

Family & Community MEDICINE

Winter 2018



Growing up on a cattle farm near the Lake Ozark, MO, area, LUKE STEPHENS developed a farmer's mentality.

"You don't clock in or out on a farm; the only time clock you have is the sun. If you can't get the job done while there's sunlight, then you do it with a lantern ... and that ain't fun!" Luke says with a grin.

His tireless work ethic, can-do attitude, and willingness to help others make

LUKE STEPHENS

well suited for the role and responsibilities of a rural family physician.

"I grew up in Stoutland (POP 200), and the only doctor I knew was our family doc," Luke says. "For me, there was just one kind of 'doctor,' and that was a family physician who saw everyone for everything."

A graduate of Iberia High School, Luke had his first experience with city life ... away from his family, friends, farm and cattle ... when he moved to Springfield to attend Missouri State University.

"I was pretty uncertain about what I was going to do after high school," says Luke. "But early in college, I was chosen to be a Bryant Scholar. This was huge for me. In fact, if not for that program, I doubt I'd be a physician today."

The University of Missouri (MU) Bryant Scholars Program was developed to encourage young people from rural backgrounds to pursue medical careers. As a Bryant Scholar, Luke was pre-admitted in MU's School of Medicine, so after college, he headed to Columbia.

Opportunities to learn rural medicine continue during medical school for Bryant Scholars. After his first year, Luke went back home to do a summer preceptorship with Barton Warren, the family doctor who took care of him throughout his childhood.

"Dr. Warren was an incredible role model who opened my eyes to the rewards of rural medicine. After spending six weeks with him in Richland, I knew that rural was my natural environment. Connecting with people who lived in rural communities was easy, and always a joy, for me," Luke says.

Even though he enjoyed all of his clerkships as a medical student, Luke considered the lessons he learned watching and working with family physicians the most meaningful. The doctor-patient relationship was forefront to the care they provided and is

what drew him to family medicine.

And what drew him to MU's residency program, after earning his MD in 2008, were the department's faculty members. They are passionate about teaching and committed to preparing residents for the role of family doctor, Dr. Stephens says. To expand his knowledge and skills in rural medicine, Luke did his continuity clinic at Callaway Physicians, MU's rural family practice located in Fulton.

"I can't say enough good things about my residency experience in Fulton. I had great role models who cared about me and my growth as a family physician. Everyone at our clinic worked well together, making it a great place to learn and practice," he says. "Many memorable moments happened when I was in the exam room with a patient. I cherished my patients and the time I spent with them."

The most memorable event in Luke Stephens' residency did not happen in Fulton, however, but rather in Lake Ozark, where he married Amanda Diaguila in 2009. Amanda was an MU medical student then, and by the time Luke finished residency in 2011, she was an OB/GYN Resident. As he looked at job options that would allow him to stay in mid-Missouri until Amanda graduated, Dr. Stephens welcomed advice he received from his mentor and colleague at Callaway Physicians, Dr. James Stevermer.

"Jim recommended that I join the faculty and enroll in the department's academic fellowship. As a fellow, I'd be able to take classes, learn about teaching and research, attend for residents and maintain my practice at Callaway Physicians," Dr. Stephens says. "The program appealed to me, especially after I knew I could continue caring for my patients in Fulton."

When Amanda finished residency in 2014, she, Luke and their two children moved to Chicago, where Amanda enrolled in University of Chicago's three-year maternal fetal medicine fellowship program. Luke decided to do a sports medicine fellowship at Advocate Lutheran General Hospital while they lived in Chicago.

"During residency, I became aware of how often patients come to their family doctor complaining about pain related to musculoskeletal problems. MU family physicians Dennis Wen and James Kinderknecht, both certified in sports medicine, were amazing role models who kept the family medicine approach to care front and center when they addressed sports medicine concerns with patients," Dr. Stephens explains. "These physicians had a major impact on my understanding and appreciation for sports medicine."

From the start of their marriage, Luke and Amanda shared the same long-term goal: To live, work and raise their family in Missouri. So in 2017, when their plans to return to Columbia were finalized, they celebrated. Both physicians had accepted faculty positions at the University of Missouri.

LUKE STEPHENS:
CONTINUED
ON PAGE 7



LUKE STEPHENS, MD, MSPH
ASSISTANT PROFESSOR
MU FAMILY AND COMMUNITY MEDICINE

CHAIR'S MESSAGE

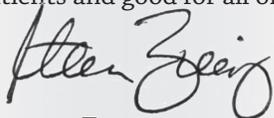
ONE OF OUR CORE PRINCIPALS in MUFCM is *Bringing people together* through our values of *collaboration, respect, diversity and inclusion*. Driven by these values, we have been able to create sustained patient care and educational programs in the rural communities our faculty and graduates serve.

