Wyoming WWAMI

WWAMI – 40 Years
Wyoming WWAMI – 15 Years

2011-2012

WWAMI – 40 Years
Imagine a medical education program that takes up about 27% of the land mass and includes eight percent of the population of the U.S. The WWAMI program was founded in 1971, in response to physician shortages in the Northwestern United States. It included Washington, Alaska, Montana, and Idaho. One of the program’s novel components was providing medical education for more than one state. There are no other medical schools that cross state lines. The program also trains medical students in their home state during the 1st year. “The WWAMI medical patient program is designed to have people go out and train in rural and remote communities so that they understand all the benefits—and also the challenges—of providing care,” says Suzanne M. Allen M.D., MPH, Vice Dean for Regional Affairs. Wyoming is proud to be the newest member of the WWAMI program. We look forward to being a partner as WWAMI meets the challenges of medical education and the workforce needs of our region.

Wyoming WWAMI – 15 Years
In 1997, ten medical students begin their 1st year of education at the University of Wyoming. This began Wyoming’s affiliation with the University of Washington WWAMI program, and the start of Wyoming’s Medical School. Our first physicians finished residency and returned to Wyoming in 2004 and 2005. Since that time 55 Wyoming WWAMI graduates have finished residency training. Of that number, 37 (67%) have returned to Wyoming to practice medicine.

Our emphasis on rural, primary care has succeeded. Nine, (24%) of our returning graduates are practicing family medicine. If we include pediatrics and primary care internal medicine, the number increases to 20 (54%). We have had 8 physicians return in rural general surgery and emergency medicine. This increases the total number of returnees practicing rural primary care to 28 (76%).

Because of the amazing success of the Wyoming WWAMI program, the Wyoming legislature increased our class to 20 students beginning in 2011. Our physician workforce needs in Wyoming now also require more emphasis on specialty care. It is unfortunate that our physician return rate of 67% is almost matched by the percentage of Wyoming citizens seeking specialty care out-of-state. In the coming years our challenges will be to educate communities so that both primary care and subspecialty physicians trained by the WWAMI program return to our state.

Want to know more about WWAMI – Wyoming
www.uwyo.edu/wwami
WWAMI Physicians Return to Wyoming in 2011

**PEDIATRICS**
Sadie West, MD – Cheyenne Children's Clinic  
Andy Rose, MD – Cheyenne Children's Clinic

**INTERNAL MEDICINE**
Greg McLanahan, MD – Laramie Pediatrics and Internal Medicine

**FAMILY MEDICINE**
Sarah Durney, MD – Powell Valley Healthcare, Powell  
Ivory Winfrey, MD – Family First, Cheyenne

**EMERGENCY MEDICINE**
Bret Birrer, MD – Campbell Co Memorial Hosp, Gillette

**ORTHOPAEDIC SURGERY**
Mark McKenna, MD – Gem City Bone & Joint, Laramie

**SURGERY**
Brock Anderson, MD – Surgical Associates, Casper

**2011-2012 Wyoming Class**
Jeffrey Bank – Carroll College  
John Barnes – UWYO  
Brandon Bluemel – BYU  
Tanner Clark – UWYO  
Steven Flynn – UWYO  
Matthew Fournier – UWYO  
Carley Grubbs – UWYO  
Christopher Ideen – Columbia Univ. NY  
Lauren Johnson – UWYO  
Nathaniel Kaan - UWYO  
Matthew Kapes – Arizona State  
Ashley Klone – Washburn Univ. of Topeka  
Dean Lorimer – UWYO  
Stephanie Lyden – UWYO  
Mattson Matthey – UWYO  
Maxwell Matson – UWYO  
Dhairyasheel Patel – Univ. of Washington  
Griffen Sharpe – UWYO  
Mark Wefel – Montana State  
Hope Wilson - UWYO

**WMS Top Graduating WWAMI Students:**
Ben Widener, MD – Big Horn. He is a first year resident in Internal Medicine at the VA Medical Center in Boise, ID

**WMS Centennial Scholarship Recipients:**
Trent Morton – Cody  
Lindsay Capron – Cody – Both are currently second year WWAMI students.

