



PRESS RELEASE
For Immediate Release
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Virginia Medical School Celebrates Inauguration of Clinic in Honduras

The Edward Via Virginia College of Osteopathic Medicine (VCOM) in Blacksburg, Virginia celebrated the inauguration of its third international clinic in Tegucigalpa, Honduras. The Honduran clinic – along with previously established clinics in the Dominican Republic and El Salvador -- complements an extensive outreach program VCOM has locally, throughout Southwest Virginia, and internationally.

Dixie Tooke-Rawlins, D.O., Dean and Vice President of the Edward Via Virginia College of Osteopathic Medicine (VCOM), noted, “This initiative will provide medical students with experiences in compassionate care of patients and will bring high-level medical care to those who need it the most. There is a strong parallel with the experiences students gain in our Honduran and other international clinics with the skills needed to be effective in rural and underserved areas in the U.S. Our students will be better physicians here in Virginia and in other underserved areas of Appalachia as a result of these international experiences.”

Graduates who experience this international exposure as part of their medical education will be better prepared to work with culturally diverse populations. They will learn to fine tune their Spanish language skills and gain cultural exposure, which will be critical in serving a rapidly increasing Hispanic population in the U.S. And, since infectious diseases have no geographical boundaries, VCOM students will have experiences which will translate later in their careers.

Preparing Global Health Leaders

VCOM is working closely with the Honduran Government, the World Health Organization, and the affiliated Pan American Health Organization to develop strong

research and health care program in the regions. The Baxter Clinic is also a significant affiliate partner of VCOM in the region.

Some of the VCOM medical students who have rotations at the clinic are concurrently enrolled in a PhD program in Global Health Leadership. This dual doctoral degree program is unique. Two VCOM students are conducting research at the clinic: one on children's nutrition and another on osteopathic manipulation to enhance health. This on-going research program will enhance knowledge development in Honduras, leading to better health care and enhancement of health care knowledge in developing countries.

Attendance at the Inauguration and related activities included many dignitaries in Honduras such as the Dean of the Medical School in Honduras and Amicus Foundation Board of Directors, as well as representatives from the Ministry of Health, Physician's Professional Association, Rotary International of Honduras, Millennium Challenge Corporation of the US, and other important representatives of foundations and agencies. Formal agreements with key partners have been developed to establish working relationships and other similar agreements are in process.

TEXT ENDS. TWO PHOTOS FOLLOW.



VCOM and Honduran Clinic Inauguration
Mr. Steve White, President of Amicus; Dr. Jim Wolfe, President of VCOM, Mr. John Rocovich, Chair of the Board at VCOM, Dr. Dixie Tooke-Rawlins, Dean of VCOM



Dean and Vice President, Dixie Tooke-Rawlins and Assistant Vice President for International and Rural Outreach, Dean Sutphin with D.O. /PhD candidate Anika Richards in the VCOM Honduran Clinic

About VCOM: Located in Blacksburg, Virginia, the Edward Via Virginia College of Osteopathic Medicine (VCOM) prepares osteopathic primary care physicians to serve the rural and medically underserved areas of Virginia, North Carolina and the remaining Appalachian region and provides scientific research that will improve the health of all humans. The College has a collaborative partnership with Virginia Tech and is located in Blacksburg, Virginia,

About Osteopathic Physicians: Osteopathic physicians (D.O.s) are licensed in every state to practice the full scope of medicine, including examining patients, diagnosing illness, performing surgery, and writing prescriptions. D.O.s practice in every field of medicine as full physicians and since their training emphasizes principles that the body can heal itself given optimum conditions, disease prevention and proper nutrition and exercise are emphasized in their practice of medicine. D.O.s are also trained in musculoskeletal manipulation to address overall health needs of their patients.

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