Each February it is our very great pleasure to offer heartfelt thanks to our family of donors. As many of you know, the Center’s work is entirely funded through gifts and grants. And, during these challenging economic times, we find ourselves especially grateful for the sound and stable foundation these funding sources provide us. We are all the more thankful for the dedicated support of our generous donors.

The new education initiatives described in this issue – which will transform the way medicine is taught at OHSU and provide vital teaching to health care professionals of all disciplines around the state – simply would not happen without you!

This month we particularly want to acknowledge those who have contributed to building the POLST Registry and the three endowments that will support the Center’s work long into the future: the Cornelia Hayes Stevens Chair, supporting the work of the Ethics Center Director, the Miles J. Edwards Chair in Professionalism and Comfort Care (the center of our story); and the Madeline Brill Nelson Chair in Ethics Education.

We are deeply grateful to those who have contributed so generously to these Chairs, and to every one of you who supports the work we are doing. Your caring is absolutely essential to our mission, and we offer you our boundless thanks and appreciation.

PS  If anyone would like to see the new teaching video described in our story, please call the Center at 503-494-4466 to request a copy.

Teaching the Language of Caring

Some years ago, in the quiet stillness of the Meditation Room of Doernbecher Children’s Hospital, 17-year-old Kyle Mouery crossed an important threshold of inner knowing. As he sat reading a book that held the anguished prayers, fervent hopes and deep gratitude expressed by the families of seriously ailing children, his own frequent musings about a possible career in medicine became, in that moment, passionate intention.

“I just knew then that I wanted to be a part of it – to help families in crisis; to learn their stories;” he remembers.

Now a second year medical student at OHSU, Kyle has lost none of his desire to be the very best doctor – to be, in his own words, “a healer who takes care of the whole patient.” And, certainly, the depth of his caring is quickly revealed through his compassionate gaze and his warm, attentive presence. These are natural qualities that he possesses in abundance. But he is also an avid learner, eager to acquire the training that is every bit as important for the humanistic doctor he intends to be.

In pursuit of these skills, Kyle participated last year in the then brand-new Living With Life-Threatening Illness elective course, designed to give students a direct window – from the patient’s perspective – into the experience of serious illness.

This year, his involvement has again been on the cutting edge of education at OHSU. He
Kyle’s part in the video comes naturally: he plays the role of a medical student. The situation that unfolds on screen, taken from the composite story of real patients, is an interview between OHSU’s Dr. Molly Osborne and “Jeanne Miller,” her patient of many years, powerfully portrayed by actress Megan Cole. This is a very deliberate meeting, requiring great skill and empathy on the part of the doctor, because “Jeanne” has recently been told that she has inoperable pancreatic cancer.

During this follow-up appointment, Dr. Osborne, Associate Dean for Student Affairs, adroitly demonstrates for Kyle (and the viewer) the key elements of a psychosocial interview, modeling through both words and body language how to be an engaged, empathetic listener. How to ask the right questions so that she and “Jeanne” can work together to meet her growing needs. How to help “Jeanne” balance hope and fear, and how to set goals for the next visit. How to allow room for “Jeanne” to be present to her own emotions, so essential to the healing she needs within the context of her incurable disease. And, perhaps most important of all, how to reassure “Jeanne” that her trusted doctor will be there for her throughout her illness.

Thanks to Megan Cole’s gifted acting and the gentle skill with which Dr. Osborne leads “Jeanne” through the interview, the video is deeply moving. Its emotional power takes teaching far beyond the traditional classroom approach, providing layers of rich learning.

It will be seen prior to students’ Internal Medicine rotation – a time when they are most likely to work with a dying patient.

During their vital 3rd Year, students will also participate in an on-line module, learning the skills needed to help a patient fill out a POLST (Physicians Orders for Life-Sustaining Treatment) form, and how to ensure the patient’s wishes are carried out when care is needed. This module will be part of their Rural rotation in the community, where they will have opportunities to practice their newfound skills.

The 3rd Year will also offer hands-on teaching, including the care of dying children (Pediatrics) and the communication skills required to support a patient whose baby was stillborn (OB/GYN). By the end of the year, students will have been exposed to Palliative Care and its more human, patient-centered teaching on every rotation.

Many of the state’s leading Palliative Care experts have partnered to create this new curriculum. Under Osborne’s leadership, they have broken new ground in medical education – integrating Palliative Care with existing curriculum in ways that are both virtual and hands-on, and available both on and off campus – to deepen and expand students’ learning.

