Growing a food revolution to prevent chronic disease
Better, together

A CORNERSTONE OF OHSU’S PLAN TO CONTINUE TO MEET OUR PUBLIC MISSIONS is a commitment to collaboration and partnership. We believe aligning with others has the potential to amplify the beneficial effects of innovation across all our missions as we develop new cures and treatments, implement new health care delivery models and launch enhanced educational programs.

During the past few years, OHSU has worked hard to identify and activate new stakeholders and alliances. I am pleased to share two examples about the impact of these initiatives; both have recently been in the news.

In November, we finalized the agreement to develop an integrated health care system with Salem Health, which includes Salem Hospital, West Valley Hospital, Willamette Health Partners and other affiliated health care organizations, expanding our clinical capacity and geographic breadth significantly. Our shared vision is to support a world-class, value-based health care system built on a foundation of collaboration and coordination. Our affiliation improves access to health care, has the potential to reduce costs by avoiding duplication, will support the realization of new population-based health care models, and provides a broader platform for education, research and community service.

About two years ago, OHSU and Intel first joined forces to combine next-generation computing platforms with biomedical research. The goal is to deploy an individual patient’s genetic data to treat disease much faster and with fewer costs than today’s standard of care. In short, precision medicine. Recently, we announced the joint development of the Collaborative Cancer Cloud: an open-source analytics platform that allows providers and scientists to securely share patient genomic data for potentially lifesaving discoveries and treatments. This represents a leap forward in quality of care and research potential and has implications for advancing precision medicine in other disease areas.

These two examples are emblematic of our work with many organizations – regionally, nationally and internationally – in affiliation arrangements.

The goal of partnership extends to you – our alumni community. Our alumni know us best, and working together with you is an essential way to move our missions forward. Thank you for your advocacy, leadership and friendship for the medical school. I invite you to contact me anytime to discuss ways to enhance our partnership with you.

Mark Richardson, M.D., MBA
Dean
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Cancer has met its match

$1 billion will launch large-scale, early detection effort

By Joe Rojas-Burke

“Raising a billion dollars isn’t the end,” said Brian Druker, M.D., director of the OHSU Knight Cancer Institute. “Raising a billion dollars is the beginning.”

In September 2013, Nike co-founder Phil Knight and his wife Penny made a surprise pledge of $500 million to fund cancer research at OHSU – if the university could raise an equal amount within two years.

In June, OHSU successfully completed the Knight Cancer Challenge, breaking a philanthropic record.

The OHSU Knight Cancer Institute will use almost half of the funds raised to launch a first-of-its-kind, large-scale scientific program to detect lethal cancers early and precisely. It will focus on distinguishing benign abnormalities from life-threatening, nascent cancers – and finding them early enough that treatments can succeed.

“This is one of the biggest unmet needs in cancer,” Dr. Druker said. “It’s essential to having more people survive this disease.”

Recruiting is underway for a program leader or co-leaders, to be followed by the hiring of 20 to 30 lead scientists and some 200 to 300 new researchers. Scientists will receive substantial internal research funding to free their time to focus more on discovery than writing grants.

The OHSU Knight Cancer Institute will also invest in clinical cancer research, community outreach, an innovation fund, new technology and other initiatives. Some $250 million will go toward creating an endowment to support continuity of operations.

Construction of a new cancer research building on Portland’s South Waterfront could begin as early as June 2016. Nearby, OHSU is adding housing for patients who must travel to receive treatment and a health-care building with cancer clinics that will accommodate expanded clinical trials.

“It’s a wide-open field that we can pioneer here at OHSU,” Dr. Druker said. “We can and we will achieve extraordinary outcomes.”

Michael Cohen, Ph.D., assistant professor of physiology and pharmacology, was one of 22 early-career researchers named a 2015 Pew scholar in the biomedical sciences.

Katie Lebold, M.D./Ph.D. student, (center) took first place in Oregon’s statewide Three Minute Thesis competition.

Albert Starr, M.D., OHSU Knight Cardiovascular Institute co-director and professor of surgery, was awarded the 2015 Grand Prix Scientifique, a prestigious international prize in cardiovascular science.
Researchers from OCHIN, OHSU and the Oregon Health Authority concluded that use of primary care services in Community Health Centers significantly increased when patients gained coverage through Oregon’s 2008 Oregon Health Plan/Medicaid insurance expansion. Results of the study were published in Annals of Family Medicine.

The U.S. Department of Energy’s Pacific Northwest National Laboratory (PNNL) joined forces with OHSU to create the OHSU-PNNL Northwest Co-Laboratory for Integrated ‘Omics. The two institutions are sharing research programs and leading-edge technology for biological mass spectrometry in pursuit of disease markers for new therapies.

In a study published in Nature, Shoukhrat Mitalipov, Ph.D., who leads the OHSU Center for Embryonic Cell and Gene Therapy and is a professor in the OHSU School of Medicine, and Hong Ma, M.D., Ph.D., demonstrated the first critical step in developing novel gene and stem cell therapy treatments for patients with mitochondrial disease.

