

THE REVIEW

UNIVERSITY OF NORTH DAKOTA
SCHOOL OF MEDICINE & HEALTH SCIENCES



Manuchair (“Mike”) Ebadi, Ph.D., is leading the effort to advance the research agenda at the University of North Dakota (UND) School of Medicine and Health Sciences. As associate dean for research and program development, he is charged with identifying and pursuing opportunities for the school to make an even greater contribution to the base of scientific knowledge necessary to understanding how the body functions in health and disease. Recently, he also has been named associate vice president for health affairs at UND (see story, page 6).

IN REVIEW

Letter

Alum Made Motion to Expand Med School

It was with great interest that I read the past issue of the University of North Dakota School of Medicine REVIEW (“*UND Strengthens Health Care in North Dakota*,” November 2001, Vo. 27, No. 1). Celebrating the 25th anniversary of granting the M.D. degree at UND is indeed exciting!

I was on the Physician’s Liaison Committee for the Medical School Affairs Committee back in January of 1973. This committee reviewed all of the information from the Booz-Allen and Hamilton report recommending that this medical school expand to a four-year program.

I am proud to have made the motion to approve this change for the medical school

to become a four-year program. The committee unanimously approved the motion. The rest is history.

The University of North Dakota Medical School has a proud heritage. Producing physicians in North Dakota to KEEP them in North Dakota to practice medicine is a fine accomplishment.

I again congratulate you (Dean H. David Wilson) and the Medical School for its successful transition and its outlook continues to be exceedingly bright!

Glenn Thoreson, M.D. (B.S. Med. ‘64)
Clinical assistant professor of family medicine, Mayville, ND

UND Family Medicine Department Chairperson

Applicants and nominations are invited for the position of Chairperson, Department of Family Medicine, University of North Dakota School of Medicine and Health Sciences.

This individual will play a key leadership role within the School of Medicine and will have an opportunity to influence health care in rural America. Based at the Grand Forks (ND) campus, the chairperson is responsible for graduate education in three family medicine residency programs, and for the undergraduate medical student curriculum in family medicine on four urban campuses and selected rural sites across North Dakota. He/she is supported by full-time, enthusiastic clinical faculty in the School of Medicine, which has been recognized nationally for its excellence in rural medical education and care.

The chairperson will interact with other chairs and the administration of the school to further excellence in family medicine within the various curricula of the school.

We seek applicants who have documented accomplishments in teaching and research; demonstrated commitment to education; experience in supervising faculty, including development of junior faculty, and a proven record in administration in both academics and practice management.

Interested individuals should send a letter of interest with current curriculum vitae by **May 15, 2002**, to Bruce G. Pitts, M.D., Professor of Internal Medicine and Associate Dean, University of North Dakota School of Medicine and Health Sciences, 1919 North Elm Street, Fargo, ND 58102 or e-mail brucepitts@meritcare.com.

The University of North Dakota School of Medicine and Health Sciences is an Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Employer.

Calendar

April 6

AMSA Science Discovery Day, “hands-on” learning activities for fifth- and sixth-graders, sponsored by American Medical Student Association at UND School of Medicine and Health Sciences, Grand Forks; for more information, call 701/777-4305, or e-mail: mlucke@medicine.nodak.edu

April 18

Frank N. Low Research Day, UND School of Medicine and Health Sciences, 501 N. Columbia Road, Grand Forks; keynote speaker: Mary Hendrix, Ph.D., chairwoman of the Department of Anatomy and Cell Biology, University of Iowa, Iowa City; for more information, call Lori at 701/777-6226, or e-mail: lwagner@medicine.nodak.edu

May 4

M.D. Commencement Ceremony, M.D. Class of 2002, 1:30 p.m., Chester Fritz Auditorium, UND campus (preceded by Commencement Awards Brunch, 10 a.m., UND Memorial Union); for more information, call the Office of the Dean, 701/777-2514, or e-mail: losannes@medicine.nodak.edu

May 11

UND General Commencement, 1:30 p.m., Grand Forks Alerus Center; for more information, call Tammy at 701/777-2724

May 22-24

UND Alumni Days, honoring classes of ‘42, ‘47, ‘52 and ‘57, UND campus, Grand Forks; medical school breakfast set for May 24; for more information, call Stacy at 1-800-543-8764, or e-mail: snelson@und-alum.org

Change of address?

