

STUDENT AWARDS

SPECIAL SECTION

Dr. Baochan Nguyen: Hudson-Penn Award for Excellence in Surgery

By Russell Rian

From helping others learn to dissect brain tissue in the laboratory to treating patients, Dr. Baochan Nguyen says she enjoys all aspects of academic medicine and is furiously planning for a lifetime of shuttling between patients, the lab and students.

"Science is about helping people on a population scale, and medicine is about helping people on an individual level," said Dr. Nguyen. "I want to be able to do both."

After graduating from Mustang High School just outside of Oklahoma City, she began her undergraduate degree in biochemistry at the age of 14 at the University of Oklahoma. Now 26, she is well on her way to the physician-scientist role, having completed the M.D./Ph.D. program at UT Southwestern. During her eight years, Dr. Nguyen investigated signaling pathways in the brain, helped first- and second-year students get a foothold in medical school and earned high scores for her surgical skills.

She garnered the Hudson-Penn Award for Excellence in Surgery, given annually to recognize academic achievement, outstanding clinical skills and a caring attitude toward patients. The award

includes a framed certificate and \$500. Established in 1979, the award is named for Dr. Lee Hudson, chief of surgery at Parkland Memorial Hospital when UT Southwestern was founded, and for Robert Penn, Dr. Hudson's brother-in-law.

"I enjoy working with patients and working in the lab. I like the intellectual aspect of science and the interpersonal nature of medicine," Dr. Nguyen said. "I think you're better able to accomplish your goals as a scientist if you have training as a physician and you understand how science and medicine impact patients on an individual level."

In the lab of Dr. James Bibb, associate professor of psychiatry, Dr. Nguyen spent time investigating single transduction pathways underlying learning and memory.

"Chan is one of the most gifted and talented young scientists I have ever worked with, and she was extremely productive and wise beyond her years," Dr. Bibb said. "She also quickly learned and applied a broad array of advanced techniques to address difficult questions and really was a leader of our group in many ways."

Her research efforts included looking at the regulation of protein phosphorylation and dephosphorylation in cognition, drug addiction and neurodegenerative disorders and, with Dr.

Bibb, she contributed to papers that appeared in *Nature Neuroscience*, *The Journal of Cell Biology*, *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, *Journal of Neurochemistry* and *Journal of Biological Chemistry*.

"I initially became interested in surgery because of my research, which involved a lot of brain microdissection. Using a microscope, I had to dissect out specific regions of the brain from 400-micron thick slices and do different experiments," she said.

This attention to detail is required for successful ophthalmologic surgery.

"What appeals to me about ophthalmology is that it is a unique combination of microsurgery and preventive medicine that uses advanced technology to promote the quality of life of a diverse patient population."

She also served as vice president of the Alpha Omega Alpha Honor Medical Society, where she helped launch Project Collegiality. "We started a pilot project this past year in which senior AOA members worked within the Colleges system to promote collegiality around campus by mentoring first- and second-year medical students," she said.

Dr. Nguyen matched at the University of California, Los Angeles, and will eventually go



there for a residency in ophthalmology. But first, she'll squeeze in a general internship at Santa Clara Valley Medical Center in San Jose, Calif.

She's also celebrating her second anniversary, after being married in 2007 to Dr. Huy Pham, an alumnus of both UT Southwestern Medical School and the internal medicine residency training program.



Dr. Jesse A. Yanes III

Minnie Lee Lancaster, M.D., Scholarship Award in Family Medicine

By Kristen Holland Shear

Some are inspired to enter medicine by a close friend or family member who works in health care. Others make the choice after someone they love is diagnosed with a debilitating disease.

For Dr. Jesse A. Yanes III, the reason is less dramatic but just as powerful.

"I have always had a desire to help others and felt that becoming a physician would help me accomplish that," said Dr. Yanes, who earned a bachelor's degree in biology at UT San Antonio.

For his work and dedication to the field, Dr. Yanes has been awarded the Minnie Lee Lancaster, M.D., Scholarship Award in Family Medicine. In 1953, Dr. Lancaster and her husband, Dr. Edgar Lancaster, opened the Grapevine Clinic and Hospital, the first clinic in Grapevine. The clinic was the forerunner of Baylor Regional Medical Center at Grapevine.

While at UT Southwestern, Dr. Yanes volunteered as a translator for physicians at North Dallas Shared Ministries and spoke to elementary school pupils about the importance of hard work in accomplishing their dreams.

The San Antonio native credits his parents with providing him the tools he needed to fulfill his own dream of becoming a physician.

"They handed down to me values such as hard work, determination and perseverance, as well as a strong Christian faith," he said.

Dr. Yanes' dedication wasn't lost on those around him.

Dr. Herb Phelan, assistant professor of surgery, said Dr. Yanes' work ethic during his third-year trauma rotation really impressed him. "Though trauma's got a reputation for being one of, if not the most, difficult rotations in the third year, Jesse came into this with an attitude like someone who was gung-ho for surgery as far as the degree of energy and effort. But family medicine remains his first love."

On slow nights, Dr. Phelan said, he often found Dr. Yanes putting together IV kits or the packets of paperwork used when patients come in for treatment.

"Everyone else would be off getting some rest, but he always stuck around, passing up sleep to do 'scut' paperwork and other tasks that aren't glamorous but need to get done," Dr. Phelan said. "That really impressed me."

Dr. Yanes stood out in other ways, too.

"I often say that I can teach any yahoo how to suture, but how to interact well with families – that's impossible to teach," Dr. Phelan said. "Jesse was just one of those kids who was just naturally outstanding with families. He's going to be a good doctor."

Dr. Yanes will complete his residency at Christus Santa Rosa Hospital in San Antonio. He said his long-term goals include opening a private sports medicine practice in South Texas.

"I feel that with sports medicine I will have a bridge to communicate with tomorrow's youth who are growing up in underprivileged areas similar to my background and be a mentor to them," Dr. Yanes said.

Dr. Chad Newton: Hemphill-Gojer Award in Internal Medicine and Vanatta, Hesser, Schmalstieg Excellence in Tutoring Award

By Rachel Skei Donihoo

With a close-knit population of 3,100, a famous chili cook-off and a name inspired by the feisty daughter of a cattle baron, Electra is the quintessential Texas country town. And Dr. Chad Newton, whose love of medicine and science flourished when he was a child there, has by all accounts become the quintessential country doctor – with big-city aspirations.

Born and raised in Electra, 27 miles west of Wichita Falls, Dr. Newton was first introduced to the "atmosphere of medicine" by his mother, a medical coder for the town's hospital and clinics.

"I had a great deal of respect for the doctors my mom worked with, many of whom became family friends. I also had a love for science and math early on, so my decision to go to medical school was natural."

That decision and Dr. Newton's stellar academic and clinical efforts have earned him a pair of honors: the Hemphill-Gojer Award in Internal Medicine and the Vanatta, Hesser, Schmalstieg Excellence in Tutoring Award.

The Hemphill-Gojer Award is given annually to the top medical student interested in internal medicine. The award was established by Ross H. and Anne Seymour Hemphill in honor of their

son and daughter-in-law, Dr. and Mrs. Ross Seymour Hemphill; their daughter and son-in-law, Dr. and Mrs. Bernard Gojer; and Anne Hemphill's parents, E. Clyde and Florine Allen Seymour. Drs. Hemphill and Gojer are both UT Southwestern alumni.

"Chad has excelled in virtually every area of internal medicine, and his enthusiasm, warmth and intelligence are evident in everything he does," said Dr. Hari Raja, associate professor of internal medicine. "He is a great communicator and an intuitive student, so we're thrilled that he will spend the next four years training with us at UT Southwestern. He truly has the complete package for what is required to be a successful internist."

The tutoring award, for which Dr. Newton will receive a certificate of appreciation, a commemorative plaque and \$500, honors the graduating senior who made the most significant contribution in the service of fellow medical students in need of academic assistance. Dr. Newton tutored fellow students in clinical medicine and anatomy, and recently conducted the physiology review sessions for second-year students' first national board exam.

"Tutoring was hugely rewarding on several levels," said Dr. Newton. "I loved the teaching

aspects of it and the interaction with my fellow students, but the experience also helped me improve my own academic and clinical skills by pushing me to review the material over and over again. Tutoring really was its own reward, but I'm very excited about this 'additional' honor."