The inspiration for this new thinking is the work of beloved physician, teacher and Ethics Center founder, Miles Edwards, MD, who died in 2006. Like Edwards a pulmonary and critical care physician, Osborne has assembled an extraordinary team of experts that is dedicated to teaching the human side of medicine that Edwards mentored so well at OHSU.

The Miles J. Edwards Chair, created to honor Edwards’ powerful legacy, is focused on statewide education, as well as the teaching of students, so the ‘Interview’ video will also become part of Ethics Center conferences, reaching health care professionals of all disciplines throughout the state. Some of these professionals, in turn, will go on to become mentors for others. (Some will no doubt serve as the rural health practitioners mentoring OHSU students.) And in this way lifelong learners will be created, and mentors will teach generations of future mentors, each benefitting from the pooled wisdom of outstanding leaders in the field. The benefits this learning will bring to future patients is immeasurable.

“I’ve learned that being a doctor is not about prestige or technological wizardry. It’s about the patients, and bringing your whole self to their healing.” Kyle Mouery

“Miles was such an inspiring teacher,” remembers Dr. Robert ‘Hugo’ Richardson, OHSU Professor and Ethics Center Palliative Care Scholar, who generously underwrote the creation of the video in tribute to his close friend and colleague. “He was unusually flexible in his teaching, and I believe he would embrace wholeheartedly these powerful new teaching methods that will impact not only future generations of OHSU medical students, but also of health care professionals in every corner of our state.”

For Kyle, the experience of creating this video was profoundly instructive. The vision he held in the quiet of Doernbecher’s Meditation Room has not dimmed over time, but it has been refined. “I used to want to be a hero for patients, to make their lives better. And I still do. But I’ve learned that, sometimes, just sitting down with people and talking with them about their illness is equally heroic.”

The skills Kyle has learned through participating in the creation of OHSU’s new curriculum bring new depth and confidence to his commitment to caring. “The ideals I based my career on – compassion and humanism – have deepened, and been both questioned and reinforced,” he observes. “I’ve learned that being a doctor is not about prestige or technological wizardry. It’s about the patients, and bringing your whole self to their healing.” There could be no sentiment more worthy of the legacy of Miles J. Edwards.
has helped create a powerful teaching video, part of a new 3rd Year Palliative Medicine curriculum. This innovative course will weave Palliative Care training and the art of compassionate communication into each 3rd Year rotation, dramatically transforming the way medicine is taught. Within two years this course will become a requirement for graduation.

Kyle’s part in the video comes naturally: he plays the role of a medical student. ‘The situation that unfolds on screen, taken from the composite story of real patients, is an interview between OHSU’s Dr. Molly Osborne and ‘Jeanne Miller’ her patient of many years, powerfully portrayed by actress Megan Cole. This is a very delicate meeting, requiring great skill and empathy on the part of the doctor, because ‘Jeanne’ has recently been told that she has inoperable pancreatic cancer.

During this follow-up appointment, Dr. Osborne, Associate Dean for Student Affairs, adroitly demonstrates for Kyle (and the viewer) the key elements of a psychosocial interview, modeling through both words and body language how to be an engaged, empathetic listener. ‘How to ask the right questions so that she and ‘Jeanne’ can work together to meet her growing needs. How to help ‘Jeanne’ balance hope and fear, and how to set goals for the next visit. How to allow room for ‘Jeanne’ to be present to her own emotions, so essential to the healing she needs within the context of her incurable disease. And, perhaps most important of all, how to reassure ‘Jeanne’ that her trusted doctor will be there for her throughout her illness.’

Thanks to Megan Cole’s gifted acting and the gentle skill with which Dr. Osborne leads ‘Jeanne’ through the interview, the video is deeply moving. ‘Its emotional power takes teaching far beyond the traditional classroom approach, providing layers of rich learning. It will be seen prior to students’ Internal Medicine rotation – a time when they are most likely to work with a dying patient.’

During their vital 3rd Year, students will also participate in an on-line module, learning the skills needed to help a patient fill out a POLST (Physicians Orders for Life-Sustaining Treatment) form, and to ensure the patient’s wishes are carried out when care is needed. This module will be part of their Rural rotation in the community, where they will have opportunities to practice their newfound skills.

The 3rd Year will also offer hands-on teaching, including the care of dying children (Pediatrics) and the communication skills required to support a patient whose baby was stillborn (OB/GYN). By the end of the year, students will have been exposed to Palliative Care and its more human, patient-centered teaching on every rotation.

Many of the state’s leading Palliative Care experts have partnered to create this new curriculum. Under Osborne’s leadership, they have broken new ground in medical education – integrating Palliative Care with existing curriculum in ways that are both virtual and hands-on, and available both on and off campus – to deepen and expand students’ learning.

