

**Building Michigan's Workforce in Health Award**  
**Educating and Training Strategies to Build Michigan's Workforce**  
**Michigan Health Council**

**Michigan State University College of Osteopathic Medicine**

**Abstract**

In order to address the projected shortfall of physicians, the Michigan State University College of Osteopathic Medicine (MSUCOM) will open two expansion sites in addition to its East Lansing Campus; the Detroit Medical Center downtown and the Macomb University Center in Clinton Township will each accommodate 50 students in the 2009 entering class. The college will have increased its entering class size 142% in seven years – from 124 in 2002 to 300 in 2009. The college has retained two-thirds of its 3,744 living alumni in the state, and more than half are practicing primary care. More than 90% of its students are Michigan residents, about 90% of its graduates take their residency training in Michigan, and its alumni serve in 77 of Michigan's 83 counties. Because MSUCOM partners with 27 Michigan hospitals and more than 2,000 Michigan physicians volunteer to serve as clinical faculty, it offers highly cost-effective medical education for the state.

**Program Goals**

The MSU College of Osteopathic Medicine was established by a public act of the Michigan legislature in 1969 with the expressed mandate to produce the physicians needed for the state. Since its inception, the college – through its mission, its culture, its recruitment practices, its development of a graduate medical education system, its strong partnerships in communities – has been faithful to its founding mandate. For eight years straight, the college has ranked in the top 5% of all medical schools (M.D. and D.O.) nationally for primary care education, according to *U.S. News & World Report*. With reliable projections such as that offered by The Blue Ribbon Committee on Physician Workforce demonstrating that both Michigan and the nation will suffer a decline in the physician workforce, William D. Strampel, D.O., dean, led the college into a significant expansion to address those needs.

Goals for the expansion to southeastern Michigan include:

- To address Michigan's significant projected physician shortage, and strengthen further the osteopathic presence among Michigan's largest population base
- To expand the pool of Michigan-educated residents who can be recruited by its Statewide Campus System hospitals
- To enhance medical education for its students by providing increased opportunities to care for people from a variety of cultures and backgrounds
- To be cost-effective
- To increase accessibility to its educational programs for people in southeast Michigan
- To increase the likelihood that committed and highly competent physicians will remain to care for the medically underserved in southeastern Michigan.

## **Program Design and Implementation**

Expansion of the entering class began several years before the college initiated efforts to expand geographically. For several decades the entering class had stood at approximately 125 students, giving the college a total enrollment of more than 500 students at any given time. In 2003, the entering class was raised to 143, and in 2005 it was increased again to 205 students. The college was interested to note that, rather than diluting the quality of students applying, these expansions actually had resulted in an increase in both GPA and MCAT scores among the entering students. In addition, there were hundreds of highly qualified students who were being turned away from the college each year.

Because of infrastructure constraints on the East Lansing campus, it became clear that the college would either have to incur significant capital expenses to grow on the present site, or expand its program to a new site. Because of the density of population, the presence of the significant portion of its affiliated hospitals, the high density of osteopathic physicians, and the opportunity to be of service to some of the neediest in the state, southeast Michigan was the logical site.

Parameters of the expansion were clear. In order to maintain the quality of medical education in the most cost-effective way, this would not be a new campus, but an extension of the program in East Lansing. The curriculum would be identical in both sites, faculty would be members of the same departments, and administrative staff would report to their analogous units in East Lansing. In fact, new distance learning technology would allow the college to provide exactly the same curriculum in real time at each site. These presentations would then be supplemented for the southeast Michigan students with discipline faculty on-site, and with osteopathic physicians from the area for clinical and osteopathic manipulative medicine education. The teaching of anatomy was a unique problem, and would be addressed with an anatomy lab at the site.

When it became known in southeast Michigan that the MSU College of Osteopathic Medicine was considering expansion, 18 credible unsolicited proposals came in offering to host the college. Though the original plan had called for only one expansion site, the MSU Board of Trustees selected two – one at Macomb University Center, part of Macomb Community College in Clinton Township, and one at the old Hutzel Hospital at Detroit Medical Center downtown. In addition, they doubled the size of the expansion, from 50 students to 50 at each site. Thus the 2009 entering class will total 300 students, and by 2012, enrollment will exceed 1,200. At the point the MSU College of Osteopathic Medicine will be the largest medical school in the state of Michigan.

In many ways the two sites offer complementary milieux for osteopathic medical education. Macomb offers an innovative, state-of-the-art educational institution situated among a high concentration of osteopathic physicians and partner hospitals. The DMC proffers an outstanding medical environment which will help students to appreciate the needs of an underserved urban population.

Following Board of Trustee approval in May 2007, the college began immediately to obtain accreditation for the expansion from the Commission on Osteopathic College Accreditation, a process that took more than a year and included applying secondarily for accreditation from the NCA. The action, taken by COCA after its September 2008 meeting, followed a thorough examination of the curriculum, faculty and staff, student support services, learning resources, and finances of the expansion. It included a visit to both the Detroit Medical Center and Macomb University Center.