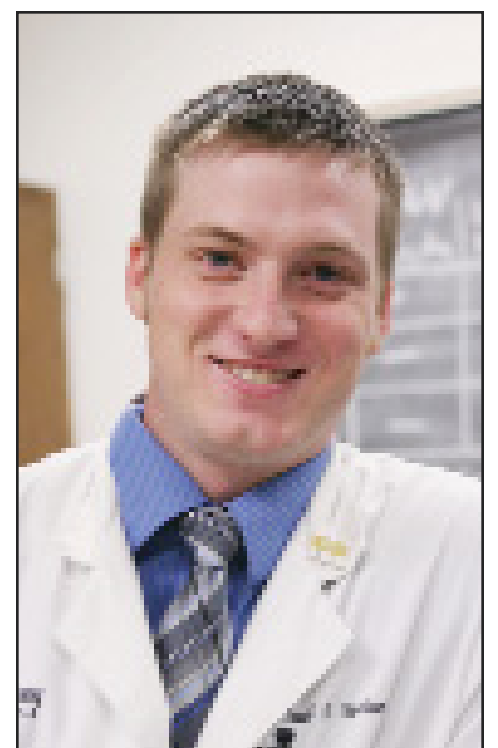
Carol Wortham, manager for the medical school's student academic assistance services, said Dr. Newton's "mastery of the subjects and his relaxed style and genuine interest in helping fellow students put everyone at ease."

"Throughout his medical education, Chad demonstrated great intelligence, humility and a work ethic that impressed everyone who came to know him," she added.

Dr. Newton earned his undergraduate degree in biology at the University of North Texas in 2004, where in addition to pursuing an education, he pursued his future wife, Haley. Mrs. Newton, whom he married in 2006, is currently beginning her third year of medical school at the University of North Texas Health Science Center in Fort Worth.

Several years into medical school, Dr. Newton developed a passion for the field of internal medicine.

"I'm fascinated by the diagnosis and management of disease, and internal medicine gives



you the opportunity to help patients find ways of coping with medical problems – often from beginning to end," he explained.

Dr. Newton, who also was elected to the Dallas chapter of Alpha Omega Alpha – a national medical honor society – will remain at UT Southwestern for his internship and residency.

Dr. Mary Gajewski-Ashmead and Dr. Karen Chen

Class of 2005 Leadership Award

By Rachel Skei Donihoo

As co-class presidents, Dr. Mary Gajewski-Ashmead and Dr. Karen Chen served the Class of 2009 cooperatively. Now, as they reflect on their time at UT Southwestern and prepare to launch their medical careers, they express gratitude for this enduring partnership and the opportunity to lead.

Their efforts have earned them the Class of 2005 Leadership Award.

"The Class of 2005 established the Leadership Award to recognize the contributions class presidents make to the well-being of their class in representing their interests at various levels of the medical school," said Wes Norred, vice president for student and alumni affairs. "Serving as a class president requires time, patience and, of course, leadership. Mary and Karen have served their class and UT Southwestern Medical School very well over the past three years, and we're pleased to honor them for their efforts."

Dr. Mary Gajewski-Ashmead

A native of Lake Dallas and graduate of Baylor University, Dr. Gajewski-Ashmead said she set her sights on medical school in the eighth grade.

Once at UT Southwestern, she quickly became interested in otolaryngology, which she has chosen as her clinical focus.

"Otolaryngology is one of the few fields that allow you to combine surgery with clinical care," she explained. "And diagnostically, it's interesting. You have the opportunity to make



Dr. Mary Gajewski-Ashmead

decisions about the course of treatment – including whether or not to operate – and see it through. Plus I find the head and neck anatomy totally fascinating."

After graduation Dr. Gajewski-Ashmead and her husband, Michael, will head to Jackson, Miss., where she will begin her internship and residency at the University of Mississippi. Mr. Ashmead, an advertising executive, also has secured a job in the area.

Dr. Gajewski-Ashmead cites her experience as co-president as one of the

most important.

"It has been a fantastic experience that has enriched my time at UT Southwestern immensely," said Dr. Gajewski-Ashmead, who also was elected to the Dallas chapter of Alpha Omega Alpha. "Being a co-president has given me great insight into how the [administrative] process works and how to effectively share your ideas and get things done. I have been so impressed by my classmates and touched by the friends I've found."



Dr. Karen Chen

Dr. Karen Chen

Dr. Chen grew up in Sugar Land, where she said her idea to become a doctor was simply an "organic notion."

She eventually attended Dartmouth College, where in 2003 she earned an undergraduate degree in economics. She then went on to earn a master's degree in epidemiology from the University of Cambridge in England before returning to Texas for medical school.

She said that the chance to lead her

class was one of the "most rewarding and challenging" experiences of her time at UT Southwestern.

"It has been a great honor to represent my class. I've learned a great deal about the administrative components that affect medical student life and how to navigate through those levels to effect change – a skill that I know will serve me throughout my entire career," said Dr. Chen. "I've also learned to look at the big picture, listen to what people want and need, prioritize, temper expectations and make decisions. It's been a great experience."

Among the changes that Drs. Gajewski-Ashmead and Chen have helped make is the relocation of the graduation ceremonies to an indoor venue.

The commencement ceremonies traditionally have been held on Eugene McDermott Plaza, but for a variety of reasons many students hoped that would change. This year's commencement will be held June 4 at the Morton H. Meyerson Symphony Center.

"This change was the result of a lot of hard work by a lot of people, but I was proud to be a part of a decision that is important to a lot of my classmates and their families," Dr. Chen said.

After graduation Dr. Chen will remain at UT Southwestern, where she will begin a preliminary surgical internship. She plans to eventually transition into the field of radiation oncology.

Dr. Arianne Shadi Kourosh: Award for Excellence in Dermatology

By Erin Prather Stafford

Dr. Arianne Shadi Kourosh, this year's Award for Excellence in Dermatology winner, credited good role models for her interest in research and medicine.

"My family moved to the Dallas area because my father was a professor and researcher at UT Southwestern," Dr. Kourosh said. "I grew up watching my older sisters, an internist and a pediatrician, attend medical school here. Through them I met Dr. George Ordway, then a professor of physiology. He mentored me in obtaining a summer internship at the National Institutes of Health while I was in high school, which had an impact in shaping my career."

The Award for Excellence in Dermatology is given to the graduating medical student who has advanced dermatological patient care, research or teaching in a special way, or who shows promise for leadership in these areas. The honor includes a certificate and \$1,000. Dr. Kourosh shares the award with Dr. Tyler Hollmig, winner of the Ho Din Award.

After graduating from Duncanville High School, Dr. Kourosh left Texas to attend the University of Virginia, where she graduated with dual concentrations in chemistry and religious studies.

She then served as a high school chemistry

teacher at an international nonprofit school in Eastern Europe before returning to the U.S. to begin medical school. During her first year at UT Southwestern, Dr. Kourosh attended interest group meetings for various specialties.

At the dermatology meeting she met a fourth-year student, the late Dr. Kelly Werlinger, who was then president of the Dermatology Interest Group and who was to win the Award for Excellence in Dermatology in 2006.

Dr. Werlinger invited Dr. Kourosh to join her as a volunteer at the Agape Clinic, a free clinic in the basement of Grace United Methodist Church in East Dallas.

In this setting, she became acquainted with Dr. Amit Pandya, professor of dermatology, who staffed dermatology services at the clinic.

It was through her volunteer work that Dr. Kourosh realized the impact a dermatologist could make in caring for the underserved.

"I saw through Dr. Pandya's example how my interests in academic medicine and service to the community could be merged," she said.

"Shadi is one of the most dedicated students I have met when it comes to patient care and teaching," Dr. Pandya said.

"She has volunteered at the Agape Clinic for several years and has been there every Saturday that I have worked, even after call, not to mention many other volunteer activities in dermatology and beyond.

"She loves the patients at Agape and also loves teaching other medical students about charting and dermatology. Giving back to the community and educating others are two common threads that are evident when tracking Shadi's career. She is an outstanding student and is sure to be a blessing to many as she transforms into a dermatologist."

Two years ago Dr. Kourosh became the student volunteer coordinator for the clinic.

She also has served as coordinator of the medical center's annual multi-cultural symposium and has coordinated fundraisers for the local Salvation Army through the Student National Medical Association.

Additionally she was president of the Dermatology Interest Group and was the medical student volunteer coordinator for the National Conference on Pemphigus and Pemphigoid Disorders.

Dr. Kourosh described receiving the Award for Excellence in Dermatology as "an unexpected honor and also humbling."

"The award is really a reflection of the exceptional mentors that I have had as a medical student.

"I feel fortunate that the Department of Dermatology is full of good role models who are truly committed to both their patients and students, and I am excited to be staying here for residency."