This issue of the newsletter highlights a number of those people and programs: Luke Stephens starting the clinic in Ashland, Angie Whitesell's commitment to Lockwood and Drew Satterfield's return to Dexter in southeast Missouri. Working with others and respect for the people in those communities has enabled these physicians to be successful in their goal to provide meaningful and valuable primary care.

Drs. Madigosky and Patil highlight the importance of respect for diversity and inclusion as we strive to create effective interdisciplinary teams to better address the health needs of our patients. Their research shows this works.

Research on burnout prevention suggests that physicians are more likely to feel connected, valued and successful when they are working with an effective team. This team should include people who can get things done and are a joy to work with. Now that 70 percent of family physicians work for an organization, we must recognize that to feel successful in our work, it is still our job as leaders to bring people together while always being respectful and inclusive. Effective teams will also help us reduce the administrative burdens we face.

Bringing people together is good for our patients and good for all of us.



STEVEN ZWEIF, MD, MSPH
PROFESSOR AND CHAIR

JACK & WINIFRED COLWILL ENDOWED CHAIR

MU FAMILY AND COMMUNITY MEDICINE FACULTY FOCUS

WELCOME TO TWO MU FAMILY MEDICINE RESIDENCY ALUMS ■■■

ROBERT PIERCE, MD, MSPH, and **LISA PIERCE, MD**, along with their family practice group, Fulton Family Health Associates (FFHA), have joined the MU Family and Community Medicine faculty. Both Robert and Lisa earned their medical degrees from the University of Michigan-Ann Arbor in 1988, then came to MU to complete their family medicine residency training in 1991.

After residency, Robert stayed at MU to complete a two-year academic family medicine fellowship and earn his MSPH, and in 1993, he started Fulton Family Health Associates, Fulton, MO. In his new role as an MU associate professor, Dr. Robert Pierce continues to care for patients at FFHA. In addition, he is doing outpatient attending at Callaway Physicians, Fulton, and serves as Medical Director of Clinical Decision Support for MU Health Care.

After residency, Lisa served on the faculty at MU Family and Community Medicine until she joined her husband at FFHA in 1996. In her role as an MU assistant professor, Dr. Lisa Pierce continues to see patients at FFHA, and she is doing outpatient attending at Callaway Physicians.

"Fulton Family Health Associates and MU Health Care share a common goal of advancing patient care, medical education and medical research," says Dr. Robert Pierce. "This is an exciting time for us, our patients and the Fulton community."

Since joining MU Health Care, the Pierces' clinic (FFHA) is now called Family Medicine – Fulton Family Health. Brice Windsor, DO, and Ashlea Horstman, PA-C, who practiced alongside Robert and Lisa at FFHA, have also joined the MU Family and Community Medicine team of providers.

WELCOME ■■■

ABIGAIL ROLBIECKI, PhD, MPH, MSW, assistant professor, joined the MU Family Medicine research team this winter. She first came to our department as a post-doc in 2015 to work with investigators from MU's Center for Patient Centered Outcomes Research. Before that, Dr. Rolbiecki was a graduate assistant at the Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention Center.

Dr. Rolbiecki, who earned her PhD in Social Work from MU in 2015, also earned her Master of Public Health and Master of Social Work degrees from MU. As a researcher, Dr. Rolbiecki wants to help family members make meaning of their caregiving and bereavement experiences. She is using various storytelling intervention approaches (digital storytelling, photo-elucidation) to engage caregivers in a meaning-making process. Ultimately she hopes to reduce their distress during caregiving, which can reduce their grief intensity.

Dr. Rolbiecki has one daughter, Lennon Katy Adams, 3, and is expecting her second child in June. In her spare time, she enjoys running, biking, camping and hiking.

CONGRATS ■■■

KARLA WASHINGTON, PhD, LCSW, assistant professor, won the 2017 Dorsett L. Spurgeon, MD, Distinguished Medical Research Award. This award recognizes high-caliber research and scholarship by emerging scientific leaders of our institution and represents a distinguished academic honor. In addition to receiving a cash prize, the Spurgeon Award recipient delivers the keynote address at MU's annual Health Sciences Research Day. "Strengthening the Evidence Base for Family-Centered Serious Illness Care" was the title of Dr. Washington's presentation.

Since joining the MU Family Medicine research team in 2013, Dr. Washington has focused on the physical and psychosocial needs of patients who are chronically ill. In her research, she is identifying strategies that are most effective in helping individuals and their families cope with chronic illness and live life on their own terms.

Dr. Washington is the fifth MU Family Medicine faculty member to win the Spurgeon Distinguished Medical Research Award since 2005. **David Mehr, MD, MS**, MU Family Medicine Professor, received the Excellence in Research Mentoring of Junior Faculty Award at this year's Health Sciences Research Day.