During that time, the college has been involved in identifying faculty and staff positions, assessing and testing distance learning, planning infrastructure, establishing student and academic services, planning for recruitment and more. In addition, the college has worked to expand the number of hospitals who are part of the Statewide Campus System in order to proactively increase both the base hospital sites for clinical education of predoctoral medical students, and residency slots for postgraduate education.

The expansion sites both require significant construction and renovation to support osteopathic medical education. Detroit Medical Center just began renovation of part of the former Hutzel Hospital. Macomb will lease existing educational space to the college until a new building is constructed in the Macomb University Center complex to house college programs; groundbreaking will be scheduled this fall and construction is expected to be completed in January 2010.

Because of the partnerships with Detroit Medical Center and Macomb University Center, the expansion is highly cost-effective. Space is being leased at both sites, and, for example, Macomb is assuming the cost of the new building for the college. It is anticipated that once the college is receiving tuition revenues from 200 students (50 in each of two classes at two sites), the project will be fully self-supporting in only a few years.

Students will be recruited into one pool for all three sites; i.e., no student will be recruited to attend the DMC or Macomb or East Lansing per se. Assignments will be made for location for the first two years of medical education, after which they will again be joined in a single pool for third- and fourth-year clinical assignments in one of MSUCOM's 20 base hospitals.

MSUCOM's presence in Detroit, in particular, offers unique opportunities to recruit among medically underserved and impoverished populations, with an eye to developing physicians most apt to return to practice in these areas. To meet this need, the college will be recruiting particularly in southeast Michigan, and is developing programs to augment its OsteoCHAMPS program, which provides motivation, education and skills development to encourage economically disadvantaged high school students to be competitive for health professions careers.

The expansion of MSUCOM to southeast Michigan is a testimony to the power of collaboration. Educational institutions, the Michigan Osteopathic Association, community governments, state legislators, private businesspersons, community organizations, physicians' groups, hospitals and others all participated to help the college

achieve its mission. Faculty, staff and administrators have been working double duty to maintain the East Lansing program and facilitate the expansion. Osteopathic physicians in southeast Michigan, especially those who are part of MSUCOM's more than 2,000 volunteer clinical faculty, and hospitals in its Statewide Campus System have made significant contributions to the effort.

The most significant challenges the college encountered at this point were political, with powerful interests competing for site selection. Almost all of these issues were resolved when the MSU Board made its decision, through dialog, communication and consideration. Day-to-day challenges are occurring as distance learning systems are tested, infrastructure is planned, faculty and staff are identified, student support systems are put in place, and the college's community learns how to grow and adapt to accommodate these significant changes.

### **Assessment and Outcomes**

At this point, the MSU College of Osteopathic Medicine has few outcomes that can be evaluated. However, with such a significant process, both formative and summative evaluation is built into many programs. For example, in the development of appropriate distance learning, a significant cadre of faculty and present osteopathic medical students worked to test the systems that were proposed, offering suggestions that would enhance the learning experience for both groups. The college will be assessing questions such as

- What happens to the educational outcomes for the expansion site classes? Do they score as well on objective tests? Do they score as well on clinical measures? Do they score as well on licensure examinations?
- Are students educated in the expansion sites more apt to practice in southeast Michigan?
- Are students recruited from southeast Michigan more apt to practice in southeast Michigan?
- Are students educated in the expansion sites more apt to take residencies in MSUCOM's Statewide Campus System graduate medical education consortium?
- How effective is the distance learning employed for medical education? How do the students perceive it? How user-friendly is it for faculty?
- How well has the college been able to produce a sense of community among the three sites? To what extent has the college succeeded in having students significantly identify themselves with MSU even when they are not present on the East Lansing campus?

### **Sustainability**

The faculty, staff, administrators, Statewide Campus System hospital partners, volunteer clinical faculty, osteopathic profession, alumni, community leaders, and the leadership of the Detroit Medical Center and Macomb University Center are all highly and demonstrably committed to this expansion. The financial prospectus demonstrates the program can be self-supporting, assuming no economic tsunamis in the nation at large.

In short, the expansion of the MSU College of Osteopathic Medicine to southeast Michigan is good for the college, good for the university, good for our Statewide Campus

System hospitals, good for the Detroit Medical Center and Macomb University Center, good for our students, and ultimately good for the people of Michigan. As the college with the highest retention of alumni in the state, the highest production of primary care physicians, the highest recruitment of students from the state, and the highest retention of alumni in postgraduate medical education in Michigan, MSUCOM offers the best opportunity to meet physician workforce requirements for the future.

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1. Award Category: Education and Training Strategies to Build Michigan's Workforce

2. Organization and contact information

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3.

The Michigan Health Council may publish the abstract of our program, with our contact information, in printed materials for distribution by the Michigan Health Council: Yes.

The Michigan Health Council may publish the abstract of our program, with our contact information, on its website: Yes.

4. N/A