According to many healthcare reform experts, our nation faces a shortfall of tens of thousand of primary care physicians in the next decade. Since the inception of the Valley Family Medicine Residency, our vision has included training primary doctors to attenuate our local shortage here in the Central Valley and nationwide. Five successful years into our development, we have demonstrated sufficient volume and resources to win official approval from ACGME to train up to 12 residents per year. Congratulations for a job well done by residents and faculty in upholding a high performance standard. Now, all we need is funding to support more trainees. Residencies like ours can only sustain expansion if funding expands as well. Supporters of a strong healthcare workforce should advocate to legislators at the state and federal level to reform graduate medical education financing. Given the modern day crisis in access to health care, shifting more investment toward the training of primary care doctors is a no-brainer.

Smoothie-ing the Path to Health, as a Group

In last year’s newsletter, we reported on an exciting new venture, funded by specially allocated state funds. In our group diabetes care, residents are trained in conducting medical group visits and facilitating activities geared toward active learning and peer-to-peer teaching. Our innovative model creates a multidisciplinary team including the patients themselves, a peer liaison from the community center, a behavioral health specialist, and the physicians all working together to optimize chronic disease management and positive behavior.
Graduates Off to Great Things!

Jose Alberto, MD (Universidad Autonoma de Guadalajara) Jose has joined Scenic Faculty Medical Group and will be practicing in Hughson, CA.

Miguel Cazares, MD (Ross University) Miguel has joined Sutter Gould Medical Foundation and will be practicing in Ceres, CA.

Maryal Concepcion, MD (Creighton University) Maryal has joined Arnold Family Medical Center and will be practicing in Arnold, CA.

April Gunn, DO (Arizona COM of Midwestern University) April has joined Scenic Faculty Medical Group and will be practicing in Modesto, CA.

Brandon Hobel, MD (Ross University) Brandon has joined Sutter Medical Group and will be practicing in Auburn, CA.

Jaskiran Hundal, MD (Ross University) While determining permanent position, Jaskiran will be doing locum tenens in Stanislaus County.

Mariko Ishiyama, DO (Touro University) Mariko has joined Hospitalists of Modesto and will be practicing in Modesto, CA.

Sanna Mahmood, MD (Universidad Autonoma de Guadalajara) While determining permanent position, Sanna will be doing locum tenens in Stanislaus County.

Joseph Novencido, DO (Chicago COM of Midwestern University) Joseph has joined Gateway Medical Group and will be practicing in Chula Vista, CA.

RaeLeigh Payanes, MD (Ross University) RaeLeigh has joined Scenic Faculty Medical Group and will be practicing in Modesto, CA.

Hardeep Saini, DO (Michigan State University COM) Hardeep has joined Scenic Faculty Medical Group and will be practicing in Hughson, CA.

Charmi Shah, MD (St. George’s University) Charmi has joined Alameda Family Physicians and will be practicing in Alameda, CA.

Smoothie-ing the Path to Health, as a Group (cont’d)

I have had people tell me: “I felt important enough to care about myself, thanks to the Diabetes group.”—Dr. Juan Lopez-Solorza

The residency program also offers training in group prenatal care, in both English and Spanish. The program also offers training in group prenatal care, in both English and Spanish.

continued from front page

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Graduates Off to Great Things!

change. Since the project began a year ago, 16 residents have trained in this group model, and over 41 patients have received care through this model. Says Dr. McLawrence, PGY3, “The group demonstrates the integration of all aspects of what family medicine can be: disease management, health promotion, behavioral health, and education. It’s eye-opening to witness the power of peer support in improving patients’ health.”
Global Health Training: Elective in Barbados

By Dr. Imran Ally, '16, who is fulfilling an Area of Concentration in Global Health:

During my two week elective in Barbados, I had three main clinical exposures. The first clinical site was the Queen Elizabeth hospital accident and emergency department. Health care at this site was free of charge and supplied by the government. Resources were scarce, such as furosemide and lancets for checking blood glucose, and even alcohol swabs. My second site was a local privately-owned urgent care center. This was a beautiful facility which had state-of-the-art medical supplies and a radiology suite on site. Patients who could afford out-of-pocket cost could also have labs drawn, receive IV fluids and have short stays until recovered or treated for their problem. I enjoyed this site because of the variable patient scenarios and the ability to use the available resources to treat the patient right away. The last site was an outpatient clinic where patients were seen in a primary care setting. This was a new clinic which was now starting a practice and all the patients were adults. My interactions with these patients were surprisingly no different than the interactions with my own patients here in Modesto. I was not sure if being from Barbados made this interaction easy or if it was because the cultural differences were not that dissimilar.

Modern Education: Enter Human Simulation

We are thrilled to collaborate with Modesto Junior College and their state-of-the-art human simulation lab. Last February the residents created teams and tried to revive computerized mannequins who appeared to succumb to sepsis and post partum hemorrhage (yes, bleeding and gasping for air and all!) Welcome to medicine in the 21st Century!

Jump start on Leadership

Just as our own Dr. Del Morris wrapped up his year as CAFP President, fresh leadership blood is surging through our veins. Congratulations to our own Dr. Nadeem Goraya, Class of 2017, the new resident representative to the Stanislaus Medical Society, who shares “being involved in advocacy gives me the satisfaction of impacting more people than I would as an individual physician.”

The Mind-Body Connection

Last year, Dr. Marlene Cohen passed the baton to our new behavioral science director, Rheena Pineda, PhD. A native of the Philippines, Dr. Pineda trained at UC Davis as well as the University of Colorado, Denver, and we are thrilled to welcome her. Fluent in Spanish, she also offers enhanced expertise in children and families, especially those impacted by trauma. Besides the structured curriculum, residents enjoy a weekly seminar which includes “check-in” time when stressful events and situations can be vented and processed in a circle of trusted colleagues.

“From my experience I would say there were more similarities than differences...”

Imran Ally, PGY3

“As current residents and future family physicians, their work will be impactful in reducing the burden of mental illness in our communities: I look forward to learning from the patients, residents and faculty as well as the wonderful experiences ahead!”

Dr. Pineda
To take the behavioral science bull by the horns!
Thuy-Lien Le, PGY3, “I was so surprised to see how much scholarly activity our residents had completed. The forum inspired me to do more!” Join us next spring for the 2nd annual regional event here, at the nexus of physician training in Stanislaus County.

Stanislaus county’s two residencies dazzled the community with their proud display of residents’ scholarly projects while outside speakers generated lively discussion about controversies affecting physicians in our community. Dr. Peter Broderick, DIO for VCME stated, “This begins an exciting tradition as graduate medical education continues to grow and thrive in our county. I’m thrilled to see our residents and faculty engaging in lively debate with outside experts.” Residents, too, were inspired by this inaugural event, which will be continued annually. Remarked Dr. Thuy-Lien Le, PGY3, “I was so surprised to see how much scholarly activity our residents had completed. The forum inspired me to do more!” Join us next spring for the 2nd annual regional event here, at the nexus of physician training in Stanislaus County.

Third year residents explain their posters while various community faculty soak up their exciting new ideas.