Aminoglycosides are commonly used to treat certain types of life-threatening infections, but these medicines also damage the ear. Results from a study led by Peter Steyger, Ph.D., professor of otolaryngology and head/neck surgery, show that the widespread inflammation that accompanies severe infections worsens the drug’s toxic effects on hearing, leading to permanent hearing loss. The study was published in Science Translational Medicine.

New leader for rural medical education

The OHSU School of Medicine named Paul Gorman, M.D., its assistant dean for rural medical education, a new position within the school.

Working closely with community groups, Dr. Gorman is leading efforts to develop and expand rural medical education and interprofessional education opportunities, integrating these with the OHSU Campus for Rural Health and the YOUR M.D. curriculum.

Dr. Gorman is a professor with joint appointments in the Department of Medicine and the Department of Medical Informatics and Clinical Epidemiology. Before joining OHSU in 1990, he was a primary care doctor in Astoria, Ore., and served as chief of medicine at Columbia Memorial Hospital.

“I firmly believe in embedded rural education programs as a critical way to ensure that students understand the rewards and realities of rural practice, the breadth of rural health care, and the deep connection to communities with their unique needs and resources,” he said.
One year into a transformed M.D. curriculum

Student and faculty input crucial to making improvements

By Rachel Shafer

In 2014, the M.D. class of 2018 stepped into a transformed curriculum, the first students to experience YOUR M.D. YOUR M.D. is structured around 43 competencies, six domains of competence and 13 entrustable professional activities (EPAs).

This fall, the class passed the halfway mark of Foundations of Medicine, which is made up of seven blocks and includes an exemplar case of the week and a spiraled integration of basic and clinical sciences.

“We are linking basic science concepts to real, breathing, heart-beating clinical cases,” explained Sandra Iragorri, M.D., associate professor of pediatrics and instructor in the new curriculum. “This will help students retain knowledge of otherwise standalone, abstract concepts.”

How did the first year go?

“Faculty and student feedback has been positive overall, and we’ve used their input to help improve processes,” reported Tracy Bumsted, M.D., associate dean for undergraduate medical education.

For example, everyone discovered early on that the weekly schedule needed more balance between large group lectures, small group activities and other forms of learning. Now that’s been adjusted.

Dr. Bumsted started “Tuesdays with Tracy” – an open, lunchtime town hall for students to give feedback. Administrators took it a step further with “You said ... We did,” an online posting of feedback acted upon to keep students apprised.

“Having personally been involved with the curriculum development, I’ve seen how elastic the curriculum is and how willing the faculty is to consider constructive suggestions,” said Nicholas von Foerster, second-year medical student.

He added, “I’m especially looking forward to the increased time during the clinical years. I think that’s where the new curriculum will pay its biggest dividends.” YOUR M.D.’s clinical experiences will begin in February.

Another highlight of the new curriculum is customization. For example, a physician-scientist track will allow research-oriented students to take time out for research, up to one year, to work with basic science and clinical mentors.

The success of YOUR M.D. will be measured through that lens of “residency ready,” explained Dr. Bumsted. “Other medical schools are looking to us for guidance on how to improve their curricula,” she said. “I think it’s fair to say we’re setting a national example in medical education.”
Science and service to humanity

By Tiah Lindner

She came to Oregon with dreams of being a professional snowboarder or a pediatrician. But along the way, Holly Corbitt discovered a passion for bioscience that has taken her life in a different direction.

From her very first chemistry class at Mount Hood Community College (MHCC), Corbitt knew her life would never be the same. “I fell in love with cell pathways and working with science on a molecular level,” she said.

At MHCC, she distinguished herself in the lab of Dr. Elizabeth Cohen – the only community college student to conduct independent research at the time – and eventually transferred to the honors biology program at Portland State University.

Today the Mississippi native studies in the lab of Cheryl Maslen, Ph.D. ’87, professor of medicine. “Grad school is less about finding a research project and more about finding a good mentor,” Corbitt said. “I came to OHSU because of faculty such as Dr. Maslen.”

Corbitt participates with her mentor in the Down Syndrome Heart Project, a multi-institution collaboration that is searching for the underlying etiology that causes heart defects in children born with Down syndrome.

The program has the largest cohort of data from Down syndrome patients ever collected and through this shared resource hopes to improve treatment for the nearly 2,000 infants a year born with atrioventricular septal defect, a condition in which there are missing walls between the chambers in the heart. In the Maslen Lab, Corbitt is part of a whole-exome study investigating genetic modifiers that may contribute to this disorder.

In 2014, Corbitt was among the first students in the nation to be awarded a Roche/ARCS (Achievement Rewards for College Scientists) Foundation Scholar Award. “Anyone who applies to graduate school looks to see if a program has ARCS,” she said. “The donors are so supportive and genuinely interested in us. They care about my success as much as my own mother.”

I fell in love with cell pathways and working with science on a molecular level.

Holly Corbitt

After completing her Ph.D. at OHSU, Corbitt hopes to pursue a postdoctoral program in machine learning or computer programming.

“I want to be doing the most innovative work that solves today’s problems in the field of biology,” she said. And whatever surprising direction life may take her after that, she trusts in the science that led her to where she is today.
Finding oneself amid the tug and pull of medical school

Photos by Tiah Lindner
First- and second-year M.D. students came together in August for the annual College Cup. It was a bit of good-natured competition with games such as Operation and medical-terminology Pictionary.