Please send address changes to: **Kitty Monley**, Office of Administration and Finance, 701/777-2431, e-mail: kmonley@medicine.nodak.edu

Visit our web site: <http://www.med.und.nodak.edu>

THE REVIEW, SCHOOL OF MEDICINE AND HEALTH SCIENCES, University of North Dakota, CHARLES E. KUPCHELLA, President, University of North Dakota; H. David Wilson, Dean, School of Medicine and Health Sciences. **The Review** (ISSN 0888-1456; USPS 077-680) is published six times a year during January, March, May, July, September, and November by the University of North Dakota School of Medicine and Health Sciences, P.O. Box 9037, Grand Forks, ND 58202-9037. Periodical postage paid at Grand Forks ND. **POSTMASTER: Send address changes to THE REVIEW, Office of Public Affairs, UND School of Medicine and Health Sciences, P.O. Box 9037, Grand Forks, ND 58202-9037.** Pamela D. Knudson, Director of Public Affairs, School of Medicine and Health Sciences. Computer graphics and photographic assistance from Medical Media at the UND School of Medicine and Health Sciences. Printed at Fine Print Inc. Grand Forks, ND. All articles published in THE REVIEW, excluding photographs and copy concerning patients, can be reproduced without prior permission from the editor. *UND is an equal opportunity institution.*

DEAN'S LETTER

Plans Under Way for New Research Center

One of the most exciting prospects on our horizon is in the planning stages at the University of North Dakota School of Medicine and Health Sciences. We are working on the design of a new Center of Neurosciences building to be located near the medical school's complex on the UND campus in Grand Forks.

This new \$3 million structure is the result of intensive efforts by members of our congressional delegation in Washington, D.C., Senators Byron Dorgan and Kent Conrad and Representative Earl Pomeroy. For all their support and encouragement, we wholeheartedly thank them. The progress we have enjoyed in recent years is in no small measure due to their concern and attention.

We look forward to the strides we will be able to make with the expanded facilities. Over the past few years, medical school faculty members have made significant progress in preparing and targeting proposals to external funding agencies such as the National Institutes of Health, the National Science Foundation, the American Diabetes and American Heart associations, among many other organizations. For example, in fiscal year 1999, records show medical faculty members submitted proposals totaling \$15.5 million for funding agencies' consideration. Today grant proposals totaling \$66 million are pending review.

The School of Medicine and Health Sciences, however, will not attempt to be "all things to all people." We will focus on those areas where we have the most talent and resources, and where we can really make the most significant impact.

As an example, the neuroscience discipline has as its focus, through the Center of Excellence in Neuroscience, a multidisciplinary approach to understanding brain function in health and disease.

Researchers are studying potential causes of Parkinson's disease and multiple sclerosis which have high rates of incidence in North Dakota. The central thrust is a concentration on neurodegeneration and neuroprotection.

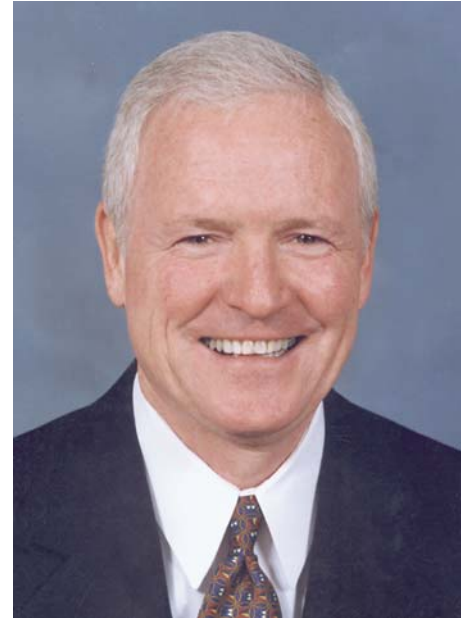
Diabetes, cardiovascular and kidney diseases, anorexia nervosa and other eating disorders, alcoholism in women, rural health care and emergency medical services, environmental toxicology, educational research and computing technology are prime areas to which the medical school does, or can in the future, make meaningful contributions.

As important as it is to conduct research, it is equally - if not more - important to see that research is implemented, or transferred, to practice. This idea, in terms of health care and personal health, is behind the recent creation of the Center for Health Promotion and Translation Research (CHPTR), under the direction of **Mary Wakefield, Ph.D.**, of the Center for Rural Health; **James Brosseau, M.D. (B.S. Med. '68)**, and **Steve Helgerson, M.D.**, of the Department of Community Medicine, and **Nancy Vogeltanz, Ph.D.**, of the Department of Neuroscience.

In the past two years, the CHPTR has received nearly \$3 million in federal funding for an effort to significantly improve the health of many North Dakotans. This is also due to the tremendous effort of our congressional delegation. CHPTR staff members have developed long- and short-term goals, but their initial efforts will focus on diabetes, smoking cessation and asthma in children.

