine has changed in many ways during my years of practice but conscientious and compassionate care for our patients will always be of most importance.

Why have you chosen to stay involved with the College of Medicine as an alumnus?
One of the pivotal points in my life was when I started to medical school. I love MUSC, the College of Medicine and the people who make it the great institution that it is. I appreciate the knowledge and training that was provided for me and strongly support its endeavors.

What quote do you live by?
A favorite verse from Psalm 46: “God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.”

How do you enjoy spending your free time?
My wife and I enjoy international travel and have done so for many years. We enjoy biking, swimming, skiing, spectator sports and the arts such as the symphony and theatre. I have been a lifelong runner.

What advice would you give to incoming medical students?
I advise incoming medical students to fully absorb the exceptional experience they are about to begin.

ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

ALUMNI OPPORTUNITIES

Attracting future talent to continue our rich history of excellence in health care, research and education, is one of our main objectives, and College of Medicine Alumni are a rich source of talent, innovation, compassion and dedication. If you have ever considered returning to your alma mater, now is the time. The Medical University of South Carolina offers opportunities in ground breaking research, state of the art patient care facilities and education that only an academic medical center can provide.

Open positions can be viewed online at www.musc.edu/hr//jobs across all segments of the MUSC enterprise:

UNIVERSITY HR: For those interested in employment as faculty (including clinical faculty) or staff at the Medical University of South Carolina.

MEDICAL CENTER HR: For those interested in employment at the MUSC Medical Center which includes multiple hospitals and clinics.

MUSC PHYSICIANS HR: For those interested in employment with MUSC’s physician practice plan including multi-specialty sites and MUSC Physicians - Primary Care sites.

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Faculty – College of Medicine

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To view more, go to www.musc.edu/hr//jobs

New way of weighing helps people shed body fat
January 21, 2015 - The Mayo Clinic, CIA and Navy Seals swear by it. Now it’s available to the Charleston public at the Wellness Center: the InBody composition analyzer, telling you everything from your body composition to your visceral fat level.
Read this story at the MUSC News Center at www.musc.edu/pr/newscenter/
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