**Gruden WWAMI Scholarship Recipients:**
Amy Kennedy is from Wheatland. Trent Morton is from Cody. Lindsay Capron is from Cody. Dane Hill is from Evanston. All four students are second year WWAMI students.

**WWAMI Graduates 2011**

Jie Chen, MD – Laramie  
Psychiatry - UC Davis Med Ctr., Sacramento, CA  
Jacob Rinker, MD – Recluse  
General Surgery - Central Iowa Health System, Des Moines, IA  
Ketura Talbot, MD – Worland  
Family Medicine - Rapid City Reg Hospital, Rapid City, SD  
Jason Vergnani, MD – Gillette  
Diagnostic Radiology - Francis Hospital, Evanston, IL  
James Waters, MD – Jackson  
Emergency Medicine - Albany Medical Center, Albany, NY

Lisa Mullen (Hill), MD – Newcastle  
Family Medicine - Family Med Res of Idaho, Boise, ID  
Samantha Michelesa, MD - Buffalo OB/GYN - Creighton Univ Affil Hospitals, Omaha, NE  
Kristopher Schamber, MD – Green River  
Internal Medicine - VA Medical Ctr, Boise, ID  
Leah Selby, MD – Cheyenne  
IM/Peds - Loma Linda Univ, Loma Linda, CA  
Rebecca Thompson, MD – Wheatland  
Pathology - U Arizona Affil Hospitals, Tucson, AZ

Tyler Weaver, MD – Casper  
Internal Medicine - Prov St. Vincent Hospital, Portland, OR  
Benjamin Widener, MD – Big Horn  
Internal Medicine - VA Medical Ctr, Boise, ID  
Carol Wright, MD – Cheyenne  
Emergency Medicine - George Washington Univ., Washington, DC
Wyoming Clerkship Sites

Students may attend third and fourth year required clerkships as well as fourth year electives in any of the five states. Wyoming has the following clerkship sites:

**Third Year Clerkships**

**Family Medicine**
- **Buffalo** – Larry Kirven, MD
- **Torrington** – Marion Smith, MD
- **Cheyenne** – Doug Parks, MD

**Internal Medicine**
- **Jackson** – Ellen Meyers, MD & Dennis Butcher, MD
- **Lander** – Justin Hopkin, MD
- **Douglas** – Lori Tobler, MD
- **Sheridan** – Wendell Robison, MD

**OB/GYN**
- **Rock Springs** – Peter Allyn, MD
- **Cody** – Dale Myers, MD & Lisa Williams, MD
- **Cheyenne** – Mary Ellen Foley, MD
- **Lander** – Jan Siebersma, MD
- **Riverton** – Stephen Rotholz, MD

**Pediatrics**
- **Cheyenne** – Joseph Horam, MD
- **Jackson** – Travis Riddell, MD

**Psychiatry**
- **Casper** – Stephen Brown, MD

**Surgery**
- **Casper** – James Anderson, MD
- **Sheridan** – Sara Smith, MD

**Fourth Year Clerkships**

**Emergency Medicine**
- **Casper** – J.R. Realing, MD

**Neurology**
- **Casper** – David Wheeler, MD

**Surgery Selectives**
- **Buffalo** – Blaine Ruby, MD
- **Riverton** – Dennis Lewis, MD
- **Cody/Powell** – Nicholas Morris, MD & Nathan Rieb, MD
- **Gillette** – Rodney Biggs, MD
- **Cheyenne** – Paul Johnson, MD (Otolaryngology Head and Neck Surgery)

**Orthopaedic Surgery**
- **Jackson** – David Khoury, MD

**Electives Offered in Wyoming**

**Surgery**
- **Casper** – Jim Anderson, MD
- **Cody/Powell** – Nicholas Morris, MD & Nathan Rieb, MD
- **Cheyenne** – Take Pullos, MD
- **Gillette** – Rodney Biggs, MD