Documents defining CHPTR's purpose sum up the focus of this initiative: "Any scientific study that is not translated and used in daily practice is ultimately wasted."

With a philosophy and research efforts such as these, an impressive infrastructure and proven expertise of its investigators, the UND School of Medicine and Health Sciences is well-positioned to deliver far-reaching results as it seeks to improve the human condition, not only regionally but globally.



H. David Wilson, M.D.

Everyone invited to Alumni Days

All alumni of the UND School of Medicine and Health Sciences are invited to return to campus this spring for the annual Alumni Days at UND. The theme of this year's event, set for May 24-26, is "As Time Goes By."

Graduates of the school are cordially invited to our breakfast on May 24. Many other events also are planned including tours; luncheons, dinners and other get-togethers, and a special performance at the Ralph Engelstad Arena. The Sioux Awards Banquet is set for May 23.

This year's event honors members of the classes of '42, '47, '52 and '57. Watch your mail for your invitation and plan to visit your alma mater this spring.

A handwritten signature in red ink that reads "H. David Wilson". The signature is fluid and cursive, written in a professional style.

H. David Wilson, M.D.

Dean

Vice President for Health Sciences

Setting the Stage for

Research Excellence

In 1999, proposals totalling \$15.5 million were submitted by medical school faculty members. Today, that figure has more than quadrupled, to \$66 million.

Research is a critically important element in the mission of the University of North Dakota (UND) School of Medicine and Health Sciences.

“The level of creative inquiry reflects the intellectual vigor of the institution,” said **H. David Wilson, M.D.**, vice president for health affairs and dean of the medical school at UND. “The university has to be more than a place that transmits ideas of the past. It must be a place to discover new knowledge. Many people here cannot not do research – they are **driven** to do research. This makes UND a really dynamic place.”

“We push the boundaries of current thinking in order to advance society. At the medical school, we encourage the spirit of inquiry and pursuit of answers to the riddles underlying disease and disease processes.”

At UND a goal has been set as a result of strategic planning led by President Charles Kupchella: to attract \$100 million in outside annual funding for research within the next five years. Last year, in 2000-01, the University’s investigators attracted about \$45 million.

The School of Medicine and Health Sciences is a key component in attaining this substantially higher level of research funding. In recent years, its infrastructure has burgeoned beyond the fondest dreams of its founding fathers and early academic leaders. Note the most **recent milestones which have opened our way to new frontiers in achievement:**

* **Construction of the Edwin James Medical Research Facility** (\$9 million, completed in 1994)

* **Development of a state-of-the-art**

Imaging Center featuring a laser scanning confocal microscope, and transmission and scanning electron microscopes (valued at \$1 million, but purchased at reduced cost with FEMA funds as part of post-‘97 flood recovery); according to **Edward Carlson, Ph.D.**, professor and chairman of anatomy and cell biology, Grand Forks, “This cluster of complementary technologies gives us world-class, cutting-edge capabilities in morphology,” the study of structures.

* **Construction of the state-of-the-art Biomedical Research Facility** for housing animals (mostly small rodents) used in research (\$6 million, completed in 2000)

* **Renovation for new research laboratories** in the school’s basement with funds from the NIH (National Institutes of Health) National Center for Research Resources (\$700,000, completed in 2002)

* **Chosen to receive a PET (positron emission tomography) scanner** by the federal Office of National Drug Control Policy (valued at \$2.5 million, approved in 2001); scanner tracks various transmitters in the brain for the purpose of identifying neurotransmitters such as dopamine that color our emotions; **this rare, extremely sophisticated technology is placed by the federal government at a select few major leading universities in the United States**, including Harvard University, Johns Hopkins University, the University of Pennsylvania, University of Colorado and the University of California-Los Angeles. Those centers are (and the UND School of Medicine will become) part of a network of scientists seeking to comprehend addiction and the compulsion of drug-seeking behavior.

* **Initial funds totaling \$3 million** earmarked by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services **for construction of a new Center of Excellence in Neuroscience research building** (in the federal government’s budget for fiscal year 2002)

Based on these and other factors, a dramatic surge in the funding of research grant applications has been realized in recent years.

“We are currently enjoying a ‘banner year’ in research funding,” said Wilson. “In only the first quarter of **this** year, we are approaching the level of research funding we attracted last year as a whole.”

In recent years, medical school faculty members have made significant strides in preparing and targeting proposals to external funding agencies such as the National Institutes of Health, the National Science Foundation, the American Diabetes and American Heart associations, among many others. For example, in fiscal year 1999, records show medical faculty members submitted proposals totaling \$15.5 million for funding agencies’ consideration. Today grant proposals totaling \$66 million are pending review.