ANGIE WHITESELL, MD

RURAL FAMILY PHYSICIAN: LOCKWOOD, MO CONNECTED TO HER PATIENTS, STUDENTS, FAMILY AND FARM

ANGIE WHITESELL, MD, earned her medical degree ('02) from the University of Missouri, then trained at Cox Family Medicine Residency ('05), Springfield, MO. Today, she lives on a farm with her husband and four children; provides health care to her hometown of Lockwood (rural town of 671 located in southwest MO); teaches medical students, and serves as associate clerkship director of MU's clinical campus in Springfield. Dr. Whitesell has a passion for practicing and teaching rural family medicine, and it shows. Everyone – patients, colleagues and students – loves Dr. Whitesell. A preceptor since 2007, Dr. Whitesell earns strong words of praise from the students she's taught:

“DR. WHITESELL is the best clinical teacher I had in med school! She is an excellent physician and well-loved by her patients, and a great teacher of patient-centered AND evidence-based care. I truly enjoyed working with her and her staff. While there, I felt like part of her team and didn't want to leave!”

“DR. WHITESELL is awesome. She lives on a farm in a rural area, so if you're a city person like me you'll get to experience a lifestyle you've probably never experienced before. You stay with her in her basement, and her family is so welcoming. Clinically, Dr. Whitesell is a great teacher and encouraged me to ask lots of questions. She also explained the financial/business aspects of being in a practice, which I didn't expect but definitely appreciated.”

“DR. WHITESELL was welcoming from day one and immediately incorporated me into her practice. She was eager to meet my learning objectives and show me a variety of patients and procedures. Dr. Whitesell provided me a brief background of the patient before I entered the exam room, so I could have a more meaningful interview when I met him/her. She listened intently while I presented a patient and encouraged me to think of an assessment and plan. I also got to observe her communicate via phone and email with specialists, and use the literature to research patients' diseases or questions while in clinic, which showed me how rural family doctors can stay up-to-date and evidence-based.”

Why medicine ... why family medicine?

DR. WHITESELL: When I graduated from high school, I knew I wanted a career that would allow me to return to where I grew up. It may sound crazy, but I've always felt very attached to the land on my family's farm. I'm at peace whenever I'm on this land. I began MU as an animal science major, but when an advisor told me about the need for physicians in rural Missouri, fireworks went off in my brain. I signed up to shadow a rural family physician and immediately observed (and was impressed by) the relationships he had with his patients and strong connection he had with his small town. I was hooked. I changed my major to biochemistry, and the rest is history. I loved every rotation in medical school, and the diversity and challenges of family medicine were the right fit for me.

How would you describe your practice?

DR. WHITESELL: Lockwood Family Medicine is a regional clinic of Mercy Health System. Our patients live up to 40 miles from the nearest urgent care center, and up to 60 miles from the nearest large referral hospital, so we see a lot of urgent care and farm-related trauma. I care for people all ages, with a practice that ranges from pre-natal to nursing home care. Nearly 40 percent of my patients are children. I work with two partners, Drs. Haley Wolf and Travis Hawks, a nurse practitioner, Leisa Blanchard, and a great clinic staff who care about patients and make my job fun.

Why do you teach?

DR. WHITESELL: After residency, my first job was doing full-scope family medicine with inpatient and operative obstetrics at the Nevada Clinic, 50 miles from Lockwood. There I hosted my first MU student. She was bright and so enthusiastic. Now I mainly precept MU



ANGIE WHITESELL, MD
with patients, Baleigh and her mom



Angie with her husband and children

students who want to experience everything rural. I invite them to participate in all aspects of my life when they are here – community meetings, youth baseball games, trips to Silver Dollar City, volunteering at the county free clinic. This helps them see that the clinical and non-clinical lives of rural physicians are closely intertwined. Teaching reminds me why I chose medicine. The students are fun and so smart. I learn something new each time I host one.

Your role as MU Associate Clerkship Director, Springfield Campus ... how's that going?

DR. WHITESELL: In 2016, when MU added a clinical campus in Springfield, I was thrilled for the offer to work in academic medicine. In addition to hosting students in my clinic, I now formally teach didactics and expose students to the joy of family medicine and unique experiences I have as a rural clinician. One challenge I face in this role is recruiting other physicians to precept students. Many already feel stretched too thin as they strive to be productive and provide quality care to patients. Convincing them that having a student in their clinic would add value without detracting from their precious non-clinical time can be difficult.

What's the most rewarding part of your job?

DR. WHITESELL: My patients. They make me laugh, and even when they're feeling ill or vulnerable, they ask me how I'm doing and about my family, too. Every day as I walk into work, I pause to remind myself of how truly blessed I am to get to do this job.

Family/Hobbies?

DR. WHITESELL: My husband, Jeremy, teaches at Missouri State University. We've been married 20 years and built a home on our family farm 10 years ago. We have four funny, active children: Owen, 13, twins Miles and Annie, 9, and Ike, 2. Life outside of work pretty much revolves around our kids (who do 4-H, church, and youth sports) and our hobby farm (where we have a large garden and raise cattle, goats and chickens).