**Emergency Medicine**
- **Jackson** – Will Smith, MD

**Family Medicine**
- **Cheyenne** – Doug Parks, MD
- **Casper** – UW FM Residency

**Cardiology**
- **Casper** – Wesley Hiser, MD
- **Jackson** – David Khoury, MD

**Dermatology**
- **Casper** – Scott Bennion, MD

**Child Psychiatry**
- **Casper** – Stephen Brown, MD

**Radiology**
- **Powell** – Lawrence Dirkson, MD
- **Casper** – Joseph McGinley, MD

**Infectious Disease/Pulmonary**
- **Casper** – Mark Dowell, MD & Donald Smith, MD
~ WWAMI Preceptors and Faculty ~

1st Year Preceptors
Debra Anderson, MD
John Bragg, MD
John Byers, DO
Mike Comly, MD
Justin Deluca, MD
John Haeberle, MD
Kate Hannifan, MD
Joel Higgins, MD
Brian Horst, MD
Travis Klingler, MD
Paul Lehmitz, MD
Greg McLanahan, MD
Daren Mikesell, DO
William Miller, MD
Gary Pearson, MD
Lars Peterson, MD
William Portilla, MD
John Scandrett, MD
Patrick Tufts, MD
Jack Ullrich, MD

First Year Wyoming WWAMI Faculty

Nineteen faculty members from three colleges at the University of Wyoming deliver the first year of the WWAMI medical education. Several of our faculty teaches primarily in the WWAMI program, and others participate on a voluntary overload basis. The WWAMI faculty and their departments are reimbursed for their participation in the program. We are grateful for the effort and dedication of our WWAMI faculty. They are a critical component of an outstanding medical education program.

Brenda Alexander, Ph.D. – Nervous System
Gerry Andrews, Ph.D. – Microbiology & Infectious Disease
Rick Dreiling, Ph.D. – Anatomy/Histology
Robert George, Ph.D. – Histology/Cell Physiology
Dale Isaak, Ph.D. – Immunology
Hermann Schatzl, M.D. – Microbiology & Infectious Disease
Pam Langer, Ph.D. – Biochemistry
Matthew McEchron, Ph.D. – Nervous System
Kurt Miller, Ph.D. – Biochemistry
Ken Robertson, M.D. – Introduction to Clinical Medicine
Merl Raisbeck, Ph.D. – Cell Physiology
Tim Robinson, Ph.D. – Medical Information & Decision Making
Mark Stayton, Ph.D. – Biochemistry
Don Swiatek, M.D. – Anatomy
Chaoqun Yao, Ph.D. – Microbiology & Infectious Disease
Jonathan Fox, Ph.D. – Nervous System

Shadowing Opportunities

Applicants to the Wyoming WWAMI Program have traditionally had strong academic records; however, many of the applicants have not had sufficient exposure to medical practice situations during their undergraduate years. The UWSOM requires medical school applicants to complete a minimum of 40 hours of shadowing experience with a physician. In the past, many Wyoming applicants did not obtain this minimum level of shadowing, and thus entered the medical school application process at a disadvantage. Dr. McEchron along with Dr. Rich Hillman and members of the Wyoming Medical Society have started to develop a statewide physician-shadowing network. The goal of the network will be to place undergraduate premed students with physicians interested in providing clinical shadowing experience. The program allows students to be matched with interested physicians from a variety of specialties. The WWAMI program is working closely with the Wyoming Area Health Education Center to connect students with doctors. Our shadowing network has been able to facilitate physician shadowing for a number of undergraduate students. Thanks to the dedicated service of physicians around Wyoming, this has provided invaluable clinical exposure that gives students an advantage on their application to medical school. Furthermore, these shadowing experiences will further increase student interest in the practice of medicine.
Admissions Committee
The Wyoming WWAMI Admissions Committee consists of four Wyoming Physicians who volunteer their time to review all applications for the Wyoming WWAMI Program. They then participate in group interviews of selected applicants. These interviews take place in Laramie, WY in January. Students have the opportunity to visit UW SOM in Seattle if they desire. Our admissions committee members are:

Gary D. (Doug) Schmitz, MD, Surgery-Cheyenne
David Fall, MD Pediatrics-Gillette
Deeann Johnson-Engle, MD, Family Medicine-Douglas
Mark Wurzel, MD, Family Medicine-Powell

Wyoming Rural Clinical Experience
This clinical program for all third-year WWAMI students brings students to Wyoming when they do their third year clinical rotations. It is available for up to four students per year. Students may come from any of the WWAMI states, and they qualify for the program if they do four or more of their six required third-year clerkships in Wyoming. The Wyoming Regional Clinical Dean’s Office makes final selection, and students participating in the program receive preference for their required clerkships. Each student also receives a $2,000 dislocation allowance. This program will promote the practice of medicine in rural Wyoming and will eventually increase the number of physicians in our state.