This recent record of success can be attributed to the concentrated effort and guidance of **Manuchair Ebadi, Ph.D.**, associate dean for research and program development at the UND medical school, Wilson noted. Ebadi’s recent appointment as UND’s associate vice president for health affairs is based on “our recognition of his talent and capacity to help us meet the research goals of UND.”

Outstanding Graduate Student

Biochemist Selected to Receive National Research Fellowship

Jon Gaffaney, a graduate student in the laboratory of **Roxanne Vaughan, Ph.D.**, professor of biochemistry and molecular biology, Grand Forks, has been selected to receive a National Research Service Award (NRSA) from the National Institute on Drug Abuse of the National Institutes of

Health (NIH).

Gaffaney, who is working on his doctoral degree, received the very prestigious award based on a decision by an NIH panel which reviewed proposals from students throughout the United States. The panel scored the proposals in much the

same manner as proposals from established researchers, Vaughan said.

Of all proposals reviewed by the panel, his ranked in the top 25 percent.

Through the NRSA fellowship, Gaffaney will receive three years of stipend support to conduct research related to dopamine transporters. He may use these funds to purchase supplies for his project, to travel and present his findings at scientific meetings, and other activities related to his investigation.

His research, which coincides with the overall focus of Vaughan's work, is looking at cocaine receptors in the brain, specifically studying the structure of a protein and conformational changes which occur during cocaine use.

Gaffaney is studying how cocaine, amphetamine and dopamine interact with the dopamine transporter, he said. "We're looking at how the protein works, so maybe down the road we can look at possible effective drug therapy." His work also has application for the treatment of Parkinson's disease.

Along with his wife, Robin, **he considered five or six other larger schools before choosing the UND School of Medicine and Health Sciences.**

"After the interview here, it just seemed like a real nice atmosphere, so I accepted the offer," he said.

"It was a stroke of luck getting to work with Dr. Vaughan. I've gotten to do a lot more than I thought; she is well-recognized throughout the country. I've gone to three national meetings and met her collaborators."

A native of Alexandria, MN, Gaffaney earned a bachelor's degree in biology from Bemidji (MN) State University in 1999. He is the son of Dick and Lavina Gaffaney of Alexandria. His wife is a Grand Forks elementary schoolteacher who plans to complete her master's degree in education at UND in December.

Jon Gaffaney, working with a Brandel tissue harvester in the Department of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology, is the winner of a prestigious award from the National Institutes of Health which ranked his research proposal in the top 25 percent among all proposals considered. His fellowship, called a National Research Service Award, provides three years of support for his investigation of the mechanisms of a protein involved with cocaine addiction. Findings of his research may also have application for Parkinson's disease.



From Rush Medical College

Homandberg Named Chairman of Biochemistry Department

Gene Homandberg, Ph.D., professor of biochemistry at Rush Medical College in Chicago, has been named chairman of the Department of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology at the University of North Dakota School of Medicine and Health Sciences. His appointment is effective July 1.

At Rush, Homandberg has occupied the Dr. Ralph and Marian C. Falk Professor of Biochemistry endowed chair for six years. This honor was bestowed as recognition of his contributions to the study of osteoarthritis and cartilage physiology. He also is director of educational programs in the Department of Biochemistry and an investigative member of the Rush Arthritis and Orthopedics Institute.

"We are fortunate to have Dr. Homandberg join us," said **Dean H. David Wilson, M.D.** "He's a very talented

teacher and researcher, and one of the only SCORE researchers in osteoarthritis in the United States.

"In addition, he has played a part in the development of an innovative educational program at Rush," Wilson said. "And he brings considerable administrative experience. His experience will benefit the educational program here and he will be an excellent addition to our research program."

Homandberg was awarded permanent membership in the "Frontiers in Bioscience Society of Scientists" in 1999, based on the contribution of a review article, "Potential Regulation of Cartilage Metabolism in Osteoarthritis by Fibronectin Fragments," in *Frontiers in Bioscience 4*.

He has reviewed books for Doody's Health Science Book Review Journal since 1993 as well as manuscripts for numerous

scientific journals. He also reviews grant proposals for the National Institutes of Health (NIH) Heart and Lung Institute, the National Science Foundation and the Rush University research committee.

A native of Iowa, Homandberg pursued his undergraduate education at the University of South Dakota where he also served as a research assistant. He went on to earn the Ph.D. degree in biochemistry at the University of South Dakota.