Dr. Myda Luu

Annelle M. Ahmed, M.D., Women's Health Care Award

By Aline McKenzie

Dr. Myda Luu always wanted to be a doctor – specifically, a pediatrician.

"I wanted a job that could take me anywhere in the world and also effect change," Dr. Luu said.

"I'm also a huge kid at heart," she said. "I'm a balloon artist. I used to work at community carnivals, elementary and middle schools."

Her pediatrics plan stayed with her through her first three years of medical school at UT Southwestern, and though she enjoyed her obstetrics and gynecology rotation, she was still focused on pediatrics.

Until one day when she was working in the emergency room.

"I saw a man I recognized, but I couldn't think of where I'd seen him," she said. "Then I saw the whole family and realized I'd delivered their baby a few months ago."

"It had been a complicated delivery, so I'd spent a lot of time with the mother in the ICU. When I saw her again in the ER, all my attention was on her – how she was doing. I realized then how much I cared about the mother."

Later, a rotation in maternal-fetal medicine solidified her new desire to specialize in obstetrics and gynecology.

Dr. Luu's dedication to her new field is such that she has been awarded the 2009 Annelle M. Ahmed, M.D., Women's Health Care Award. The accolade is given in honor of Dr. Ahmed, a UT Southwestern resident and faculty member who died of breast cancer at age 39.

"Dr. Luu was a very easy choice for the award," said her adviser, Dr. Vanessa Rogers, assistant professor of obstetrics and gynecology. "She's an incredibly caring person with a good heart. She exemplifies the spirit of Dr. Ahmed."

"She treats her patients the way she'd want her own mother or sister to be treated. She cares not only about their medical problems, but also what they're like as people."

Dr. Rogers praised Dr. Luu's combination of empathy and superior ability.

"It's an amazing combination of com-



petence and caring," she said.

Dr. Luu said another incident led her to OB/GYN. "At the end of my rotation, I wondered if that would be the last baby that I ever delivered, and that thought made me sad."

As the daughter of a single mother with four children, Dr. Luu – a graduate of Irving High School – took a slightly different path to medicine than many pre-med majors. She majored in finance at UT Austin, in order to have a background in business that could help her as a doctor.

"I knew you could have any major and still get into medical school, and I wanted to take advantage of UT Austin's excellent business school," she said.

Dr. Luu will perform her residency at Parkland Memorial Hospital.

Dr. Alexis Melton

Kurt Ian Wey, M.D., Pediatrics Award

By Russell Rian

By the time she was in high school, Dr. Alexis Melton was already in a university laboratory conducting research on gene expression.

"I didn't always know I wanted to be a doctor, but I always liked science," said Dr. Melton, a native of Loveland, Colo.

As part of a special high school science class at Cherry Creek High School near Denver, Dr. Melton was studying the transcriptional regulation of prolactin, a pituitary gland hormone, looking for the factors that controlled this tissue-specific hormone. She later worked in the same lab, located at the University of Colorado Health Sciences Center, in the summers during college and at another lab at the University of Colorado at Boulder before coming to UT Southwestern.

One of her mentors, Dr. Arthur Gutierrez-Hartmann, had earned his medical degree at UT Southwestern in 1975, and he recommended the school.

"I liked it," Dr. Melton said. "It was the best combination of excellent medical training and lab work."

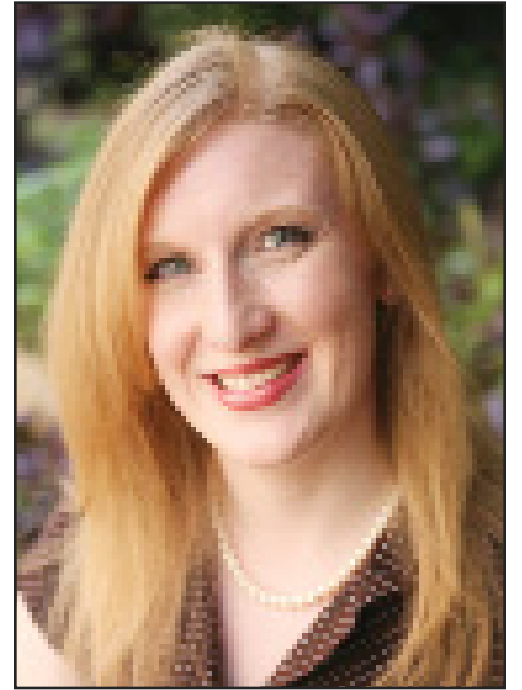
Under UT Southwestern's M.D./Ph.D. program, she continued her biochemistry studies in the lab of Dr. Kristen Lynch, associate professor of biochemistry. The lab team is working to understand the biochemical mechanisms and regulatory networks that control alternative splicing, particularly the role of signal-induced splicing within the mammalian immune system and the regulated splicing of the protein tyrosine phosphatase, CD45.

"The alternative splicing of the CD45 gene ultimately affects how the immune system turns off," Dr. Melton said.

But her passions are not strictly for the lab.

"I really love both research and medicine," she said. "Especially in pediatrics, I love taking care of little kids. It's amazing when you walk in the first time, and there's a sick child who doesn't want to play or interact with you. Then in a couple of weeks, they get better, and you walk in the room, and they are talking to you, playing with you and maybe running down the hallway. It's rewarding to see."

Her enthusiasm for both research and clinical care have earned her the 2009 Kurt Ian Wey, M.D.,



Pediatrics Award, which is given each year along with \$2,500 to a fourth-year medical student in memory of the 1998 UT Southwestern graduate who died in an automobile accident. The award, established by Dr. Wey's family and friends, is given to a student who shows empathy and compassion for sick children and a sense of humor in addition to a significant clinical knowledge.

"Lexi embodies all the qualities one would want in a future pediatric physician-scientist," said Dr. George Lister, chairman of pediatrics. "She has the patience, intellect and dedication to obtain an outstanding education, the passion for the plight of children with cancer and the personal qualities that will create a lasting bond with her patients and drive her to improve their welfare."

Dr. Melton's next step will be a pediatric residency at Children's Hospital of Boston, part of a combined pediatric residency program affiliated with Harvard. She hopes to subspecialize in pediatric hematology/oncology or critical care, and to stay in academic medicine.

Dr. Ashley A. Petersen

**Pediatric Society of Greater Dallas Award
for Excellence in Pediatric Medicine**

By Erin Prather Stafford

Dr. Ashley Petersen has always wanted to work with kids. Even before she decided to go into medicine, the winner of this year's Pediatric Society of Greater Dallas Award for Excellence in Pediatric Medicine knew she loved the dynamics of working with families.

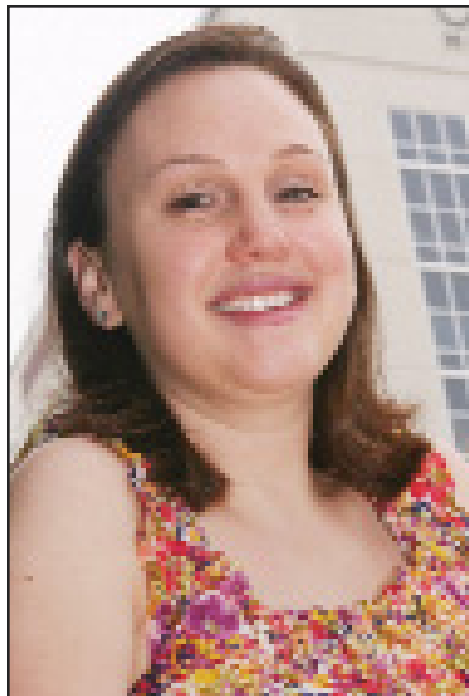
"During my first two years of medical school I was warned that students often change their specialty," Dr. Petersen said. "I tried to keep an open mind as I went through my third-year clerkships and was surprised to discover I enjoyed many of them. However, when I finally did my pediatrics clerkship it reaffirmed that was the best fit for me. I love the patients' variety in ages and watching children grow and develop."

Dr. Petersen is the second recipient of the award, which recognizes an outstanding graduate who embodies the personal character and dedication to serve and advocate for children. Dr. Dorothy Sendelbach, associate professor of pediatrics, said she couldn't think of anyone more deserving.

"Ashley possesses all the qualities any of us would want our pediatrician to have," Dr. Sendelbach said. "Not only is she clinically astute and exceptionally knowledgeable, she is patient, warm, approachable and empathetic."

The Tulsa native got her first taste of medicine while having dinners at St. John Medical Center, where her mother worked as a medical technologist. Later she spent time with her brother during his hospitalization for diabetes. At 13, she signed up as a volunteer and worked in both the neonatal intensive-care unit and on the general pediatrics floor. She volunteered at the hospital for two more summers.