The school is helping students such as these find their future physician selves in a new advising and mentorship program: The Colleges.

Students explore multiple career paths in any of the seven “colleges,” which represent specific practice settings such as Acute Care and Rural Care. Students select one college as a home base for weekly student affairs programming and enrichment activities.

In addition, a personal academic mentoring system brings students together with faculty-coaches to address individual strengths and weaknesses, areas of clinical and research interest and professionalism.

These learning communities support key tenets of the new curriculum, YOUR M.D. They individualize the curriculum, help students develop self-assessment skills, offer leadership experience, build a heightened community awareness and provide early experience with specialties. The school is on the frontlines of a national effort to enhance advising and guidance to medical students with this student-centered model.
Ending chronic disease where it starts
Scientists know what causes chronic disease. The future depends on us fixing it. So what are we waiting for?

IN A RURAL CORNER OF OREGON, 10 WOMEN OF Childbearing age were given cameras. Their objective? Photograph all the things in their daily lives that made healthy eating easier or more difficult over a two-week period.

The PhotoVoice project, part of the Clatsop/Astoria Maternal Partnership Study, occurred last year in this comparatively low-income, coastal community. The women wrote captions explaining their images, and some common themes emerged. Little time. Tight budgets. The ease of convenience foods.

“My family’s main source of protein comes from the deer we get each season,” wrote one participant. “It may not always be a guarantee, but this is as organic and healthy as we can get.”

_We are what we eat_ goes the old adage. But, as it turns out, women in particular must eat nutritiously. Human health depends on it. Why?

Researchers in a relatively new field of science called developmental origins of health and disease (DOHaD) – a field pioneered at OHSU – found that the dietary habits of women strongly influence a child’s susceptibility to a whole range of chronic illnesses later in life. Diabetes. Obesity. Cancer. Stroke. Cardiovascular disease.
Our genes are a collection of infinite possibilities, which can be switched on or off depending on the nutrition and well-being of a mother and child during those first 1,000 days.
And it’s multigenerational. “The egg that influenced my health was made in my mother’s ovary when she was in my grandmother’s womb,” explained Kent Thornburg, Ph.D.*, a leading DOHaD scientist and director of the OHSU Bob and Charlee Moore Institute for Nutrition & Wellness.

He and fellow researchers have identified a particularly critical window. Many chronic diseases and chronic infections originate in response to poor nutrition during fetal development and babyhood – the first 1,000 days.

“The greatest gift we could give the next generation is to improve the nutrition of girls and women,” said David Barker, M.D., Ph.D.* Dr. Barker started the DOHaD field some 30 years ago and, until his death in 2013, he collaborated with scientists at OHSU. He directed international collaborations at the Moore Institute from the time it began in 2011.

Why, then, is healthy eating so difficult? The Clatsop/Astoria PhotoVoice project – funded by the Moore Institute in partnership with the Oregon Rural Practice-based Research Network (ORPRN) – illuminates just a few of the roadblocks to a healthy diet, especially for low-income women. It also gives a tiny flash of insight into what the Moore Institute is up against – for Dr. Thornburg and colleagues have taken on a daunting challenge. They want to spark a food revolution that does nothing less than eliminate chronic disease around the world.

Life-changing consequences

Establishing the field of DOHaD itself took a revolution. It all started with the Barker Hypothesis, which grew out of Dr. Barker’s path-breaking epidemiological studies beginning in the late 1980s tracking thousands of 20th-century birth and death records in Hertfordshire, England.

Dr. Barker found a strong correlation between low birthweight – 5.5 pounds or less – and death from heart disease and diabetes years later. His work suggested that a full-term baby born at the five-pound end of the birth weight scale had, on average, a three-to-five-time greater risk of dying of heart disease than a baby at the eight-to-nine pound range.

Dr. Barker hypothesized that a child’s health was determined in the womb, disputing mainstream science that a pre-programmed slate of bad genes and/or an unhealthy lifestyle later in life were the root causes.

Many doctors were hostile. “People started walking out on meetings when I spoke,” Dr. Barker told The New Yorker in an interview. Britain’s leading epidemiologist, Sir Richard Doll, declared that he was “very disappointed,” which Dr. Barker took as a form of academic censure.

Yet Dr. Barker knew that the supply of nutrients to the fetus at critical points in its development alters the structure and function of the body’s organs and systems. If the fetus is undernourished, organs such as the brain at the top end of the developmental hierarchy are protected to a large extent by skimping on the nutrients to other organs such as the kidney, he reasoned. Low birthweight babies, as a consequence, are vulnerable for the rest of their lives because they have fewer heart cells, fewer filtering units in their kidneys and different hormone and metabolism settings.

Dr. Barker persevered, and scores of studies – in Finland, the Netherlands, India, China, Sweden, the U.S. and elsewhere – have replicated his findings. In fact, he was awarded the Richard Doll Prize in 2011 for DOHaD’s important contribution to the field of epidemiology worldwide.