He took advanced training as a postdoctoral fellow at the NIH Laboratory of Chemical Biology in the National Institute of Arthritis, Metabolic and Digestive Disorders. He also was a postdoctoral research associate in the Department of Chemistry, Division of Biochemistry, at Purdue University.

Ebadi Appointed as UND's Associate Vice President

Manuchair ("Mike") Ebadi, Ph.D., has been appointed associate vice president for health affairs at the University of North Dakota (UND), it has been announced by **President Charles Kupchella** and **Vice President for Health Affairs H. David Wilson, M.D.**

Ebadi, who also serves as associate dean for research and program development at the UND School of Medicine and Health Sciences, will continue activities aimed at building research, especially medical research, on the UND campus. In his new role, he reports to Vice President Wilson, who also serves as dean of the medical school.

"Mike Ebadi will serve the University community by helping to forge research connections across all health areas at UND," Kupchella said. "This is an area of great potential for UND, given the doubling of the budget of the National Institutes of Health now under way."

Ebadi will continue to focus on areas he has been involved with for some time, said Wilson. In addition he will be working with the USDA (U.S. Department of Agriculture) Human Nutrition Research

Center and the Energy and Environmental Research Center in Grand Forks to study environmental toxins and their relationships to neurodegenerative diseases such as Parkinson's and Alzheimer's diseases and multiple sclerosis. He will also work on identifying and building on other opportunities to increase research at UND.

"Dr. Ebadi is one of the most successful scientists on campus," said Wilson. "As director of the Center of Excellence in Neuroscience, he has attracted nearly \$4 million in external grant funding and recruited a very talented group of young researchers who, we believe, have great potential to make a name for themselves and for UND."



Manuchair Ebadi, Ph.D.

Alumnus Dr. Montz to Deliver Keynote Address

F.J. "Rick" Montz, M.D. (B.S. Med. '78), an oncologist with Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine in Baltimore, has been invited to present the keynote address at commencement ceremonies for the M.D. Class of 2002.

The event is set for 1:30 p.m. May 4 at UND's Chester Fritz Auditorium.

Montz, a professor of gynecology and obstetrics, and oncology, is director of the Kelly Gynecologic Oncology Service at Johns Hopkins Hospital and Medical Institutions.

A native of Bismarck, he earned the B.S. Med. degree at the UND School of Medicine in 1978 and went on to complete the M.D. degree at Baylor College of Medicine in Houston where he was elected to the Alpha Omega Alpha (AOA), honor medical society. He took residency training in obstetrics and gynecology at Los Angeles County-University of Southern California Medical Center in Los Angeles.

Montz was featured on one of the episodes of ABC's "Hopkins 24/7" program which aired in 2000.

Outstanding Microbiology Faculty Member

Young Receives McDermott Award at Founders Day Celebration

Kevin Young, Ph.D., professor of microbiology and immunology, Grand Forks, received the UND Foundation/McDermott Award for Excellence in Teaching, Research or Creative Activity and Service at the 119th UND Founders Day celebration in February at Grand Forks.

Young received “very enthusiastic evaluations from medical students and a strong letter of appreciation from the first-year class president,” said **Michael Atkinson, Ph.D.**, associate professor of anatomy and cell biology, Grand Forks, who presented the award. Students cited him for his “absolutely awesome lectures” and conducting a class that was “upbeat and interesting - overall excellent job.”

According to students’ nomination letters, Young is considered an outstanding faculty-scholar. In recommending him for the McDermott Award, students said he is “heavily involved” in the revised medical school curriculum, which “requires a level of commitment not typically seen at other medical schools.”

Young was recognized for organizing a graduate course in scientific writing and a workshop for students and faculty members on genetic engineering. He has been a research advisor for several undergraduate students and served on advisory committees for 30 graduate students.

His research grants from the National Institutes of Health and National Science Foundation total more than \$1 million. Past research grant support has brought more than \$2 million to the UND School of Medicine and Health Sciences. He has written numerous articles for research journals and book chapters, and serves as a peer reviewer for several scientific journals. He has been invited to speak at Harvard and Tufts universities.

Other UND School of Medicine and Health Sciences’ employees who were honored during the Founders Day event:

Clara Syverson, medical laboratory technician, Department of Pathology, Grand Forks, on her retirement, and **the following who were honored for 25 years of service:**



UND President Charles Kupchella (left) presents Kevin Young, Ph.D., with the UND Foundation McDermott Award for Excellence in Teaching, Research and Service.