After graduating from the University of Oklahoma with a Bachelor of Science in microbiology, Dr. Petersen worked as a research assistant at the University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center. She began applying to medical schools and considered UT Southwestern at the urging of her college roommate, who was in her first year of medical school.



"She recommended I apply here," Dr. Petersen said. "I enjoyed my interview day here and just had a good feeling about the school. Plus, Dallas provided a change of scenery since I'd always lived in Oklahoma. There were also good job opportunities for my husband, with a reasonable cost of living."

While at UT Southwestern, Dr. Petersen became involved with Bryan's House, a nonprofit that assists children and families affected by HIV and AIDS. Services provided include medically managed daytime and overnight care, on-site nursing care and child development programs. Dr. Petersen and her husband also became parents for the first time, during her fourth year in medical school.

"It is already a blessing to have had the opportunity to train in pediatrics and pursue a career that I love," Dr. Petersen said. "To be honored for doing so is simply extraordinary."

Dr. Andrew Nik

**American Academy of Neurology
Medical Student Prize for Excellence in Neurology**

By Aline McKenzie

Although Dr. Andrew Nik has graduated from UT Southwestern in the 21st century, he cherishes a quote from nearly 400 years ago:

"To explicate the uses of the Brain seems as difficult a task as to paint the Soul, of which it is commonly said, that it understands all things but itself."

This was written in 1664 by Thomas Willis, the British physician considered to be the father of neurology, in his book *The Anatomy of the Brain and Nerves*. For Dr. Nik, it's still applicable.

"The brain is just fascinating," Dr. Nik said. "It's the most complex organ in the human body, and today, over 300 years after Willis, there are new things being discovered all the time."

Dr. Nik's fascination – and his talent – in neurology have led to his being awarded the American Academy of Neurology Medical Student Prize for Excellence in Neurology. This honor, as defined by the American Academy of Neurology, is awarded annually to a graduating medical student "who exemplifies outstanding scientific achievement and clinical acumen in neurology or neuroscience, and outstanding personal qualities of integrity, compassion and leadership."

"Andrew has been an exceptional student in neurology," said Dr. Mark Agostini, assistant professor of neurology. "He received nominations for the AAN award from every attending he worked with, earned straight-A clinical grades during his neurology rotation and scored in the top 12 percent nationally on his neurology National Board exam."

"More importantly, his warmth and caring are evident in every interaction with patients, peers and faculty," Dr. Agostini said. "He has an easygoing manner that, combined with his great enthusiasm for learning, makes it a joy to work with him. We are extremely pleased that Andrew will be staying at UT Southwestern for his neurology residency."

As a child growing up in Dallas, Dr. Nik had no particular medical ambitions. He graduated from Plano schools and earned an undergraduate



degree in biology at the University of Dallas.

He became interested in medicine after volunteer experiences in the health care field, including in the emergency room at Parkland Memorial Hospital.

The decision to pursue neurology came to Dr. Nik during his first year of medical school, when he took the neuroscience course and was fascinated by the study of the brain and nerves. It was finalized in his third-year neurology clerkship.

"I had the opportunity to work with some of the excellent neurology faculty and residents at UT Southwestern, and I got to experience firsthand what neurologists do," Dr. Nik said. "I knew then that it was exactly what I wanted to do."

The interest in the brain and mind has grown in his family – Dr. Nik's younger brother Jason has a bachelor's in psychology and currently is pursuing a master's at UT Dallas.

Dr. Jennifer Coffman

Texas College of Emergency Physicians Award

By Connie Piloto

During her third year of medical school, Dr. Jennifer Coffman gained insight into patient care that can't be acquired in the classroom or during rotations as a medical student.

She became ill with pneumonia, which progressed to a viral myocarditis, requiring hospitalization. The illness set her medical career back for several months, but it taught her much more.

"Now I know exactly how my patients feel. I can relate to wait times and being awakened at 5 a.m. for blood pressure checks while being hospitalized," Dr. Coffman said. "Being sick was a humbling experience. Hopefully, it will make me a better doctor."

Her hospitalization also made her appreciate the hard work of the health care staff.

Her dedication and accomplishments as a medical student in her chosen specialty helped her win the 2009 Texas College of Emergency Physicians Award.

"Nurses and ancillary staff do a ton of work," she said. "I have a great appreciation for what they do."

Dr. Coffman always had an affinity for science and graduated with a degree in biology from Texas Christian University.

During her undergraduate years, she volunteered at Cook Children's Hospital in Fort Worth and decided she would pursue a career in medicine.

"I enjoy science and have a desire to help people," Dr. Coffman said. "Medicine is a natural combination for both of those."

At UT Southwestern, Dr. Coffman volunteered at The Monday Clinic, where medical students under the supervision of faculty members and other physicians see patients with mild illnesses at a community outreach center near campus.

During her medical school rotations, Dr. Coffman said, she found emergency medicine the most challenging and interesting.

"Emergency medicine is a field that requires physicians to use their entire knowledge base daily and see a wide range of cases," Dr. Coffman said.

Dr. Lynn Roppolo, assistant professor of emergency medicine, supervised Dr. Coffman during her emergency medicine rotations at Parkland Memorial Hospital.

"What was most impressive to me was her perseverance and dedication," Dr. Roppolo said. "Dr. Coffman did a second rotation with us while she was pregnant and close to her due date, and she did amazingly well. She has a great attitude, worked hard and had excellent people skills."

Dr. Coffman's medical school career was also highlighted by two other important life events – she got married in 2007 to her husband, Heath, and she had a baby during her final year of medical school. Her son, Sawyer, is 7 months old.

Dr. Coffman, 27, who grew up in Amarillo, is joining the emergency medicine residency program at UT Southwestern and will work at Parkland.

"I enjoyed working at Parkland as a medical student, and I'm happy that's where I will do my residency," Dr. Coffman said. "I really enjoy working with the population that it serves."



Dr. Geoffrey Chow: Rolland C. Reynolds Pathology Award



By LaKisha Ladson

During his first year of medical school, Dr. Geoffrey Chow believed something was missing.

"I thought that one of the primary things you should be doing in medical school was to learn how to take care of patients," he said.

Sensing an opportunity to improve medical care for an underserved population, Dr. Chow helped create an avenue for students to learn those clinical skills.

"He decided with a group of other students to create The Monday Clinic," said Dr. James Wagner, associate dean for student affairs. "This is a free clinic for the underserved that is run by medical students and staffed by UT Southwestern [and other] physicians in partnership with North Dallas Shared Ministries."

"I was struck by Geoffrey's vision, calm persistence and dedication to this project. He even took time out of his busy curriculum to travel with a classmate, Josh Langston, and me to Stanford University to learn about their model for free clinics."

"The Monday Clinic is now in its fourth year and is growing because of continued student leadership that shares Geoffrey's characteristics of vision, persistence and dedication. I am inspired by them all, and Geoffrey gets credit for being a key instigator of this wildly successful and needed service to the community."

During medical school, Dr. Chow also helped organize numerous health fairs for underserved children and families throughout the state.

He is this year's recipient of the Rolland C. Reynolds

Pathology Award, named after the well-loved pathology professor who was known for his sincere interest in his fellow man and for his desire to make the world a better place. The Reynolds Award includes \$1,500.

Dr. Chow, who graduated from Westfield High School in the Houston suburb of Spring, decided to pursue a career in medicine through a process of self-discovery. Adept at science and math, the Rice University graduate first considered becoming an engineer. After eliminating many possibilities, he majored in chemistry, and his graduate choices came down to business or medicine.

From a middle-school presentation on viruses, to a fascination with bioterrorism and the maintenance of health, medicine became the obvious choice.

"I realized that a lot of my motivations would fit with many of the things you could do in medicine," he said.

Dr. Chow next will serve a general surgery residency at Northwestern University's McGaw Medical Center in Chicago. His goal is to become a pediatric craniofacial surgeon.

"I'm enamored by the idea of setting up a charity to help treat and care for children around the world who have a variety of craniofacial problems but who have no access to any sort of care," he said.

In his spare time, Dr. Chow enjoys running marathons, playing tennis, snowboarding, reading, lifting weights, conversing with friends and traveling.

Dr. Georgia Hay

R. Michael Ragsdale, M.D., Outstanding Graduate Award in Family Medicine

By Kristen Holland Shear

Every child has a dream.

Dr. Georgia Hay's was to follow her maternal aunt's footsteps and become a family practice physician.