These babies are also more vulnerable to adverse environmental influences, epigeneticists have found. Epigenetics is the study of cellular and physiological variations caused by environmental factors. In addition to poor nutrition, stress on a mother before and during a child’s early development, as a result of poverty for example, can have life-changing consequences.

Epigenetic findings suggest that the genetic code in our DNA that tells cells how to make the proteins needed for a healthy body is not a rigid blueprint. It’s a collection of infinite possibilities that can be switched on or off depending on the nutrition and well-being of a mother and child during those first 1,000 days.

One mechanism that might explain this is the methylation of genes. Some foods – such as leafy-green vegetables, citrus fruits, fish and whole grains – are rich in chemical entities called methyl groups. Diets high in these foods, particularly during pregnancy, have been shown to suppress the genes that put us at risk for chronic diseases later in life.

So with every generation, there’s hope.
Moore in the making


The institute has an array of irons in the fire aimed at sparking a revolution in dietary habits.

“The track we’re on is to become a regional, national and international leader and resource in optimizing nutrition for women of child-bearing age,” said Jonathan Purnell, M.D.*, the institute’s associate director and an endocrinologist who researches obesity. Oregon, he says, is the test kitchen for many of the institute’s ideas.

One strategy is K-12 education, led by Susan Bagby, M.D.* The average American child receives just 3.4 hours of nutrition education in a school year and only 5 percent of children eat enough fruits and vegetables for a healthy diet, according to a FoodCorps estimate.

In response, the institute funded OHSU’s Let’s Get Healthy! group to develop an interactive game called “Nurture Your Nature,” to show Oregon middle school students how lifestyle, stress and nutrition choices can alter gene expression. A self-contained curriculum unit called “Nutrition in a Box” is in the works for use in fourth through eighth grades, giving structured lessons on healthy nutrition and basic culinary skills.

Hub for the revolution

Another strategy is targeted outreach. Together with the OHSU Knight Cardiovascular Institute, the Moore Institute has created “Adelante con tu Salud,” a health initiative aimed at improving the health of Hispanic-Americans and teaching the developmental origins story.

Mexico, for example, where fruits, vegetables, nuts and whole grains are readily available once had one of the lowest rates of heart disease in the world, says Dr. Thornburg. But now second- and third-generation Mexican-Americans are falling prey to the same ills – obesity, diabetes, heart disease – that poor diets are visiting on the rest of the American population.

“We have a chance to turn that around in a much better way than we have been able to do for non-Hispanics,” said Dr. Thornburg.

In a similar vein, the institute is launching a study of the Yup’ik native population in Alaska’s Yukon-Kuskokwim River Delta. Carnivorous for thousands of years, Yup’ik subsisted on diets high in protein and fat with little access to plants, but their diets – like those of Hispanic-Americans – are increasingly being Westernized.

“Sugary soft drinks and potato chips are being flown in, and the younger people tend to like those things more than their traditional foods,” says Dr. Thornburg.

Working with Bert Boyer, Ph.D., of the Institute of Arctic Biology at the University of Alaska in Fairbanks, Moore researchers are preparing to study how the placentas of a cohort of pregnant Yup’ik women on a traditional diet transmit nutrients to their babies compared to a similar group of pregnant Yup’ik women on a Western diet.

Outside the Northwest, the institute expanded its global reach earlier this year when it hosted 67 delegates from 17 countries for the International Summit on the Nutrition of Adolescent Girls and Young Women with the support of a $420,000 grant from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. There, nutrition scientists and nutrition practitioners met to address maternal and child malnutrition and build bridges.

The institute’s biggest and most ambitious strategy is to catalyze a public movement that changes food culture.

“The ability to translate what can be dense and inaccessible science has posed major obstacles to translating this research into something actionable,” said Liana Haywood, MPH, Moore Institute communications director.

In response, the Moore Institute launched an online hub, betterthefuture.org, and accompanying social media. Online posts focus on community, environmental and cultural factors that influence the way people eat and offer steps that individuals and communities can take to collectively impact the food culture.

“The hope is that the hub will not only spread the DOHaD message, but empower people to call for change to our food system and provide the scientific justification for doing so,” said Haywood.

The best thing for all these conditions – heart disease, diabetes, hypertension, obesity – is to prevent them.

Dr. Jonathan Purnell
**“Heathy eating ... with one hand”**

In the end, the message has to hit home. It has to change not just behavior but society as a whole. While women provide the environment for the child, society shapes the environment that women live in.

“What I’m doing with the Moore Institute is targeting prevention because, on a population basis, if we want to really do something about obesity, for example, we have to prevent it,” said Dr. Purnell. “Once it’s in place, we don’t cure it, we just treat it. So the best thing for all these conditions – heart disease, diabetes, hypertension, obesity – is to prevent them.”

“The way to do that,” he concluded, “is at the level of how you design your cities, how you build your neighborhoods, how you access foods.” In other words, a revolution.

Can the Moore Institute fulfill the dream of its patrons and end chronic disease as Dr. Barker envisioned? Time will tell.

“Some of our work is quiet and in the background,” Dr. Thornburg noted, “because if your goals are as big as ours you have to slowly build organizational ties and, in spite of the generosity of the Moores, it will require a lot of additional funds to make our efforts come to fruition.”