DEXTER, a small southeast Missouri farming community of 8,000, is home to Dexter Bar-B-Que, Tyson Foods Plant and the Heritage Caboose. Founded in 1873 by the Cairo, Arkansas and Texas Railroad, the railroad is an important part of Dexter's past. Starting in July, **DREW SATTERFIELD, DO**, will become an important part of Dexter's future.

3RD YEAR FAMILY MEDICINE RESIDENT DREW SATTERFIELD

graduated with 100 other seniors from Dexter High School in 2007. Some people say that growing up in a small town is boring; not Drew. A 6'4", 220-lb athlete, Drew participated in every sport – football, basketball and golf – at Dexter High School. He also played bass for a four-piece classic rock band, *The Basement*.

"We performed at birthday parties, bars, and other local events. It was fun and a great way to make money," says Drew. "Lynyrd Skynyrd's *Sweet Home Alabama* was a favorite for our band and one of the most requested songs from our fans."

When Drew began college at Southeast Missouri State University (SEMO), Cape Girardeau, he was already considering a career in medicine. To see how the role of "physician" fit, he arranged a shadowing experience with his family doctor, Bobby Jibben, DO, during his junior year at SEMO.

"Besides being my doctor growing up, Dr. Jibben was team doc for the Dexter football team. He had a solo practice that was diverse and included hospital medicine, emergency medicine ... a

little bit of everything," says Drew. "He obviously loved his job and stayed active in our community. Watching Dr. Jibben, I became confident that family medicine was the field I wanted to pursue."

Dr. Jibben also influenced Drew's decision to pursue a degree in osteopathic medicine. "As a DO, Dr. Jibben practiced a whole-person approach to care," says Drew. "I wanted to be like Dr. Jibben ... a doctor who listened and seemed to

know everything about his patients."

After earning his DO from Kansas City University of Medicine in 2015, Dr. Satterfield enrolled at MU's Family Medicine Residency.

"MU has excellent faculty members and provides training in rural medicine. But ultimately what sold me on the program were the family medicine residents I met during my interview," he says. "They were welcoming and friendly ... to me and to each other. I was impressed at how happy everyone at MU seemed."

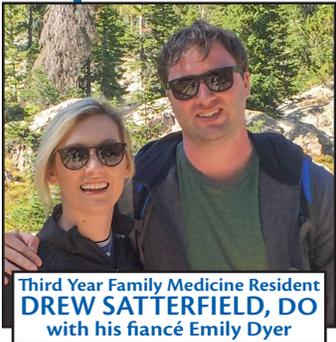
Today, with graduation just months away, Drew Satterfield has nothing but positive things to say about his residency experience.

"It was stressful at first, but once I learned about time management, it was easier for me to be focused and productive," he says. "Practicing in Fulton has expanded my knowledge, skills and understanding of rural medicine. I love the clinic, the attendings and the community. And my patients are the best! I am grateful for every opportunity I have to help and connect with them."

Residency has been amazing, he says. He will miss it, for sure, and will forever treasure the friendships he developed with faculty, patients and classmates. But after graduation, Dr. Satterfield will be returning to his roots to do outpatient family medicine at two clinics, Southeast Health in Cape Girardeau and Southeast Health in Dexter, and he couldn't be happier!

"This was my goal when I started med school," he says. "I can't wait to get back home and serve the community I know so well."

As summer approaches, Dr. Satterfield is excited about another major event in his life. He and his fiancé, Emily Dyer, will marry in July. "The future looks good," he says. "I feel fortunate for the opportunities I've been given and will strive to always be my best for my patients, my town and my family."



Third Year Family Medicine Resident
DREW SATTERFIELD, DO
with his fiancé Emily Dyer

MU Family Medicine Honors Three Newly Named Endowed Professors

RICHELLE KOOPMAN, MD, MS, MU Family and Community Medicine Professor, was named the **JACK M. AND WINIFRED S. COLWILL ENDOWED PROFESSOR**. Dr. Koopman, a family physician who recognized her passion for research early in her career, joined our department in 2007. Today, in addition to seeing patients, she is MU Family Medicine Research Director. A national leader in family medicine research, Dr. Koopman currently serves on the board of directors of the *Annals of Family Medicine, Inc*, and the North American Primary Care Research Group, and she is participating in the Hedwig van Ameringen Executive Leadership in Academic Medicine Fellowship program.

DEBRA PARKER OLIVER, PhD, MSW, MU Family and Community Medicine Professor, was named the **PAUL REVARE, MD, FAMILY PROFESSOR OF FAMILY MEDICINE**. Dr. Oliver began her career as a social worker, then joined our department in 2007, six years after earning her PhD. Today, she is internationally recognized for her work in end-of-life, hospice and palliative care. She serves as associate editor of the *Journal of Pain and Symptom Management* and is an honorary lifetime member of the Academy of Hospice and Palliative Medicine. Dr. Oliver has authored over 150 peer-reviewed publications and received nearly \$15 million funding from multiple National Institutes of Health agencies.