Two decades later, the 26-year-old native Texan is almost there. Residency is the only thing left for Dr. Hay to complete before she can start working toward her long-term goal of joining a group practice in a rural Texas community.

Dr. Hay's dedication to family medicine helped her earn the 2009 R. Michael Ragsdale, M.D., Outstanding Graduate Award in Family Medicine.

The award, given annually to an outstanding graduate student in family practice, was created in the memory of a Dallas family physician who served as a preceptor to many UT Southwestern students. It includes a \$500 scholarship from the Dallas chapter of the Texas Academy of Family Physicians Foundation.

Dr. Hay, who lives in Arlington

with her husband, Nick, said that watching her aunt through the years has taught her a lot about practicing medicine.

"The most important things I've learned from her are to always listen to your patients and never stop learning," said Dr. Hay, who graduated from Baylor University and grew up in West, a small town just north of Waco.

She also learned a lot by watching how different medical professionals interacted with ill family members, such as her grandfather, who died in July 1995 as a result of multiple myeloma, a cancer of plasma cells.

"Seeing how different people in the health care arena interacted with my family members, both good and bad, gave me a better idea about how I want to practice medicine," she said.

Dr. Hay's aptitude for the profession wasn't lost on the attending physicians she worked with while at UT Southwestern. Dr. Jennifer

Walsh, assistant professor of pediatrics and internal medicine, said Dr. Hay was a pleasure to work with during her rotation in inpatient pediatric services at Children's Medical Center Dallas.

"Dr. Hay is very bright, but also showed great dedication to her patients and exceptional maturity, each of which will make her an outstanding physician," said Dr. Walsh, attending physician for the adolescent and young adult team at Children's.

Dr. Hay will complete her residency in family medicine at Fort Worth's John Peter Smith Hospital. She said her goal as a resident is to garner a broad base of medical knowledge and possibly get a clearer idea what specialty she'd like to tailor her own practice around.

"I'm excited to continue my training at another county hospital," Dr. Hay said. "I've enjoyed my time at Parkland and look forward to continuing to work in that setting."



Dr. Cason Pierce

Dr. Richard Mays Smith Award in Internal Medicine

By Katherine Morales

Coming from a family with ties to medicine and to the Dallas area primed Dr. Cason Pierce for a career that seemed destined to begin at UT Southwestern.

Dr. Pierce's father, Dr. Rush Pierce Jr., is a physician in their hometown of Amarillo, and his son became accustomed at an early age to seeing the rigors of the medical profession. When it came time for him to go to college, he knew he probably would end up in Dallas.

"We have a long family tradition of going to Southern Methodist University, and I got an academic scholarship there, so it worked out perfectly," the younger Dr. Pierce said.

He decided to take courses in math and science, but zeroed in on a field of study called development economics, which focuses on economic policies of lower-income countries. The field, however, didn't offer him the kind of person-to-person interaction he wanted.

"I just felt it would be too removed from people," he said. "I figured I could do the same kind of work in medicine – larger-scale community projects and research."

After being accepted to UT Southwestern, where his grandfather Dr. Rush Pierce received his medical degree in 1952, Dr. Pierce was drawn to internal medicine during his clinical rotations in his third and fourth years of medical school.

Dr. Pierce has earned the 2009 Dr. Richard Mays Smith Award in Internal Medicine, given to a graduating medical student who excels academically during clinical rotations or exhibits an interest in and compassion for patients.

The award honors Dr. Smith, who spent 45 years as an internal medicine physician, including his career as associate professor of internal medicine at UT Southwestern before his death in 1975. It includes a \$1,000 prize.

"I'm a generalist by nature and internal medicine encompasses both the medical and non-medical dynamics of patient care," Dr. Pierce said. "It's a broad field."

His compassion for patients extended beyond clinics in Dallas during his fourth year.

"I felt strongly that I wanted to experience



medicine in a different health care setting," he said.

Dr. Pierce chose a surgical rotation in India and a clinical fellowship in South Africa, which focused on HIV and AIDS. After graduation, he will begin his internship at the University of California, San Francisco, School of Medicine, where his father earned his medical degree.

"I worked with Cason for four weeks during his third-year internal medicine rotation as his attending, and I thought he was intelligent, understood his patients' concerns and problems, and was efficient in solving these problems," said Dr. Hari Raja, associate professor of internal medicine. "I think that he embodies many of the qualities that an internist needs to have in today's environment. He's a good listener; he has good interpersonal skills; and he has a strong interest in the doctor/patient relationship."

For his part, Dr. Pierce said he was extremely flattered to receive the scholarship.

"UT Southwestern has a tremendous internal medicine program, so for me, this was a very great honor," he said.

Dr. Heather Mattick

Southwestern Gynecologic Assembly Award

By Aline McKenzie

Growing up in Las Vegas, Dr. Heather Mattick was always interested in becoming a doctor.

"From childhood, I was really interested in how the body works," she said. "I liked the science, and I liked the interpersonal relationships inherent in medicine."

Dr. Mattick used high school as an opportunity to pursue science courses, while doing volunteer work and joining a group that taught students what it's like to practice medicine.

The daughter of a Methodist minister, she attended Southern Methodist University, majoring in biology. While in Dallas, she became familiar with UT Southwestern's reputation.

Dr. Mattick spent a lot of time preparing for medical school, but when she arrived on campus she hadn't yet settled on a specialty. During her second year, she became intrigued by a lecture on women's health. And in her third year, she found that she enjoyed surgery.

"Obstetrics and gynecology ended up being the perfect mix of surgery and primary care with a focus on women's health," Dr. Mattick said. "And it becomes more and more complex as I delve into it. I like reading research papers and learning as much as I can."

Her interests have combined so well that Dr. Mattick has been awarded the 2009 Southwestern Gynecologic Assembly Award. The award was established in 2003 to recognize the outstanding UT Southwestern student entering the field of obstetrics and gynecology.

"A lot of people think that OB/GYN is just delivering babies, but it's very challenging from a medical viewpoint," she said.

Dr. Mattick particularly enjoyed handling complex cases that sometimes carried ethical dilemmas, such as whether a baby with a life-threatening condition would be better off with a Caesarean delivery at a very premature stage or being carried further through the pregnancy.

"I was also given the opportunity to manage high-risk pregnancies such as rare monochorionic-monoamniotic twins and fetuses afflicted



with parvovirus," she said.

Monochorionic-monoamniotic, or "MoMo," twins share an amniotic sac, unlike the vast majority of twins who develop in separate sacs.

"Dr. Mattick's performance and abilities were at the level of a first-year house officer, especially remarkable at the beginning of her fourth year," said Dr. Brian Casey, associate professor of obstetrics and gynecology. "I was impressed with her drive and her intellectual curiosity. Her grasp of the specialty was superior."

Dr. Mattick will continue her studies at the University of Colorado at Denver, where she will perform her residency.

Her mother, Carla Yule, works in administration for an organ donation program, but Dr. Mattick is the first in the family to become a doctor.

Dr. Lisa Gilbert and Dr. Jennifer Cohen

William F. Ross, M.D., Scholarship Award in Family Medicine

By Kristen Holland Shear

Dr. Jennifer Cohen and Dr. Lisa Gilbert have been named the recipients of this year's William F. Ross, M.D., Scholarship Award in Family Medicine.

The award, given to a graduating student, includes a \$1,000 scholarship by the Dallas chapter of the Texas Academy of Family Physicians Foundation. It is named for the chairman of family and community medicine at UT Southwestern from 1984 to 1993.

Dr. Dan Sepdham, assistant professor of family and community medicine and faculty adviser for the family medicine interest group, said Drs. Cohen and Gilbert have been instrumental to the interest group's success this year.