Back in Astoria, the women gathered to discuss their findings at the conclusion of the PhotoVoice project, which was led by Melinda Davis, Ph.D., of ORPRN.

“Being a first-time mom on a shoestring budget with no child care, I learned fast that healthy eating took effort and planning and two hands,” one woman said. “I cross-referenced my recipes with what was allowed by the WIC [Women Infants and Children federal supplemental nutrition program] vouchers, found ways to get the baby to sleep in the backpack, then made large batches of healthy meals and stored them in containers ready to grab – with one hand.”

And with that, her child’s and her grandchildren’s future got a little bit better.

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**What is good food?**

A tip sheet from the OHSU Moore Institute

The message that we should be eating better is nothing new. We hear it everywhere. But making sense of the advice on what to eat or not eat seems to be constantly changing – one minute eggs are good for us; the next minute, eggs are bad. We’re told our health problems result from all that saturated fat we consumed. No wait, it’s carbs that are making us fat, or maybe it’s all the added sugar or gluten.

Mixed messages, fad diets and marketing ploys can make it hard to feel confident about the food choices we make.

At the OHSU Moore Institute, we believe that reducing the prevalence of chronic diseases throughout life starts by promoting healthy, nutrient-rich diets based on wholesome foods – before conception, during pregnancy and lactation, and in infancy and early childhood.

We don’t have an easy, sexy solution. We don’t have an amazing new diet or a magic pill. It just goes back to the fundamentals of a balanced diet including whole grains, fruit, vegetables, nuts, legumes and healthy fats.

All those years your mom told you to eat your veggies – turns out she was right. Eating a diet based on real foods, including lots of whole grains, fruits and vegetables is the first step toward preventing heart disease, diabetes, obesity and other chronic diseases in this and future generations.

So let’s remember what real food looks like:

**Real food** is grown, not made

**Real food** is a product of nature, not industry

**Real food** looks like it did when it was grown

**Real food** doesn’t have a barcode or three inch list of ingredients you’ve never heard of

Would your great-grandparents recognize it? If not, it probably isn’t real food.

Visit betterthefuture.org

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**Particulars**

- Dr. Thornburg is a professor of medicine, OHSU School of Medicine.
- Dr. Barker was a professor of medicine, OHSU School of Medicine, and professor of clinical epidemiology at the University of Southampton in the United Kingdom.
- Dr. Purnell is a professor of medicine, OHSU School of Medicine.
- Dr. Bagby is chair of the Moore Institute Community Education and Outreach Committee and professor of medicine, OHSU School of Medicine.
Roadway warrior

Dr. John Tongue was the driving force behind Oregon’s safety belt law

By Harry Lenhart

Twenty-five years ago, Oregon’s “Click It or Ticket” law was enacted through the state’s ballot initiative process, the only state to put such a law on the books by a vote of the people. The law enforced the wearing of federally-mandated safety belts in vehicles.

Within a year, the percentage of drivers in Oregon who wore safety belts rose from 43 percent to 70 percent, resulting in more than 100 lives saved. Last year it was at 97.8 percent, the highest in the country.

Since the law went into effect, the injury rate per hundred million vehicle miles traveled has fallen 32 percent and the fatality rate declined by 62 percent, said Carla Levinski, occupant protection program manager at the Oregon Department of Transportation.

The law and those statistics are a monument to one man, John R. Tongue, M.D. R ’74, an orthopaedic surgeon and clinical associate professor at OHSU.

When Dr. Tongue was a teenager, he regularly wore a lap belt at his father’s urging, and because of that, Dr. Tongue survived a crash in 1963 when his car, hit broadside, rolled over several times.

That lesson not only stuck with him but was underlined time and again as a rotating intern in OHSU’s emergency department and as a first-year general surgery resident treating motor vehicle traumas.

“It was personal for me,” he said.

In 1983, Dr. Tongue founded the Oregon Lifebelt Committee and tried for years to get a safety belt law passed in the Oregon legislature.

He finally succeeded in 1990 via Oregon’s arduous ballot initiative process. It meant lining up the support of more than 100 organizations, chief among them the Oregon Medical Association and AAA Oregon, hiring staff and recruiting 2,000 volunteers to persuade 80,000 qualified voters to sign petitions. Dr. Tongue collected 8,000 signatures himself. Once it qualified for the ballot, he helped raise a half million dollars to fund the campaign.

He worked virtually nonstop. It was hard on his family and also, he concedes, on his practice. But Dr. Tongue, whose great-grandfather introduced the bill in Congress in 1902 that created Crater Lake National Park and whose father was an Oregon Supreme Court justice, has a strong sense of civic duty. It’s important, he said, for physicians “to step outside their day-to-day role in medicine and use their credibility to make a difference.”

Road safety is where Dr. Tongue chose to make a difference. He’s also helped pass drunken driving laws in Oregon and has been a vocal opponent of increasing interstate speed limits.

For his work as a “roadway warrior,” he’s received many honors, including the Oregon Medical Association’s Doctor-Citizen of the Year Award, the Humanitarian Award of the American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons and the National Highway Traffic Safety Association Public Service Award.