ERIKA RINGDAHL, MD, MU Family and Community Medicine Professor, was named the **WILLIAM C. ALLEN, MD, ENDOWED PROFESSOR**. Dr. Ringdahl, a 1992 graduate of MU Family Medicine Residency, joined our department in 1994 to serve as assistant director of our residency program. In 1996, she was named director of MU Family Medicine Residency, a role she continues to serve with distinction. Since 1997, she's been awarded continuous federal training grants that have fueled our efforts to maintain a comprehensive, innovative and patient-centered family medicine residency curriculum. Dr. Ringdahl received the Nikitas J. Zervanos Outstanding Residency Program Director Award in 2015.



LEFT TO RIGHT: Richelle Koopman,
Erika Ringdahl, Debra Parker Oliver and
Family Medicine Chair Steve Zweig



BRIAN MAHAFFEY, MD, MSPH, was inducted into the **MISSOURI SPORTS HALL OF FAME** at a ceremony held this winter in Springfield, MO. This annual recognition honors individuals whose "significant careers have enhanced amateur/professional sports in Missouri." Dr. Mahaffey, MU Family Medicine Alum (Res '96, Fellow '98), currently serves as a team physician for the St. Louis Cardinals and medical director of Mercy Sports Medicine, and he practices at Mercy Clinic Sports Medicine.



ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR, UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO FAMILY MEDICINE **WENDY MADIGOSKY, MD, MSPH**

earned her medical degree from George Washington University, Washington DC, in 1999; attended University of Colorado's Rose Hospital Family Medicine Residency; then

came to Missouri and completed MU's Academic Fellowship in Primary Care in 2004. Today – a faculty member at the Department of Family Medicine, University of Colorado, Denver, for 14 years – Wendy Madigosky loves her job and the opportunities she has to take care of patients, direct an interprofessional education course and collaborate with faculty in developing curriculum. But more than anything else, Dr. Madigosky loves to teach and cherishes working with students in their preclinical years of medical school.



MU FAMILY MEDICINE FELLOWSHIP ALUM
WENDY MADIGOSKY, MD, MSPH
WITH HER FAMILY

WENDY MADIGOSKY's goal from day one of medical school was to pursue a career in academic medicine. By 2002, when she began fellowship training, she knew she wanted to teach medical students, with a focus on the preclinical years.

"As an academic fellow, I became interested in patient safety and quality issues, which aligned nicely with the work that others at MU were doing," she explains. "I had an opportunity to collaborate with faculty members to develop interprofessional patient safety teaching sessions for MU medical students. This was an exciting experience that definitely influenced my desire to keep on doing interprofessional education (IPE) – but at larger scale – once I joined the University of Colorado (CU) faculty."

When she moved to Denver in 2004, Dr. Madigosky had responsibilities in the residency program and family medicine clerkship. Early on, she decided to shift her focus to medical student education, and by 2006, she was named director of the Foundations of Doctoring Curriculum. This three-year curriculum teaches medical students, regardless of their specialty, basic clinical skills.

"My career has evolved from teaching clinical skills to teaching interprofessional practice. In 2014, I became director of the Interprofessional Education and Development Course," she says. "I like and continue to serve both roles, which is why I'm so busy."

The commitment to doing interprofessional education is strong across the CU campus and goes back nearly 30 years. For most of its history, IPE at CU's medical school focused on ethics.

"While working with the CU faculty who were doing IPE, I was able to share what I did and learned as an MU Fellow. This helped expand the program to where it is today," says Dr. Madigosky.

As Interprofessional Education and Development Course Director, Dr. Madigosky manages the two-semester preclinical course required of CU students from the anesthesiologist assistant, dental, medical, nursing, pharmacy, physical therapy and physician assistant programs. The course teaches three content domains: teamwork/collaboration, values/ethics, and patient safety/quality improvement to 700 students. It is longitudinal and includes 16 sessions: 8 in the spring and 8 in the fall (*online and face-to-face ver-*

sions). More than 45 faculty members across campus participate in the course.

"I am proud of our IPE course and appreciate the opportunities I've had to shape it. Leading this course is a responsibility I embrace and take very seriously," says Dr. Madigosky.

The bulk of Dr. Madigosky's time is focused on teaching and administering curricula. Working with faculty on developing curriculum is stimulating, she says, but she loves learners and treasures her time with medical students, too, especially M1s and M2s.