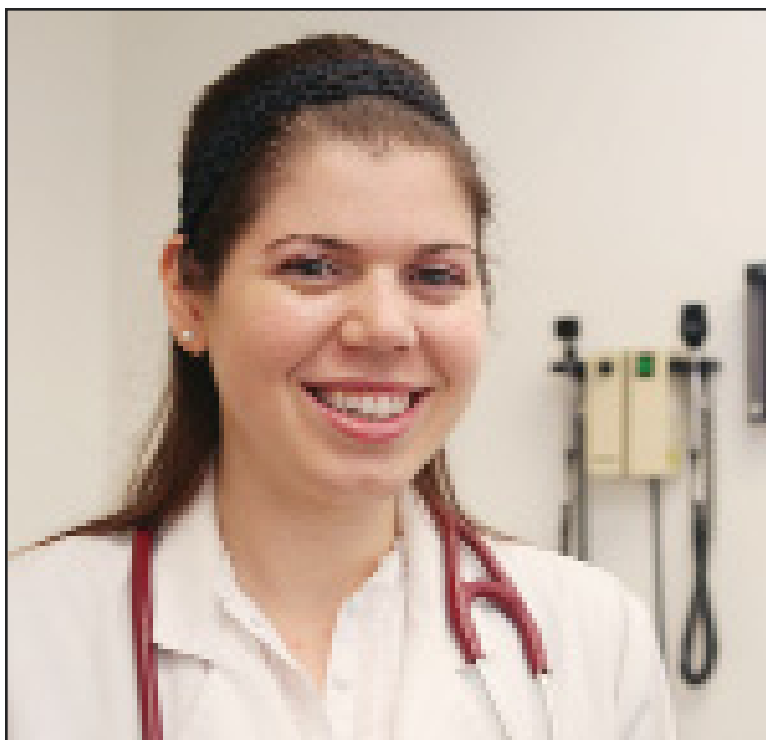
"Through their leadership, the family medicine group established a new blog site for students interested in family medicine, and many of the events would not have taken place without their hard work behind the scenes," Dr. Sepdham said. "Among the student body this year, these two ladies were the face of family medicine."

Dr. Jennifer Cohen

Dr. Cohen always wanted a job where she could interact with people, but the exact career eluded her. As an undergraduate, she studied cultural anthropology at Bryn Mawr College in southeastern Pennsylvania and spent her summers working at a program for children with autism.

The Terrell native considered neuropsychiatry but found that the psychiatric approach didn't provide the answers she was searching for. Enter family medicine.

"I like that family medicine excludes nothing and no one," Dr. Cohen said.



Dr. Lisa Gilbert

She hopes eventually to split her time between running her own practice in the United States and working abroad. Before medical school, she spent a year working for a non-governmental organization in Zambia that conducted AIDS research and provided antiretrovirals.

"In Zambia, you don't have time to fill out mountains of paperwork or worry about all the philosophical debates that we have here," she said. "Every day is about trying to heal the people in front of you who are really sick – can you help them or can't you?"

Dr. Cohen will serve her family medicine residency at Columbia Presbyterian Hospital in New York. She said her goal as a resident is to broaden

her medical knowledge.

"Four years to learn everything there is to medicine is just not enough," she said.

Dr. Lisa Gilbert

The daughter of Christian missionaries, Dr. Gilbert was born in Springfield, Mo., but grew up in Kenya and Togo. She attended Missouri State University and planned to pursue a career in infectious disease research. But early in her college career, she began questioning whether it was the right fit.

Rather than continue her studies at Missouri State, Dr. Gilbert took a year off and joined her parents in South Africa, where she volunteered at an



Dr. Jennifer Cohen

HIV/AIDS orphanage.

"It was a tremendous year for me and the reason I decided to go into medicine," she said.

While at UT Southwestern, Dr. Gilbert took part in four medical mission trips to Mexico and served as co-president of the Family Medicine Interest Group. She also volunteered at North Dallas Shared Ministries' The Monday Clinic and spent several months exploring medicine in India and South Africa.

Dr. Gilbert said she has had several mentors in medicine, but considers her parents her mentors in life. Marvin and Rosie Gilbert currently serve at the Cape Theological Seminary in Cape Town, South Africa.

"They have shown me that a life well lived is a life that is given in service to God and to others," she said. "I deeply respect their guidance, wisdom and love, which have saved me from many mistakes and allowed me to become the woman I was meant to be."

Dr. Gilbert, who will serve her family medicine residency at Via Christi in Wichita, Kan., said her experiences abroad have taught her that delivering good health care is a small part of healing.

"True healing comes from radical changes in individuals as well as society. The needs I see are larger than I can meet, but I know that I am called to make a difference to the people around me," she said.

Dr. Erin MacDonald Owens

Society for Academic Emergency Medicine Award and Endocrine Society Medical Student Achievement Award

By Connie Piloto

Early in her undergraduate college career, Dr. Erin MacDonald Owens knew she wanted to pursue a career in science.

And she never wavered from that goal.

"I decided to pursue a career in medicine for the same reason that most people do it: I wanted to have an impact on people's lives and care for people," Dr. Owens said. "I also thought it would be challenging both intellectually and emotionally."

Her dedication to patient care helped her to earn the 2009 Society for Academic Emergency Medicine Award, and her studies in basic research led to her being honored with the 2009 Endocrine Society Medical Student Achievement Award.

The Endocrine Society gives the award each year to a medical student who has done significant research in the area of endocrinology.

As Dr. Owens pursued her undergraduate degree in biochemistry at Southern Methodist University, she became acquainted with UT Southwestern. She spent two undergraduate summers working in the laboratory of Dr. Carole Mendelson, professor of biochemistry and obstetrics and gynecology.

In Dr. Mendelson's lab, Dr. Owens studied one component in a cascade of chemical events leading to the mother's initiation of labor. She presented her findings at the Medical Student

Research Forum during her first year of medical school.

As she began her medical rotations she encountered a problem – every medical specialty appealed to her.

"I enjoyed every one of them," Dr. Owens said.

She decided to specialize in emergency medicine because it will allow her to become a mini-specialist in a broad array of medical issues.

"Emergency medicine gives you the ability to care for adults as well as children, to work on trauma as well as general medicine," Dr. Owens said. "Every day is different."

Dr. Joseph Martinez, associate professor of emergency medicine, supervised Dr. Owens during her emergency medicine rotations at Parkland Memorial Hospital.

"After completing a couple of shifts, Erin was eager to start seeing patients and to take an active role in their care," Dr. Martinez said. "She didn't want to wait until her residency to start learning her specialty – she was ready to start right then. She is meticulous."

Dr. Owens, 25, grew up in Lubbock and graduated from The Colony High School, in the Dallas area. She will soon be making another move as she joins the emergency medicine residency program at the Indiana University School of Medicine in Indianapolis.

A newlywed, Dr. Owens and her husband, Jeff, have purchased a home there and will move shortly after graduation.



Dr. Mark Valasek: Vernie A. Stembridge, M.D., Scholarship Award in Pathology



By LaKisha Ladson

Dr. Mark Valasek's study of pathology moved him to write. The latter part of his poem, "That Blessed Pathology," reads:

*Shall we not desire to see, to learn truths deep,
To find answers for things hidden we keep
Locked neatly inside every sinew and bone,
And every cell never working alone?
Only then we will tease
Away those conspiring elements of disease.
It will be a modern grave-robbing both molecular and precise
To apprehend the anatomy of disease, death, and life.*

*But are we treading across ugly boundaries
By finding beauty in the midst of disease?
Surely not, if only we can remember the story the sick must tell
Of death and dying to the better and well.
After all, we can never stain
The lonely fibers of pain,
But may listen to its stories and never forget;
The next time this happens we will understand more yet.
We will work to overcome illness with tireless might
As we collaborate to learn, remember, and fight.*

*Thus, we must unabashedly learn to cure with care,
To master the dichotomy of medicine – science and people with their
Hopes and community.
Then together we can right the wrongs of that blessed pathology.*

Dr. Valasek is the recipient of the Vernie A. Stembridge, M.D., Scholarship Award in Pathology, named for the former pathology chair who died in 2000. Friends and colleagues of Dr. Stembridge endowed a scholarship in his name, an award that includes \$1,500 and is given to the most outstanding graduating medical student

whose performance in the sophomore pathology course was exemplary and who is interested in pursuing a career in pathology.

"Dr. Valasek is an exceptional physician-scientist, and I was very fortunate to have him perform his doctoral research in my laboratory," said Dr. Joyce Repa, assistant professor of physiology and internal medicine. "Mark has a natural curiosity, great observational skills and a superb intellect, and he used this wonderful skill set to explore intestinal lipid physiology with studies that ranged from biochemical and cell-culture experiments to whole animal metabolic flux analyses. His participation in the Medical Scientist Training Program and his selection to the Pharmacology Training Grant provided an outstanding environment for his training and allowed him to relate our basic research findings to their relevance in human biology and disease."

Dr. Valasek paid tribute to the gift's namesake: "I understand that Dr. Stembridge was one of those rare individuals who was able to change for the better any thing or person he touched. He was truly a pioneer. As the first person in my family to go to medical school, I see myself as a bit of a pioneer, and I'd like to be a pioneer in advancing the science of pathology as well."

"I hope that receiving this award will help me remember in whose footsteps I'm following and try to continue down that road."

Dr. Valasek is also interested in making pathology more accessible to students in the UT Southwestern School of Health Professions by writing a pathology textbook.