Creating Change

By all estimates, Oregon’s seat belt law has saved thousands of lives, prevented innumerable injuries and saved hundreds of millions in medical costs, lost productivity and related economic costs. “What I’ve found about leadership is that it’s really hard work so you need a really short list, and this was my project,” said Dr. Tongue.
It was personal for me.

Dr. John Tongue
What's your background?
I graduated from OHSU in 1966 and received my residency and cardiology training at OHSU, finishing and starting practice near Good Samaritan Hospital (GSH) in 1974. In 1981, I started an interventional program at GSH. I was fortunate to be able to help train cardiologists from Vancouver, Bend and Salem in this new field. I also traveled to Boise and Yakima to help train cardiologists in coronary angioplasty. I joined the OHSU cardiology faculty in 2002 as an interventionalist. I retired from OHSU a little over three years ago. I spend my retirement playing tennis, working out, reading and traveling with my wife, Chris. I especially enjoy learning new stuff about history and our amazing planet utilizing The Great Courses lectures.

What will the alumni association be working on this year?
Our top priority is to support the medical students, residents and graduate students to help us create new programs to enhance their overall experience at OHSU.

When people ask you what's going on at the school these days, what do you tell them?
I mostly emphasize the great need for financial assistance in the form of scholarship support as the cost of education is quite expensive. I know because our son just graduated in June from medical school. Another is the amazing and exciting changes with the renovations on the main campus, the development of the South Waterfront, technological advances in teaching techniques and the new curriculum, YOUR M.D.

How can alumni get involved?
Look up our new web page at www.ohsu.edu/som/alumni and you will find information about our activities. We have three-year council terms with the possibility of re-upping for another term. We have three main council meetings a year and one to two committee meetings a year. Interested alumni should contact any of the council members or staff to express such interest. The email for the alumni office is alumni@ohsu.edu.
New alumni website

Now it’s easier than ever to come back to the OHSU School of Medicine – virtually, that is. Browse through the pages and connect with the school today. Visit www.ohsu.edu/som/alumni.

Nominations wanted for Alumni Awards

The annual Alumni Awards program recognizes exceptional members of the 17,000-member alumni community. There are many alumni who deserve to be recognized – which is why your participation in our alumni awards program is critical. Throughout the year, we accept nominations in several categories. Nominate a classmate or a colleague by Dec. 17 for the 2016 awards. Instructions and more details can be found at www.ohsu.edu/somalumniawards.

Volunteer with H.O.S.T.

Make a difference in the life of a medical student by serving as a host during fourth-year residency interviews. Curtis Bergquist, fourth-year medical student and class president, said, “Selecting a residency is a challenging task. We would love to gain your insight about your home city or institution.” The OHSU School of Medicine Alumni Association’s Help Our Students Travel or “H.O.S.T.” program connects alumni with members of the M.D. Class of 2016. Email alumni@ohsu.edu to learn more.

Note of appreciation

Thank you to all M.D. alumni who attended a reunion in 2015! Eight classes celebrated, with particular thanks going to the 19 reunion coordinators.

Fill OHSU’s cup of history

Earlier this year, Max Johnson, OHSU’s university archivist, was browsing through the 1982 OHSU Yearbook when he came across these gentlemen performing in the All-Hill Talent Show. “Who are they?” he wondered. No names could be found. Johnson is seeking information about these “Four Fossae” students and anyone else who participated in an All-Hill Talent Show.

OHSU Historical Collections and Archives grows through the generous donations of artifacts by faculty, current and former staff and alumni. If you have materials that may be of historical interest, please contact Johnson at johnsmax@ohsu.edu or 503 494-0186.

Night of networking

Now in its second year, Career Networking Night once again provided an ideal forum for Ph.D. candidates and postdoctoral fellows to explore career options outside of traditional academic research labs. More than 75 students and postdocs participated in the May 5 event, engaging in conversations with 22 professionals – including alumni – who represented a variety of professions: industry product development, college teaching, finance, law, government research and more. The event is sponsored by the OHSU School of Medicine Alumni Association.
Teaching medicine in the shadows of the Wallowas

By Harry Lenhart

She grew up in Iron River, a small town in Michigan’s sparsely populated Upper Peninsula where 160 inches of snow a year is not uncommon. As a child, Elizabeth Powers, M.D. R ’06, often strapped on skis to trek with her father, a family physician, to the local hospital. She would munch cookies at the nurse’s station while he did his rounds.

As a student at Stanford School of Medicine, Dr. Powers considered a number of different specialties. But her rural upbringing made an indelible imprint. “It absolutely colored in my brain what it means to be a doctor,” she said. After rotations in say, surgery or neurology, she would think, “That was cool, but I didn’t feel like a doctor.”

During her family medicine residency at OHSU, she did a rotation in Enterprise, Ore., and fell in love with the place. After residency, she joined a practice there called Winding Waters Clinic PC; she is one of three physician/owners and the lead clinician. That was nearly a decade ago. But she has hardly settled into a quiet, pastoral life. She works in a busy clinic, which sees some 1,300 patients a month, and also cares for patients in hospital and emergency-room settings. She has two small children who go with her to all her out-of-town meetings. She is president of the Oregon Academy of Family Physicians and serves on the Oregon Rural Practice-based Research Network steering committee and the American Academy of Family Physicians Commission on Rural Health.