Wendy Madigosky, MD, family physician, has an interprofessional practice. Two half-days a week, she sees patients in a residency-based clinic at CU Hospital. They have a patient-centered medical home where pharmacy residents, family medicine residents, psychology interns, social workers and case managers are integrated throughout the clinic. When there, Dr. Madigosky enjoys taking care of patients, but she considers teaching medical students and other learners equally rewarding.

"One of the great things about my job is that it's authentic," she says. "I'm doing IPE when I'm with patients, teaching it when I'm with learners, and living it when I collaborate with faculty."

Academic medicine is a great fit for Dr. Madigosky. She understands and appreciates the challenges and opportunities her job provides. "All of us in academic medicine play a role in training future physicians to practice in an environment where interprofessional teams work collaboratively to take care of patients. I know there's lots to do, but this is exciting work and fun for me," she explains. "It's also challenging because we're trying to build a curriculum that prepares students for a practice that hasn't quite come of age. We can't let this stop us though; the environment will change."

In spite of how busy Dr. Madigosky is, her energy and attitude never change. Nor does her commitment to a life outside of work.

"In my free time, I like to be outdoors, ski, swim and travel. And I like to eat ... especially French and Asian dishes," she says. "Mostly I like being with family. My husband, Craig, and I have two children, Isaac, 11, and Sarah, 9. They are a super important part of my life. I strive to be present and focused when we are together."



MU FAMILY MEDICINE CHAIR DR. STEVEN ZWEIG ASKED:

“Dr. Madigosky, why should all of us in academic medicine practice and teach interprofessionally?”

“I firmly believe, and not just intellectually, but also from my own practical experience, that working in teams provides better patient care. By bringing together the skills, knowledge and goals of other health professions, we can improve experiences and outcomes for patients. In addition, providers can be happier and more effective in their jobs when they work collaboratively with a health care team. Universities across the country are doing IPE, and many look to Colorado to learn about our experiences. Having this course in our school definitely puts CU at the forefront of IPE,” **ANSWERED MU FAMILY MEDICINE ALUM DR. WENDY MADIGOSKY.**

FINDING JOY IN HER JOB

When MU Family Physician Sonal Patil talks about her work, her enthusiasm is infectious. “I’m happy and excited about everything I do,” she says with a smile and energy that tells you her passion and positive attitude are real.

NEWLYWED ... Sonal, who was born, raised and earned her medical degree in India, was an OB/GYN Resident on February 29, 2000 – the day she wed Ashutosh Patil in a marriage arranged by her parents. After their wedding, Sonal quit residency and left India to join her husband who was working in California.

“While studying for the USMLE and preparing to apply to US residency programs, I served as a research assistant for a cardiologist at Stanford,” Sonal says. “After learning about my goals and interests, he told me I was well suited for family medicine. I agreed.”

FAMILY PHYSICIAN ... In 2003, Sonal and Ashutosh moved to Atlanta, GA, where Sonal enrolled at Emory Family Medicine Residency. During her last year of residency, Sonal gave birth to their daughter, Ruchira, and Ashutosh began his doctoral studies at Georgia Tech. As she waited for him to graduate, Sonal worked at Urgent Care 18 months, then took a job at Kaiser Permanente.

“Working as a family physician at Kaiser was a great experience that continues to fuel my motivation to do more for my patients, especially those with chronic illness,” Dr. Patil explains. “Kaiser has chronic disease management clinics where physicians can refer patients who have specific health issues. These programs are terrific resources that benefit patients and physicians.”

In 2010, after Ashutosh finished his Phd, he, Sonal, Ruchira, and their newborn son, Rajeev, moved to Massachusetts where Ashutosh joined the faculty at Boston College.

RESEARCHER ... Dr. Patil waited a few months before taking a job at the Boston Neighborhood Health Center, a clinic that serves underserved patients and families. Initially she worked part-time, but by 2012, when her children were older, Dr. Patil increased her hours at the clinic. The more time she spent with patients, the more aware she became of the challenges associated with caring for underserved populations.

“Besides having language barriers and financial problems, many of our patients had complicated health issues that required time to treat and control. It was very hard to get them to commit to health changes or lifestyle guidelines,” says Dr. Patil. “My colleagues and I would get together daily to brainstorm about possible strategies that could help our patients.”

A peer support program was one idea that excited everyone on our health care team, says Dr. Patil.

“We’d need to find an ideal patient who was motivated to change, train him to control his health problems, then arrange for him to reach out and educate others with similar health problems in the community,” she says. “I wanted to develop a peer support program that focused on diabetes self-management.”

Her commitment to this program stayed strong even after Dr. Patil realized the clinic could not fund it. To go forward with this project, she’d need to secure external funding. But first she needed to learn about grant writing, which is why Dr. Patil enrolled in a clinical research course at Harvard. It was while taking this class that Sonal discovered her passion for research.

Dr. Patil’s professor, impressed by her curiosity, intelligence, determination and excellent problem-solving skills, advised her to pursue a master’s degree and a career in academic medicine. Having earned the highest score in the class, she trusted his advice.