Dr. Valasek went to high school in Cincinnati and earned his undergraduate degree from Texas A&M University. He will begin his residency at the University of Washington in Seattle with the goal of becoming a gastrointestinal pathologist.

In addition to writing poems, Dr. Valasek enjoys playing basketball, reading and spending time with his wife, Mandy, and their children, Ruby, Andrew and Pearl.

Dr. Jadon Webb

North Texas Society of Psychiatric Physicians Award for Outstanding Medical Student in Psychiatry

By LaKisha Ladson

Dr. Jadon Webb got his yearning for medicine while living in Jakarta, Indonesia.

"I had a chance to see life without good health care," he said. "People around us had virtually nothing."

That experience led him to medical school, where he decided on a career in psychiatry.

"I found that talking with and getting to know patients was my favorite part of medical school," he said. "On the research front, I feel like psychiatry is an open frontier. It's relatively unexplored from a research perspective."

Dr. Webb is the recipient of this year's North Texas Society of Psychiatric Physicians Award for Outstanding Medical Student in Psychiatry.

"Jadon brings a rare combination of research success and clinical talent to the table. Along with his doctoral neuroscience research, Jadon has also recently branched out into psychiatric epidemiology," said Dr. Adam Brenner, director of medical student education in psychiatry.

After attending junior high school and some high school in Indonesia, where his father worked for an oil company, Dr. Webb moved with his family to Houston, where he finished the curriculum at age 16. He then attended junior college until turning 18, when he transferred to Texas A&M University.

"Junior college was definitely scary at first," Dr. Webb said about going to college with nontraditional students who were much older. "But it was a great learning experience and a chance

to step out of my comfort zone and again get to know people who were different from me."

In Houston, Dr. Webb saw the latest in medical technology and how the science behind treatment worked.

"I was really amazed at seeing the power of what it could do," he said.

That was one of the reasons he decided to attend UT Southwestern.

"I saw the research prowess and was impressed by the ability of UT Southwestern to get good research done, and impressed by the MSTP [Medical Scientist Training Program, in which graduates earn medical and doctoral degrees concurrently] and thought this was a good place to grow in a research and medical direction," he said.

During his free time in medical school, Dr. Webb wrote a grant proposal and is now principal investigator of a study that investigates drug use and stress-coping mechanisms of medical school students.

Long term, Dr. Webb hopes to become a child and adolescent psychiatrist, doing research on affective disorders such as depression and anxiety. He will do his residency at UT Southwestern.

"We're delighted that he'll be bringing his enthusiasm, warmth and intellectual gifts to our own UT Southwestern psychiatry residency in July," Dr. Brenner said.

Dr. Webb enjoys mountain biking and spending time with his wife, Salem; 11-month-old son, Eli; and dogs, Daisy and Sweetpea.



Dr. Laura Staub and Dr. Laura Ryan: Pepper Jenkins Award in Anesthesiology and Pain Management

By Katherine Morales

Dr. Laura Staub and Dr. Laura Ryan have a few things in common.

Both were drawn to anesthesiology for its combination of cardiovascular physiology, pharmacology and patient interaction. Both are pursuing residencies in anesthesiology and both have earned the 2009 Pepper Jenkins Award in Anesthesiology and Pain Management.

Dr. Laura Staub

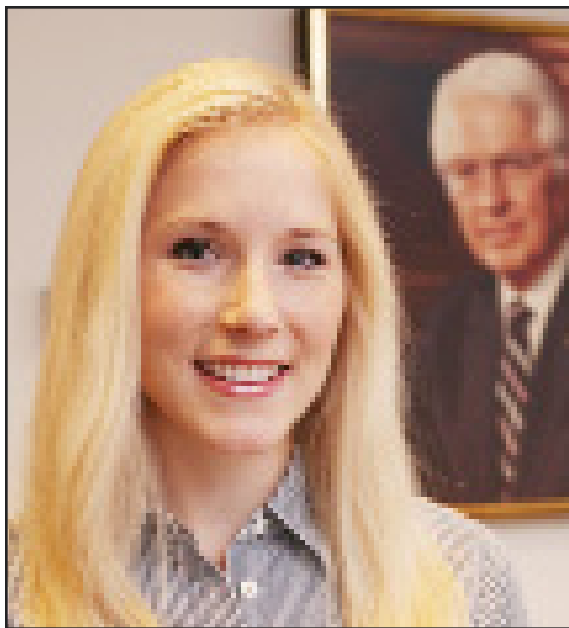
Dr. Staub didn't have to go far to come to UT Southwestern. She grew up in Dallas and attended Greenhill School for 15 years. But early on, she said, she had no desire to become a physician.

"I thought I would pursue a career in law," she said. "Then one day during my senior year of high school, my boyfriend asked me why I always watched surgery on the Discovery Health Channel after school."

Dr. Staub said a light bulb went off in her head, and she decided to pursue a career in medicine. She also ended up marrying that high school boyfriend, fellow UT Southwestern medical student Dr. Blake Staub, who is also graduating.

During her third and fourth years of medical school, Dr. Laura Staub said she became interested in anesthesiology for its unique combination of medicine.

"There is so much basic science in anesthesiology, and I love how the



Dr. Laura Staub

science melds with patient care," she said. "I really enjoy critical care as well, so anesthesia was the perfect fit for me."

During one of her clinical rotations, Dr. Staub said, she met a particularly inspirational patient who reinforced the best experiences a physician can hope for when caring for the critically ill.

"I helped take care of a patient who had battled a rare genetic blood disorder," Dr. Staub said. "The patient was only 21 and went into cardiac arrest at least twice. But after receiving

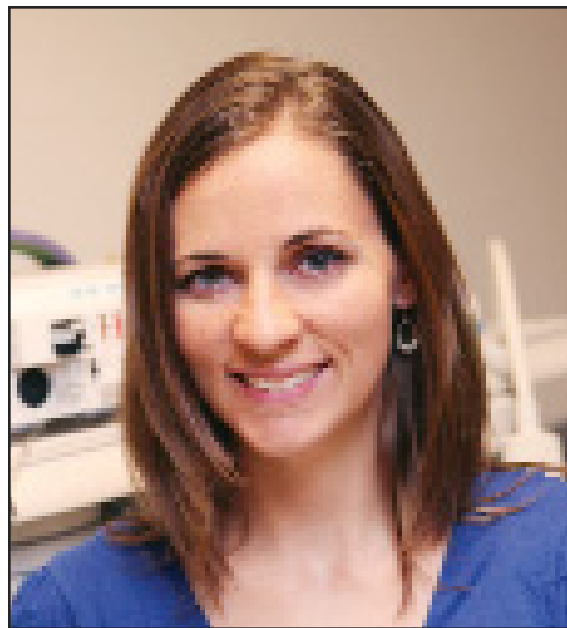
a left ventricular assist device, the patient managed to recuperate and be discharged, and seeing the patient leave the hospital was incredibly rewarding."

Dr. Staub will perform her residency at Baylor College of Medicine in Houston, where her sister Carolyn is a third-year surgery resident.

Dr. Laura Ryan

Dr. Ryan, on the other hand, came from Houston to Dallas to attend medical school, fulfilling a lifelong dream to become a physician.

"This was something I wanted to do as long as I could remember," she said.



Dr. Laura Ryan

"There were no other doctors in my family; I just always did well in science and was interested in medicine."

After finishing high school, Dr. Ryan went to Brigham Young University in Provo, Utah. There, she finished her pre-med studies and fell in love with snowboarding and her future husband, Eric.

The two returned to Texas and during her clinical rotations, she felt that anesthesia would not be terribly interesting to her. She was happily incorrect.

"I really don't know what I was

expecting when I started my rotation, but I loved the acute-level care and how the specialty implemented other things I was interested in, like cardiovascular physiology," Dr. Ryan said. "I also got along really well with other anesthesiology residents and faculty."

In keeping with her own personality, she said she also liked how calm all the doctors remained during very stressful situations.

"I think for patients, anesthesia can be one of the scariest things," she said. "But that's why I like it. It's a great balance between patient interaction and medicine."

Dr. Ryan will stay at UT Southwestern for her anesthesiology residency – a perfect fit considering her husband works in town and they recently bought a house in Irving.

Dr. Charles Whitten, chairman of the Department of Anesthesiology, said both doctors exemplify all of the outstanding characteristics of the award's namesake, the late Dr. Jenkins.

Dr. Jenkins established the anesthesiology department at UT Southwestern and served as its chairman from 1948 to 1981. The award includes a \$500 stipend.