Among the jobs she is most dedicated to, however, is training and mentoring the next generation of doctors as an affiliate associate professor in the OHSU School of Medicine. She and her clinic colleagues teach a steady stream of OHSU medical students and residents on their rural rotations.

Earlier this year, Sylvia Peterson-Perry, a third-year medical student in OHSU’s M.D./MPH program, shadowed physicians as they rounded at Wallowa Memorial Hospital or saw patients in the clinic. They did exams together, wrote patient notes and talked about the medical conditions being treated.

In the clinic, Peterson-Perry often took part in patient interactions. In one case, Dr. Powers detected a heart murmur, but Peterson-Perry couldn’t hear it.

“No, no, it’s right here,” said the patient. “I’m gonna hold my breath, now listen.”

“Because we’ve had learners here for so long, the community is invested in their training,” Dr. Powers explained.

What struck Peterson-Perry about her Enterprise experience is how close the provider-patient relationships are. “The physicians would perform a procedure, and then they might say, ‘I’m looking forward to our kids’ playdate tomorrow,’” she said.

Her goal, says Dr. Powers, is to give learners a sampling of her own Iron River experience. “I want to instill in students a passion for community health and patient-centered, team-based care,” she said.

A broad range of providers teach students and trainees in community settings throughout Oregon. The school is seeking additional providers to participate in this crucial learning experience. Please contact somdeanoffice@ohsu.edu to learn more.

ROOTED IN COMMUNITY

Dr. Powers has a rich life outside her medical responsibilities. She and her husband revel in backcountry skiing, mountain biking and kayaking. They produce and bale six tons of hay a year on their five-acre spread. And until the birth of her youngest child, Dr. Powers was a violinist in the Grande Ronde Symphony and still plays a mean fiddle with local Irish and bluegrass bands.
Frances J. Storrs, M.D. R ’68, professor emerita of dermatology and an OHSU legend, is also an avid gardener. “She’s almost a professional plant collector,” said James E. Rasmussen, M.D. R ’73, a former student and a gardener himself.

For these dermatologists, gardening is a bit more than an avocation since plants are the source of many allergens that cause contact dermatitis, which each of them has spent careers studying and treating.

But it is Dr. Storrs who is known worldwide for her work in contact dermatitis and the discovery of new workplace and environmental allergens. She is author or co-author of more than 100 studies in peer-reviewed journals. She has been showered with nearly every award her specialty offers, among them the Gold Medal of the American Academy of Dermatology (AAD), its highest award.

The first woman to complete a residency in the OHSU Department of Dermatology, Dr. Storrs has been a strong and effective advocate for women in her profession.

Yet it is Dr. Storrs the teacher and mentor whom generations of OHSU students and dermatology residents celebrate. Almost every teaching and service award OHSU offers has been bestowed on her.

That’s because she’s cultivated and nurtured learners with much the same passion she gives her plants – and virtually everything else she tackles.

“She’s a part of,” said Diane Baker, M.D. R ’75, a Portland dermatologist and former president of the AAD. “She has an amazing capacity to motivate students to do their best.”

“She was relentless at questioning,” recalled Peter Schalock, M.D. ’02, associate professor of dermatology at Harvard Medical School. She might ask a patient the same question four different ways, he said, as a means of teasing out the information necessary to diagnose contact dermatitis.

For years, groups of medical students met once a month at her house for dinner. “Nearly all the women among them,” said Dr. Storrs with pride, “became dermatologists.” A couple of them even got married at her house.

“Her lasting legacy,” concluded Dr. Baker, “is her effect on the lives and careers of her many students. We can only hope to live up to the example Fran has set in her life as a physician and friend.”

Nominate teachers and mentors who have had an impact on you for our “Lasting Legacy” column. Reach us at alumni@ohsu.edu.
Welcome your news and photos

Email alumni@ohsu.edu or write a note to Bridges Class Notes c/o Rachel Shafer, OHSU School of Medicine, 3181 S.W. Sam Jackson Park Rd., MC L102, Portland, OR 97239. Please write a maximum of 250 words and include your name, degree/training information and graduation/completion year. We may not be able to publish all items and may edit for length and clarity.

1970s

David Grube, M.D. ’73, of Corvallis, Ore., wrote, “I have been named a national medical director for Compassion and Choices, a leading nonprofit organization committed to helping everyone have the best death possible. We offer free counseling, planning resources, referrals and guidance, and across the nation we work to protect and expand options at the end of life.”

James Reuler, M.D. R ’76, MACP, of Portland, Ore., received the 2015 Rob Delf Honorarium Award from the Medical Society of Metropolitan Portland and the Metropolitan Medical Foundation of Oregon.

1990s

William Noonan, M.D. ’91, J.D., of Sherwood, Ore., is a life sciences patent attorney at Klarquist Sparkman. He wrote, “I have led our Life Sciences group at Klarquist Sparkman for many years. As part of that work, I obtained the NIH and CDC as clients in the 1990s, and I also became the directing partner of my firm’s patent work for the United States Government.”