“By the time I finished the course, Ashutosh was ready to leave

Boston College. He was invited to join MU’s College of Business faculty, and I was accepted in Family Medicine’s academic fellowship program,” says Dr. Patil. “In 2014, we decided that Columbia, MO, would be a great place to work, live and raise our children.”

ASSISTANT PROFESSOR ... From the day she began her fellowship, Dr. Patil knew that coming to MU was a good decision.

“I had a vision of what I wanted to do when I came here, and it seemed to fit well with the department,” she says. “I brought with me the systematic review I had started in Boston. My work focused on peer support interventions for Hispanic adults with diabetes, and after collaborating with MU med school and nursing school faculty who had interests similar to mine, I was able to expand this study to include other populations and more factors*.”

By 2016, Dr. Patil had completed her fellowship, earned her MSPH, then joined MU’s Family Medicine faculty. Today, her research on managing diabetes and hypertension continues to be an important part of her work as a faculty physician.

“Once I found my love for research, I wanted to keep doing it. I wanted to keep seeing patients, too,” she says. “I love being both clinician and researcher. Patient care feeds my interest in research.”

As a family physician, Dr. Patil doesn’t think there’s enough time to address complicated chronic disease management in the clinic. She wants to help physicians who already feel burdened by a continually increasing workload.

“I’m trying to develop community-based support programs that are successful for patients and cost-effective for the health care system,” she explains. “There isn’t one thing that works for everyone ... some patients benefit from health care peer coaches, some benefit from nurse care managers and some respond well to social workers. I want to create programs with the necessary components that work best for patients ... research will help me succeed in that effort.”

With funding from the American Academy of Family Physicians, Dr. Patil is conducting a blood pressure monitoring project. The goal of this one-year grant is to improve the hypertension control rate for family physicians.

“We know some patients have high blood pressure at clinic because they are nervous,” she explains. “In this study, we lend participants a blood pressure machine that’s been tested for accuracy and ask them to take their blood pressure at home daily for two weeks. When patients return the machine, we enter their average blood pressure reading in PowerChart. The home reading counts, so the patient’s blood pressure changes from uncontrolled to controlled.”

We’ve already achieved our recruitment goal of 96 patients for this study, and so far, all of them love it, Dr. Patil says. We hope the project can continue after my grant ends.



SONAL PATIL, MD, MSPH
ASSISTANT PROFESSOR
MU FAMILY AND COMMUNITY MEDICINE

SONAL PATIL:
CONTINUED ON LAST PAGE

Amanda joined MU Obstetrics and Gynecology to serve as a maternal fetal specialist, and Luke rejoined the faculty at MU Family and Community Medicine.

"I was excited to be invited back to MU and a department that for many years felt like family to me," he explains. "Everything about my job sounded great and was what I wanted to do. MU was building a family medicine clinic in Ashland (POP 3,800), and I jumped at the offer to be the first and only family physician at the new clinic when it opened last summer. Ashland is not far from Columbia and a terrific place to raise children. I looked forward to getting to know the people who lived there, becoming active in the schools, and developing a presence within the community."

Today, Dr. Stephens dedicates most of his time to family medicine, providing cradle-to-grave care, in Ashland. He also practices sports medicine at Missouri Orthopedic Institute. Outside of clinic, he does inpatient attending for residents, teaches medical students and pursues other scholarly work.

In addition, Dr. Stephens is spearheading the department's efforts to establish a primary care sports medicine fellowship at MU. This project is a major responsibility that excites but also scares him. His biggest

challenge is finding permanent funding sources for the program, he says. Interest in sports medicine is ongoing among family medicine residents nationwide, so once it's up and running, the fellowship will be an important recruiting resource for the MU Family Medicine Residency program.

"We call the specialty sports medicine because that sounds attractive, but musculoskeletal medicine is a more accurate name for this practice," Dr. Stephens says. "Many patients who come to us with bone and muscle injuries are not athletes; they are all ages, all occupations and all fitness levels. And as our population ages, musculoskeletal problems will increase."

His family medicine training makes him a better sports medicine doctor – no question about it, he says. But as much as he enjoys sports medicine, Dr. Stephens would never give up his role as family doctor. Getting back to family medicine and taking care of health issues throughout life has been fantastic for him.

"I consider it a privilege to serve Ashland. Our clinic is a small facility, so it hasn't taken us long to build trust and meaningful relationships with each other. Already it feels like home to me," he says. "As I get to know my patients, I'm learning about their families, friends and workplace. Connect-

ing with patients is fun and enables me to provide them the best level of care I can."

A goal-oriented Dr. Stephens is motivated by the variety of work his career in academic medicine offers.

"I do so many different things, have different roles and work in different settings. I love that about my job!" he says. "Being able to balance my various responsibilities influences my success and happiness."