The inspiration for this new thinking is the work of beloved physician, teacher and Ethics Center founder, Miles Edwards, MD, who died in 2006. ‘Like Edwards a pulmonary and critical care physician, Osborne has assembled an extraordinary team of experts that is dedicated to teaching the human side of medicine that Edwards mentored so well at OHSU.’

The Miles J. Edwards Chair, created to honor Edwards’ powerful legacy, is focused on statewide education, as well as the teaching of students, so the ‘Interview’ video will also become part of Ethics Center conferences, reaching health care professionals of all disciplines throughout the state. Some of these professionals, in turn, will go on to become mentors for others. (Some will no doubt serve as the rural health practitioners mentoring OHSU students.) And in this way lifelong learners will be created, and mentors will teach generations of future mentors, each benefiting from the pooled wisdom of outstanding leaders in the field. The benefits this learning will bring to future patients are immeasurable.

“I’ve learned that being a doctor is not about prestige or technological wizardry. It’s about the patients, and bringing your whole self to their healing.” Kyle Mouery

“Miles was such an inspiring teacher,” remembers Dr. Robert ‘Hugo’ Richardson, OHSU Professor and Ethics Center Palliative Care Scholar, who generously underwrote the creation of the video in tribute to his close friend and colleague. “He was unusually flexible in his teaching, and I believe he would embrace wholeheartedly these powerful new teaching methods that will impact not only future generations of OHSU medical students, but also of health care professionals in every corner of our state.”

For Kyle, the experience of creating this video was profoundly instructive. ‘The vision he held in the quiet of Doernbecher’s Meditation Room has not dimmed over time, but it has been refined. “I used to want to be a hero for patients, to make their lives better. And I still do. But I’ve learned that, sometimes, just sitting down with people and talking with them about their illness is equally heroic.”’

The skills Kyle has learned through participating in the creation of OHSU’s new curriculum bring new depth and confidence to his commitment to caring. “The ideals I based my career on – compassion and humanism – have deepened, and been both questioned and reinforced,” he observes. “I’ve learned that being a doctor is not about prestige or technological wizardry. It’s about the patients, and bringing your whole self to their healing.”

There could be no sentiment more worthy of the legacy of Miles J. Edwards.
A message from Center for Ethics in Health Care donors Cornelia Hayes Stevens and Lisa Andrus-Rivera

Each February it is our very great pleasure to offer heartfelt thanks to our family of donors. As many of you know, the Center’s work is entirely funded through gifts and grants. And, during these challenging economic times, we find ourselves especially grateful for the sound and stable foundation these funding sources provide us. We are all the more thankful for the dedicated support of our generous donors.

The new education initiatives described in this issue – which will transform the way medicine is taught at OHSU and provide vital teaching to health care professionals of all disciplines around the state – simply would not happen without you!

This month we particularly want to acknowledge those who have contributed to building the POLST Registry and the three endowments that will support the Center’s work long into the future: the Cornelia Hayes Stevens Chair, supporting the work of the Ethics Center Director; the Miles J. Edwards Chair in Professionalism and Comfort Care (the center of our story); and the Madeline Brill Nelson Chair in Ethics Education.

We are deeply grateful to those who have contributed so generously to these Chairs, and to every one of you who supports the work we are doing. Your caring is absolutely essential to our mission, and we offer you our boundless thanks and appreciation.

PS: If anyone would like to see the new teaching video described in our story, please call the Center at 503-494-4466 to request a copy.

OHSU CENTER for ETHICS in HEALTH CARE

Teaching the Language of Caring

Some years ago, in the quiet stillness of the Meditation Room of Doernbecher Children’s Hospital, 17-year-old Kyle Mouery crossed an important threshold of inner knowing. As he sat reading a book that held the anguished prayers, fervent hopes and deep gratitude expressed by the families of seriously ailing children, his own frequent musings about a possible career in medicine became, in that moment, passionate intention.

“I just knew then that I wanted to be a part of it – to help families in crisis; to learn their stories,” he remembers.

Now a second year medical student at OHSU, Kyle has lost none of his desire to be the very best doctor – to be, in his own words, “a healer who takes care of the whole patient.” And, certainly, the depth of his caring is quickly revealed through his compassionate gaze and his warm, attentive presence. These are natural qualities that he possesses in abundance. But he is also an avid learner, eager to acquire the training that is every bit as important for the humanistic doctor he intends to be.

In pursuit of these skills, Kyle participated last year in the then brand-new Living With Life-Threatening Illness elective course, designed to give students a direct window – from the patient’s perspective – into the experience of serious illness.

This year, his involvement has again been on the cutting edge of education at OHSU. He (continued on page 2)