Participants ~ 2010-2011
Brian Menkhaus – Laramie, WY
Erin Catellier – Cheyenne, WY
Brian Hardy – Cheyenne, WY
Elin Hammer – Lander, WY

Participants ~ 2011-2012
Mary Mrdutt – Casper, WY

Participants ~ 2012-2013
Catherine Cantway – Laramie, WY
Alyse Springer – Sheridan, WY
Trent Morton – Cody, WY
David Mills – Ten Sleep, WY
Jennifer Moore – Seattle, WA

R/UOP (Rural / Underserved Opportunities Program) is for WWAMI students finishing their first year of medical school. Students spend four weeks working with a rural physician. The purpose of the program is to encourage medical practice in rural communities by providing students with hands-on experience in clinical practice and intimate exposure to a rural community. It provides students with an opportunity to discover how patients receive health care away from the highly specialized resources of the academic medical center in Seattle.

Wyoming WWAMI

WRITE
WRITE (WWAMI Rural Integrated Training Experience) is a unique program that promotes and emphasizes rural care to medical students in their third year of medical education. Only 15-20 students from each WWAMI class of approximately 216 students are accepted into the WRITE program each year. The WRITE students complete 20 weeks of their third year of medical school in one rural community. During this time they complete Family Medicine and portions of the Pediatrics, Internal Medicine and Psychiatry requirements. At the end of the WRITE experience the students are extremely comfortable with the practice of medicine in a rural environment. Wyoming’s WRITE Sites are located in Powell, Lander and Douglas where a large number of physicians and other health professionals participate in training our future physicians.

Wyoming Rural Clinical Experience

AHEC
The Wyoming Area Health Education Center’s (AHEC) mission is to increase access to quality health care and to use educational programs as an incentive to attract and retain health care providers in areas of need. Programs and services offered through the Wyoming AHEC are community-based and focus on community/academic educational partnerships. Wyoming received $75,096 in federal grant funds for the period of September 1, 2010 to August 31, 2011. These funds are used for recruitment and retention activities for students and residents in health professions; for placing students in interdisciplinary, rural clinical settings as a way to encourage health professionals to locate in rural communities; and for continuing education programs for nurses, physicians, and other health professionals, and partial support for CHAP and SPARX activities.

CHAP
Community Health Advancement Program (CHAP) began at the University of Wyoming in 2001 and is modeled after a similar program at the University of Washington. The University of Wyoming Division of Medical Education and Public Health and Wyoming AHEC sponsor CHAP. The purpose of the CHAP program is to involve students interested in health care professions in community activism and volunteer projects. Students design, plan, implement, staff and evaluate these programs, with assistance and guidance from the Wyoming Area Health Education Center.
Wyoming is fortunate to have two family medicine residency programs funded through the University of Wyoming. The program in Casper accepts six residents per year while Cheyenne accepts eight residents. Dave Driggers, M.D. who is Director of Medical Education at the University of Wyoming directs both programs.

Both residencies participate in the WWAMI Family Medicine Network. This is a group of residencies throughout the WWAMI region that promotes quality graduate medical education. They also have a goal of meeting the workforce needs of the region. Dr. Driggers is working diligently to assure excellence in the training of family physicians for Wyoming. One of the main goals of the family medicine residencies is to train family physicians who will provide care for Wyoming and its citizens.

The University of Wyoming also provides the first year of medical education for the Wyoming WWAMI students. Matt McEchron, PhD, provides outstanding leadership overseeing the first year of education. He also directs the RUOP program and has developed shadowing opportunities for students interested in medical school through the WWAMI program.