But more than anything else, it's family that makes Luke happy and his roles as husband, father and son that make him most proud. Luke and Amanda have three children, Isabelle, 8; Isaac, 6; and Eleanor, 2.

"I strive to be a good parent and supportive spouse. Family time is always special and a priority for me," Luke says. "And when I can, I go home to visit my parents and help out on our family farm."

Dr. Stephens is busy, but he's doing what he wants to do, so life is good, he says. A fan of race car driving, he credits a quote by Mario Andretti for keeping him motivated and on track: *If you have everything under control, you're not moving fast enough.*

"For now, I'm where I want to be ... right at the edge of being able to take care of everything," Dr. Stephens says. "Every time I push myself to accomplish more, I'm careful to not let myself spin out of control."

"I'm so thankful that Dr. Stephens came to Ashland! The first time I met him, I could tell he was listening and cared about me. I have cardiac problems that can be complicated to manage, but thanks to Dr. Stephens, I am stable and feeling strong."
— **Shirley Stephenson** ... DR. STEPHENS' PATIENT AT ASHLAND FAMILY MEDICINE CLINIC

"Dr. Stephens is loved by everyone here at Ashland Family Medicine! He is generous, caring and thorough, and he exhibits an in-depth knowledge of all things primary care. An excellent collaborator, Dr. Stephens is always willing to be consulted and goes beyond a simple answer to enhance my understanding. It's obvious that he loves his job, and his positive attitude makes this a great clinic for patients and staff."
— **Sue Runyon, FNP** ... NURSE PRACTITIONER: ASHLAND FAMILY MEDICINE CLINIC

"Dr. Stephens was a wonderful mentor for me during my residency at the Fulton clinic. He fully embodied what it means to be a broad spectrum rural family doctor, and he shared that passion of caring for whole generations of families with the medical students and residents he worked with."
— **Amanda Shipp, MD** ... 2014 FAMILY MEDICINE RESIDENT; FAMILY PHYSICIAN, VERSAILLES, MO

"One of the joys of being a physician-teacher is watching our students become colleagues. In Luke's case, he first came to our clinic as an integrated resident and then stayed with us through residency. After graduation, he joined our faculty and practiced at Callaway Physicians three more years. Luke brought a down-to-earth sense of humor, a relaxed personal style and excellent clinical judgment to both his teaching and patient care. I had hoped that we'd be able to get him back in Fulton when he returned to Missouri – that didn't work out, but I'm very glad to see him practicing in a rural setting."
— **James Stevermer, MD, MSPH** ... MU FAMILY AND COMMUNITY MEDICINE PROFESSOR; MEDICAL DIRECTOR, CALLAWAY PHYSICIANS

"Luke is a very dedicated husband and father. He spends a lot of time with our children – reading to them, playing games with them, teaching them how to play basketball and baseball, building pinewood derby cars ... He is truly amazing!"
— **Amanda Diaguila Stephens, MD** ... LUKE'S WIFE; MU OBSTETRICS AND GYNECOLOGY MATERNAL FETAL MEDICINE SPECIALIST



Luke and Amanda Stephens
WITH THEIR THREE CHILDREN



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SONAL PATIL: CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6

Sustainability of a project is a challenge for many researchers. Oftentimes investigators receive grant money to develop a program, but when the grant ends, so does the program. Dr. Patil hopes to avoid that unfortunate outcome with her Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality-funded study: Youth Diabetes Coach Program.

To develop this program, Dr. Patil partnered with the health education teacher from Douglas High School in Columbia. During the eight-week curriculum, students are trained to become health coaches for family members who have diabetes/hypertension. The class is about healthy lifestyles and includes information students can use to improve their own health as well.

"Our program is designed to be self-sustaining," Dr. Patil says proudly. "Family Medicine Residents are now training the students; participation in this Youth Diabetes Coach Program is considered a community health elective for them. It's fun to watch the interactions between residents and students. Douglas High School values the program and has requested that we come back every fall."

When Dr. Patil talks about her work, her enthusiasm is infectious. "I'm happy and excited about everything I do," she says with a smile and energy that tells you her passion and positive attitude are real.

Dr. Patil does a lot, and agrees to do more when asked. But as busy as she is, Sonal always gets the job done.

"I've taught myself to be disciplined and regimented. I plan every day before it starts and once I get to work, I go non-stop and avoid distractions. I'm productive because I'm focused and doing things I like to do," she says.

When the work day ends for Dr. Patil, her focus shifts to the real joys in her life, her husband, Ashutosh, and their children, Ruchira, 11, and Rajeev, 7.

"I look forward to family time every night," she says. "When I get home, I cook healthy dishes that everyone in my family eats. I walk daily. My goal is to role model the healthy lifestyle I encourage others to follow."



Sonal and Ashutosh Patil
WITH THEIR CHILDREN