April Byars, administrative assistant, Harley E. French Library of the Health

Sciences, Grand Forks; **Betty Dacar**, laboratory supervisor, UND Family Practice Center, Bismarck; **Byron Danielson, M.D. (B.S. Med. ‘64)**, professor of internal medicine, Fargo; **Dorothy Elston**, administrative secretary, Office of Academic Affairs and Information Resources, Grand Forks; **Dawn Fore**, account technician, Office of Administration and Finance, Grand Forks; **Beverly Johnson**, associate professor of physical therapy, Grand Forks; **David Lambeth, Ph.D.**, professor of biochemistry and molecular biology, Grand Forks; **Renee Mabey**, associate professor of physical therapy, Grand Forks; **Mary Clare Smith**, information processor, UND Minot Center for Family Medicine, Minot, and **Connie Strand**, circulation supervisor, Harley E. French Library of the Health Sciences, Grand Forks.

Dakota Medical Foundation Funds Cancer Research

Anil Potti, M.D., assistant professor of internal medicine, Fargo has received a \$58,900 grant from Dakota Medical Foundation of Fargo to continue his cancer research.

His project is aimed at the study of a specific gene, HER-2/neu, an “oncogene” known to play a role in the growth of cancer cells. In an earlier study also supported by the Dakota Medical Foundation, Potti and his research team found that the presence of this oncogene may predict the outcome in 20 to 30 percent of solid tumors, he said.

“More importantly, our findings, in conjunction with other studies, were the basis for current multiple clinical trials, in the region and nationwide, evaluating the role of the newly developed, highly specific monoclonal antibody against the HER-2/neu oncoprotein,” Potti said.

Recent research, the result of studies around the world, suggests that the presence of mutations in the c-kit gene (another oncogene) may have value in

predicting outcome of cancer, possibly in conjunction with HER-2/neu over-expression, Potti said.

Research suggests that testing for the presence of both HER-2 and c-kit in solid tumors may be helpful to patients suffering from advanced-stage cancer, such as lung and brain tumors and sarcomas, which typically have not responded well to traditional therapy,” he said.

“We believe that further study of c-kit over-expression in lung carcinoma, primary brain tumors and sarcomas, will add significant understanding to the preliminary implication of this oncogene on the overall survival of patients with these cancers,” Potti said, “as well as provide a possible target for tumor-specific therapy.”

According to Deb Watne, grants manager with the Dakota Medical Foundation, “We are honored to partner with (Potti) on this worthy project,” and “excited about (his) project’s potential health impact.”

ALUMNI

'64 Alum Writes of His Appreciation for Education at UND Medical School

I attended the University of North Dakota medical school from 1962 to 1964 when it was a two-year school. I always cherished my days at North Dakota, my lifelong friendships - I married a woman I met during those two years, but I really never have returned.

I subsequently went on to Northwestern (University) for my M.D., then to the University of California, San

Francisco, for my residency in orthopaedic surgery. Like so many North Dakotans I wanted to live in Minneapolis and have been here since finishing the military in 1973.

The reason I am writing is more for information but also to express my gratitude to the University of North Dakota for allowing me to start in medicine. For that I thank all of you, past and present. I am professor of orthopaedic surgery at the University of Minnesota and director of the private rotation at Abbott Northwestern Hospital. I have served several committees for our national society, the American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons, and have chaired committees on membership and ethics. I am associate editor of *Clinical Orthopaedics and Related Research*, and I am a reviewer for the *Journal of Bone and Joint Surgery*.

In September ('01) I (began serving as) president of the American Board of Orthopaedic Surgery. I have enjoyed an active practice of adult reconstructive orthopaedics, and again, all of this began at the University of North Dakota.

I write this letter not to brag, but rather to let you know about a graduate who has gained some success and who is indebted to the University of North Dakota medical school.

Sincerely yours,

Gordon M. Aamoth, M.D. (B.S. Med. '64)

Wayzata, MN



*Gordon Aamoth, M.D.
(B.S. Med. '64)*

Alumni Notes

'73

Mark Sperry, M.D. (B.S. Med. '73), an anesthesiologist, has been elected to a second term as chief of staff at Mercy Hospital in Coon Rapids, MN. He has been on the staff of that hospital for 20 years.

"UND provided me with an excellent medical education that has been a tremendous asset," he wrote in a recent letter to the school.

After earning the B.S. Med. degree in 1973 at the UND School of Medicine, he went on to earn the M.D. degree at the University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine in Philadelphia. He is board-certified in anesthesiology.

'94

Phil Marin, M.D. '94, is in the final months of a one-year fellowship in hand surgery at the National Hand Center in Baltimore, MD. He plans to join a private practice with Charles Kessler, M.D., this summer in Pueblo, CO.

In June 2001, Marin completed residency training in general surgery and plastic surgery at Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore.