Marcel Curlin, M.D. ’95, of Portland, Ore., joined the OHSU faculty in the Division of Infectious Diseases in the Department of Medicine. He will be active in HIV vaccine development, subspecialty care in infectious diseases and the development of international research and exchange initiatives for OHSU Global Health. Dr. Curlin’s research interests include HIV molecular epidemiology and pathogenesis, vaccine development and translational research in HIV/STD prevention.

Michael Tso, M.D. R ’97, of Hillsboro, N.H., is director of training and development at a Christian residential community focused on recovery and holistic, whole-person care in Deering, N.H. He wrote, “We have a beautiful, working New England farm and are doing the work of bringing healing and wholeness to the broken lives of men and women.”

2010s

Christina Lorentz, Ph.D. ’10, of Portland, Ore., is a research scientist/project manager at Aronora, Inc., a startup biotech company, where she is focused on preclinical development of novel antithrombotic drugs that do not cause bleeding. In addition, she is a senior research associate in the Department of Biomedical Engineering at the OHSU School of Medicine.

Mischa Ronick, M.D. ’11, of Belize wrote, “I’m medical director for Hillside Health Care International, an NGO clinic in rural, southern Belize. We provide a variety of primary care services, operate mobile clinics to rural Mayan villages and collaborate with local communities to promote public health and disease prevention. My favorite aspects of living here are getting to work with the many different ethnic communities in Belize, feeling the breeze off the Caribbean Sea, co-directing the organization alongside my partner, Carly Hood, and going for runs through the jungle with the calls of Howler monkeys all around!”

Kaiser Permanente Northwest selected Marcus Cassar, MBA ’13, of West Linn, Ore., to be the department administrator for anesthesia. He oversees anesthesia operations at Kaiser Sunnyside Hospital, Kaiser Westside Hospital and the Ambulatory Surgery Centers located at Sunnybrook, Interstate and Skyline.

Boulder Community Health named Robert Vissers, M.D., MBA ’15, of Boulder, Colo., its president and chief executive officer.
Rajarshi Mazumder, M.D. ’14, MPH, of Los Angeles, Calif., presented results of a recent study at the Second Annual International Scientific Conference on Nodding Disease Syndrome in Gulu, Uganda. Dr. Mazumder is a first-year resident in neurology at UCLA.

Jane Riebold, M.S. ’15, of Corvallis, Ore., was selected for the prestigious Boston Children’s Hospital Pediatric Clinical Nutrition Fellowship. After completing the fellowship, she hopes to work as a pediatric dietitian in both clinical and research settings.

In memoriam

Daniel Labby, M.D. ’39, of Portland, Ore., died Aug. 30 at age 100. Dr. Labby was a professor of medicine and a founder of the OHSU Center for Ethics in Health Care.


Ernest P. Greenwood, M.D. ’44, of Salem, Ore., died May 21 at age 97.

Robert C. Jackson, M.D. ’47, of Salem, Ore., died June 12 at age 92.

Robert Mass, M.D. ’51, of Lincoln City, Ore., died June 18 at age 88.

Dean Neal, M.D. ’59, of Lake Grove, Ore., died May 23 at age 80.


In memoriam is also online at www.ohsu.edu/som/alumni.

Calendar

For the latest information and more events, visit www.ohsu.edu/som/alumni.

Alumni Events

For more information and to RSVP, please call 503 552-0667.

DEC. 6  2–4 p.m.  THE TOWN CLUB, PORTLAND

School of Medicine Alumni Association Holiday Reception

2015–16 OHSU Marquam Hill Lectures

For more details, visit www.ohsu.edu/mhlectures.

FEB. 18  7 p.m.  COLLABORATIVE LIFE SCIENCES BUILDING, PORTLAND

Lessons From the Battlefield: How Military Care Transforms Civilian Care in the United States
Martin Schreiber, M.D.

MARCH 17  7 p.m.  OHSU AUDITORIUM, PORTLAND

The 24-Hour Clock and Human Health
Steven Shea, Ph.D.

APRIL 21  7 p.m.  OHSU AUDITORIUM, PORTLAND

The Promise of Gene Therapy for Metabolic Rare Diseases
Cary Harding, M.D.

Upcoming CME

Schedules are subject to change. Please contact 503 494-8700 or cme@ohsu.edu for brochures and program updates. For the latest information on these and other CME events, visit www.ohsu.edu/som/cme.

FEB. 8–12  47th Annual Primary Care Review

APRIL 21–22  23rd Annual Internal Medicine Review

MAY 5–6  SOMMER MEMORIAL LECTURES / OHSU SCHOOL OF MEDICINE ALUMNI SCIENTIFIC MEETING
Scholarships make a profound and positive difference in the educational experience of our medical students. We are actively building our scholarship funds so we can offer more students, like Linda, the opportunity for tuition support.

Our alumni and friends understand the immense need of student financial aid. As a catalyst for critical student support, you can establish a named endowed scholarship fund as a perpetual legacy of your support for the next generation of physicians.

To find out more, contact Mark Kemball at 503 552-0667 or kemballm@ohsu.edu or visit www.ohsufoundation.org.