"They both performed admirably on the general anesthesia rotation and both excelled in the elective rotation that we have," Dr. Whitten said. "Each of the faculty who interacted with both doctors thought they were extraordinary and would make talented and successful future anesthesiologists."

UT SOUTHWESTERN GRADUATE SCHOOL OF BIOMEDICAL SCIENCES CANDIDATES FOR DEGREES

Doctoral graduates, August 2008

Biological Chemistry

Chase Tanner Archer
Nicola Catherine Reading

Biomedical Engineering

Priya Ravikummar

Cell Regulation

Kakajan Komurov

Clinical Psychology

Julie Fields
Rachael Renee Phillips
Sally Ferdon Long
Vanessa Renee Salazar

Genetics and Development

Gwanghyun Jung
Yuri Kim
Joshua Fuller Ransom
Jayme Nicole Kosarek Stancel

Immunology

Kimberly J. Brooks

Andrei Marconescu

Integrative Biology

Asligul Yalcin-Chin
Jen-Chieh Chuang
Samvit Tandan
Ying Chen

Molecular Biophysics

Jeongmi Lee

Molecular Microbiology

Traci L. Kinkel

Neuroscience

Wen-Pin Chang
Hongmei Li

Tzu-Ming Wang

Jing Zhou

Tong Zang

Master of Science, August 2008

Molecular Biophysics

Daeho Lee

Genetics and Development

Gokalp Celik
Gregory Scott Olson

Neuroscience

Kalisa Galina Myers

Radiological Sciences

Yi Guo

Rehabilitation Counseling

Psychology

Alexander Douglas Simmons
Martin C. Vega

Master of Arts, August 2008

Biomedical Communications

Brenda Harrison McArthur

Doctoral graduates, December 2008

Biological Chemistry

Feng Jiang

Biomedical Engineering

Elvin Blanco

Xiufeng Li

Chiang Hong Tan

Cell Regulation

Mark Chen

Tzuling Cheng

Daryl L. Goad

Shondra Pruett-Miller

Chunli Shao

Tingwan Sun

Clinical Psychology

Todd Wilson Dunn
Kimberly Dayle Roaten

Genetics and Development

Swati Choudhary

Kimberly Rene Cordes

Chanhee Kang

Shaila Rajni Kotadia

Heng-Chi Lee

Krista Ann Matthews

Malia Beth Potts

Rita Roupen Sulahian

Immunology

Ann Davis

Paula Ann Guidry

Noredia Ojogun

Integrative Biology

Kristen Elizabeth Evaul

Hua Huang

Molecular Biophysics

Randall Beane

Molecular Microbiology

Andrea Kaup Erickson

Neuroscience

Edward Clifton Hurlock

Yun Li

Lu Lin

Michele Ann Noonan

Brad Erich Pfeiffer

Joseph Richard Trinko

Catherine Wasser

Master of Science, December 2008

Genetics and Development

Xin Zhang

Clinical Sciences

Heidi Tewich Jacobe, M.D.

Master of Arts, December 2008

Biomedical Communications

Aimee Cammilleri

Jennifer Leigh Hulsey

Lindsay Oksenberg

Doctoral graduates, June 2009

Biological Chemistry

Alexis Allyson Melton (MSTP)

Biomedical Engineering

Yong Wang

Cell Regulation

Christian Gocke (MSTP)

Arif Jivan

Yu-Chi Juang

Lillian Susanna Kuo

Yuntao Mao

Brent Kevin Presley (MSTP)

Jing Yang

Clinical Psychology

Charlotte Louise Haley

Michelle Rima Kandalaf

Genetics and Development

Amy Marie Archer (MSTP)

Christopher Parks Dravis

Wendy Joy French

Ozgur Karakuzu

Melissa Ann O'Neal

Abdullah El-Abd Shaito

Wenwen Zeng

Immunology

Elizabeth Cameron

Jason Mendoza

Hilario J. Ramos

Integrative Biology

Lina Fouad Abi-Mosleh

Irena Masiulis Bowen

Inik Chang

El Hadji Mamadou Dioum

Denise Marie O'Donnell

Ramirez

Anne Louise Reuter

Lane J. Jaekle-Santos

Paul Tannous (MSTP)

Mark Andrew Valasek (MSTP)

Molecular Biophysics

Amer Alam

Najeeb Halabi

Christopher Larson (MSTP)

Karen Adell Lewis

Prashant Mishra (MSTP)

Katherine Elizabeth Suel

Molecular Microbiology

Chris Ayers

Lacey Bingham-Ramos

Dara Lesley Burdette

Cynthia Johnson (MSTP)

Stephanie Nicole Joslin

Brian Keller (MSTP)

Melanie Leann Yarbrough

Neuroscience

Amy Arguello

Ammar Hawasli (MSTP)

Ki Woo Kim

Leah Schaal Leverich

Omar Lloyd Nelson

Baochan Nguyen (MSTP)

Diana Lynn Simmons

Jadon R. Webb (MSTP)

Master of Science, June 2009

Rehabilitation Counseling

Psychology

David Austin Denney

Jacqueline Whitney Rosckes

Clinical Sciences

Anna Rachel Brandon, Ph.D.

Ronald Gene Hall, Pharm.D.

Uzma Fatima Mehdi, M.D.

Adam Howard Miller, M.D.,

M.S.

Shalini Mukherjee, Ph.D.

María Angélica Ramos-Román,

M.D.

Master of Arts, June 2009

Biomedical Communications

Thomas Jeffery Fels

Jessica Lynn Yeager (awarded

posthumously)

Dr. Amy Mellgren Archer: Eliot Goldings Award in Rheumatology

By Russell Rian

While Dr. Amy Mellgren Archer was in high school, her grandmother was hospitalized. So the teen watched as neurologists reviewed her grandmother's case and debated what to do.

"One of the doctors was a really good communicator and helped me understand what was going on at the time," she recalled. "I realized then how much the way you do things as well as what you do can make a difference.

"Also, growing up my uncle was quadriplegic, and meeting the different physicians and seeing how they interacted with him and helped him was an inspiration for me."

Those early lessons remained with her as she traversed medical school at UT Southwestern to graduate with an M.D. and a Ph.D.

In addition to those accomplishments, Dr. Archer's care, concern and thoroughness were instrumental in her selection for the Eliot Goldings Award in Rheumatology, given to the outstanding student in rheumatology.

The award, which includes \$1,000, honors Dr. Goldings, a faculty member in the division of rheumatic diseases who died in 1988 at age 40. Dr. Goldings had joined the division in 1978 and

distinguished himself as a scholar, researcher and physician.

"Amy is an extremely hard-working and inquisitive student," said Dr. David Karp, associate professor of internal medicine and chief of rheumatic diseases, who holds the Harold C. Simmons Chair in Arthritis Research. "Since we didn't have a medical resident on the consult service when she was with us, both the fellows and I appreciated how thoroughly and efficiently she managed her patients."

Dr. Archer said she particularly enjoys the patient interaction, a love taught to her by her mother, a nurse.

"I love the relationships that I have with the patients," she said. "I like being able to communicate with the patients and help them on multiple levels. I may not always be able to cure whatever they have but I can hopefully make the process easier and more understandable."

Dr. Archer grew up in Mahtomedi, Minn., a suburb of St. Paul, and graduated from Wellesley College in Massachusetts, where she earned her bachelor's degree in biochemistry, with a minor in economics. At the start, she wasn't certain which would win out.

"I was interested in science," she said. "I enjoy

the thought processes and questions in science. In terms of my interest in economics, I originally thought I wouldn't like it, but wound up loving how they look at things. I found it very similar to the scientific viewpoint."

But by her third year, her passion for science had won out, and she was wooed to UT Southwestern after a presentation about the M.D./Ph.D. program.

"I came out to interview and loved the people and their philosophy," she said.

Once at UT Southwestern, she studied coronary vascular smooth muscle cells and how platelet-derived growth factor receptor beta affected their development. She did her Ph.D. work in the laboratory of Dr. Michelle Tallquist, associate professor of molecular biology. The lab is trying to unravel the key signaling molecules in development to define the pathways that become disrupted in human birth defects and disease.

Dr. Archer, who married in May, met her husband while playing on a graduate student-organized soccer team. Dr. Chase Archer, a 2008 graduate of UT Southwestern, has been doing postdoctoral work at UT Southwestern in biochemistry.

The couple are now headed to St. Louis, where



Dr. Amy Archer will do her residency at Washington University. She hopes to do a fellowship in rheumatology afterward.

Dr. Karp, who also trained at Washington University, said he is confident she will do well there: "They are getting an excellent house officer in Amy."