The education he received at the UND School of Medicine was "better than anywhere else," he said. **"I received a solid clinical background and basic science education. We had better interaction with attendings (physician-faculty members) - almost one-on-one"** during his third year in Fargo and fourth year in Grand Forks. **"You don't get that with larger programs . . . I really value and appreciate my education there."**

He and his wife, Heidi, have a son, Nicolas, who is 13 months old. Heidi Marin is a North Dakota native and '94 graduate of UND with a bachelor of science in nursing (BSN) degree.



Phil Marin, M.D. '94, with his wife Heidi, and son, Nicolas

'I credit a great deal of this (honor) to the work ethic and basic research skills gained while at UND.'

Greg Borstad, M.D. '98
San Antonio, TX

Referring to his selection to receive the Commander's Award for excellence in primary care research

'96

Gary Buxa, M.D. '96, is an ear, nose and throat specialist in Redding, CA. He is in a private practice called Redding ENT Head & Neck Surgery.

He completed residency in otolaryngology at the University of Texas-Houston in June of 2001.

The son of Betty Buxa of Minot and the late Wayne Buxa, he was married last May to Erica Hedges in Houston. The newlyweds reside in Redding where the bride is involved in helping a candidate in a city council race and serves on the board of directors of the Redding Medical Center Foundation.

'98

Greg Borstad, M.D. '98, San Antonio, TX, began a rheumatology fellowship at Wilford Hall this year which, he writes, is going well.

Last spring, during his final year in internal medicine residency, he received the "Commander's Award" for excellence in primary care research at the combined graduation of Wilford Hall USAF (United States Air Force) Medical Center and the Brooke Army Medical Center. **It is essentially the highest research honor a resident can receive at our medical centers**, he said.

The award "involves work I did on an ongoing protocol involving digital rectal exams versus voided specimens for fecal occult blood-testing," he writes. "We hope to submit (the research) for publication" this year. The honor has never been awarded to the Internal Medicine residency (it is a program-wide competition).

"I credit a great deal of this to the work ethic and basic research skills gained while at UND," he said.

He also writes that he and his wife, Stacy, "have a beautiful girl, Alexa, age 18 months. She keeps us busy."

'01

Sarah Vick, M.D. '01, and **David Lien, M.D. '01**, were married Dec. 29 at the Plains Art Museum in Fargo.

Vick is in residency training in pediatrics and Lien is in the family medicine residency program, both at the University of Michigan at Ann Arbor.



Greg Borstad, M.D. '98

In Memoriam

Dr. Verrill Fischer, Donor of First Major Professorship at UNDSMHS

V.J. Fischer, M.D. (B.S. Med. '35), Fargo, who with his wife, Ruth, established the first major professorship in the UND School of Medicine and Health Sciences, died March 13. Dr. Fischer, 88, was a family physician and surgeon.

In 1998, he established the Dr. and Mrs. Verrill J. Fischer Professorship in Family Medicine, the first such award given to the Department of Family Medicine. Funds from the professorship are used to support an outstanding teacher and role model for medical students.

In 1999, he received the UND Sioux Award, the highest honor bestowed by the UND Alumni Association and Foundation.

Born in 1914 to The Reverend John and Emma Fischer of Alice, Dr. Fischer grew up in Lehr and Tappen and later attended Ellendale State College where he earned a bachelor of science degree in 1933.

He went on to study at UND where he earned a bachelor's degree in engineering and the bachelor of science in medicine (B.S. Med.) degree. He completed the doctor of medicine degree at Rush Medical College in 1937 in Chicago. He took internship and residency training in St. Paul prior to establishing his practice in Pine City, MN.

Dr. and Mrs. Fischer moved to Towner, where he served as McHenry County coroner until World War II. He entered the military and, after specialized training, served as a flight surgeon with the rank of major in the Army Medical Corps in Europe. He was a member of the 101st Airborne Division that parachuted into Normandy on D-Day, June 6, 1944.

After his discharge from the military, Dr. and Mrs. Fischer moved to Minot where he was a general practitioner and surgeon at St. Joseph's and Trinity hospitals; at the latter hospital, he served three terms as chief of staff. He was a founder of the Medical Arts Clinic and a teacher at the UND Family Practice Center in Minot.

Over the course of his career he delivered 5,300 babies and performed 20,000 major surgeries. He served as president of the North Dakota Medical Association and Blue Shield of North Dakota. The student library at the UND medical school's campus office in Minot is named the V.J. Fischer, M.D., Resource Center.

He is survived by his wife; a daughter, Peggy (Steve) Moe of Fargo, and sons, John Fischer, M.D., Anchorage, and **Mark (Rhonda) Fischer, M.D. (B.S. Med. '77)**, Dothan, Ala.; seven grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

Memorials are suggested to the UND School of Medicine and Health Sciences or First Lutheran Church Foundation in Minot.



Verrill J. Fischer, M.D. (B.S. Med. '35)

Only North Dakotan Selected

Med Student to Present Research Poster at National Meeting of Internists

Stephanie Hansel, a fourth-year medical student, has been selected to present a research poster at the annual meeting of the American College of Physicians-American Society of Internal Medicine in April at Philadelphia.

Hansel, the daughter of Dennis and Drina Hansel of Langdon, will be the only medical student representing North Dakota in the eighth annual Medical Student Member Abstract Competition.

Her poster, titled "A Case Report of Hepatic Encephalopathy Following Exposure of Sevofluire," is among 17 chosen from 125 admissions to be presented at the meeting. Other students from the U.S., Puerto Rico, Canada and Chile also will present posters.

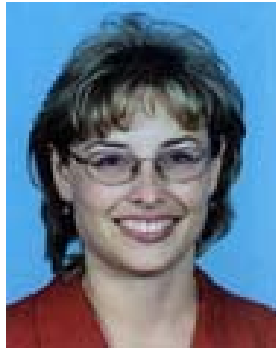
Competition winners will receive a monetary prize and a yearly subscription to selected medical journals, said Tracy

Henry, medical student programs coordinator.

Originally from Langdon, Hansel holds a bachelor's degree in biology and psychology from Jamestown College and a

master's degree in clinical psychology from North Dakota State University.

Now in her fourth year of medical studies in Grand Forks, she plans to pursue internal medicine residency training after graduation in May.



Hansel

Schauer Named Acting Chairman

Roger Schauer, M.D. (B.S. Med. '69), has been named acting chairman of family medicine at the UND School of Medicine and Health Sciences, **Dean H. David Wilson, M.D.**, has announced. The appointment was effective March 1.

Schauer, associate professor and

director of pre-doctoral medical education in the Department of Family Medicine, takes over for

William Mann, M.D., who, in January, announced his resignation as chairman, a



Schauer

post he has held since 1996. Mann will continue as associate professor, teaching and providing patient care at the UND Family Practice Center in Grand Forks.

"We are pleased that Dr. Mann will continue to teach medical students and residents in family medicine," Wilson said. "We are grateful for his leadership and the many advances that have been realized during his tenure as chairman. He has provided outstanding assistance in the development of the renewed M.D. curriculum and the Rural Opportunities in Medical Education (ROME) program."

Schauer is "highly respected by family medicine faculty members around the state," Wilson said. "With his experience and understanding of the needs of rural physicians, he will provide strong leadership in his role as acting chairman."

A committee, representing the school's constituencies, will conduct the search for a new chairman. The group is headed by **Bruce Pitts, M.D.**, associate dean for the school's Southeast Campus, based in Fargo.

"I believe the position will attract interest nationally as well as from talented family physicians in North Dakota," said Wilson.

for Historic Purposes...

Class Photos Needed

Do you have any class pictures from the UND medical school classes of 1911-1936 or 1939?

As the UND School of Medicine and Health Sciences approaches the 100th anniversary of its founding in 1905, we are in the process of assembling a complete collection of medical class pictures, according to **Robert Fischer, Ph.D.**, professor and chairman emeritus of microbiology, Grand Forks. But despite searching high and low, we are missing a few.

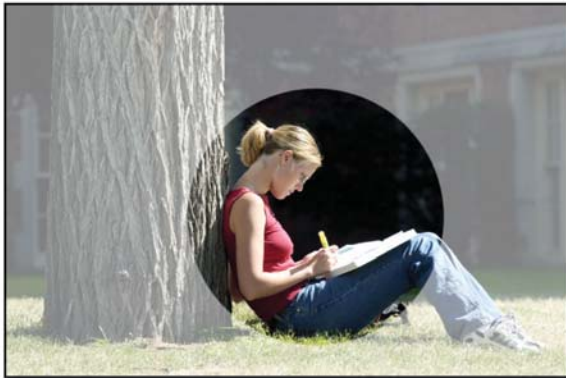
If you have (or someone you know has) a photo of your class from the years mentioned above, please contact Fischer at the UND School of Medicine and Health Sciences, P.O. Box 9037, Grand Forks, ND 58202-9037. You may also reach him at 701/777-3018 or e-mail: mlucke@medicine.nodak.edu.

All photos will be returned, with our thanks.

(It is possible that some classes were not photographed as a group, what with major world events and other distractions. If you know that to be true for one of the "missing" classes, please let us know.)

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