Greetings from beautiful Connecticut and the University of Bridgeport (UB). The university has been methodically transforming itself into a university-based center of excellence in integrative, complementary, and wellness-based healthcare through its Division of Health Sciences and the UB Clinic. Integral to this transformation is the UB College of Naturopathic Medicine (UBCNM), a member of the division, along with the Center for Bioethics, the Connecticut Nutrition Institute, Acupuncture Institute, Physician Assistant Institute, and Fones School of Dental Hygiene.

The formation of the UBCNM in the 1990s represented a return of naturopathic medical education to the east coast of the United States for the first time in many decades. Our naturopathic medicine and other health sciences alumni include prominent physicians and healthcare providers throughout the nation, including many at top-tier academic medical centers such as New York University (New York City), Vanderbilt University (Nashville, Tennessee), Tufts University (New Haven, Connecticut), and The Johns Hopkins University (Baltimore, Maryland). New developments at the UBCNM are highlighted herein, as well as the accomplishments of some of our students.

Center of Excellence in Generative Medicine With Dr Peter D'Adamo

The past year has been a productive one for Dr Peter D'Adamo as a member of the College of Naturopathic Medicine (CNM), a unique center for exploring systems analysis, molecular biology, and bioinformatics to more fully understand the self-healing behaviors that form the basis of naturopathic pharmacology and inform the treatments for personalized care. Initiated in phases, what began as a specialty clinic shift in personalized medicine was followed by a series of 3 didactic courses in biochemical individuality and generative medicine incorporated into the curriculum. The next phase is the physical site for the COE, scheduled to open in spring 2012 in a beautifully restored Victorian house located on campus and directly across the street from the UB Health Sciences Center.

Advanced Clinical Training for Physicians

Dr D'Adamo is also a guest in the naturopathic and integrative medicine field but also an internationally acclaimed researcher and author of the perennial New York Times best seller Eat Right 4 Your Type (Putnam Adult), as well as author of the forthcoming Fundamentals of Generative Medicine (Drum Hill Publishing). Although students have been learning from Dr D'Adamo for years at his practice based in Wilton, Connecticut, and at national conferences, his education is greatly enhanced by his presence in the classroom and clinic. Dr Elizabeth Pimentel, interim dean of the UBCNM, has been an enthusiastic supporter of the COE development from the beginning, stating: "We are thrilled that we are able to offer our students the opportunity to learn from someone who has been called the 'most creative scientist in the Western world' and who is a true pioneer in our profession." Student clinicians supervised by Dr D'Adamo on the personalized medicine shift reinforce the lessons gleaned in the classroom by gaining firsthand experience in using naturopathic systems analysis to fine-tune their treatment recommendations and by observing clinical outcomes. At the new COE, Dr D'Adamo will continue to teach and research his theories on the effects of the common human polymorphisms on personalized nutrition. In addition to expanding its curriculum of the naturopathic program, the center will provide high-quality patient care, conduct research, and offer postgraduate training, with a new certificate in generative medicine.

Clinical Education in Multiple Areas

Located within the Health Sciences Center on campus, the UB Clinic is becoming known regionally as the place to come for evaluation and treatment of a broad range of problems from an interdisciplinary perspective within a facility that includes naturopathic medicine, nutrition, acupuncture, chiropractic, and dental hygiene services. The UB Clinic provides valuable healthcare services to almost 20,000 patients in the southern Connecticut region annually, including many who are uninsured and underinsured and would otherwise have no access to naturopathic medical care. This facility, along with many off-campus clinical sites, provides a wonderful training opportunity for our ND students to experience a well-rounded palette of clinical experiences during their training.

Grounded in naturopathic philosophy, the clinical program of study at the UBCNM is continually evolving to meet the demands of a changing medical landscape. The clinical experience includes specialty teaching shifts in the following areas: functional medicine, homoeopathy, mind-body medicine, integrative oncology, pediatrics, personalized and general medicine, physical medicine, and women's health.

In January 2011, Dr Jared Skovron, faculty member and author of the textbook Fundamentals of Nutritional Pediatrics (CCNM Press), created the Pediatric & Autism Clinic in the UB Clinics and has since helped thousands of children by providing naturopathic management for colds, asthma, eczema, stomach complaints, attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder, and other health conditions. The clinic also specializes in DAN (Diet Autism News) biomedical therapy for autism. While most DAN providers charge more than $1000 for each visit, Dr Skovron and his team of interns are offering nutritional healthcare to all children for less than an average copayment. Dr Skovron says: "Research shows long-term health problems start when children are young. By treating children early, naturally, you are giving them a lifetime of health." The Pediatric & Autism Clinic thoroughly analyzes each child, providing nutritional analysis and physical examinations, while educating parents about the proper use of herbs, vitamins, homoeopathic remedies, and healthy diet and lifestyle changes.

The New Center for Naturopathic Medicine

With a new clinic on the horizon, the UBCNM can ensure that its graduates are the health-care leaders in the cutting-edge medicine of the 21st century. An increase in the number of patients treated within the naturopathic clinic has led to a capital campaign to improve and renovate an entire floor in the 8-story Health Sciences Center building on the campus of the UB. The improvements will also give students a state-of-the-art clinic, allowing for better clinical educational opportunities. Along with 18 examination, treatment, and consultation rooms, the new facility will boost group conference and learning rooms, an on-site microvascular library that connects to the powerful UB digital library system, and a SMART (SMART Technologies, Calgary, Alberta, Canada) classroom and educational center. Naming-opportunity rights for large donors are available, including the naming of individual rooms and spaces, as well as the naming of the center and the UB Health Sciences Center building. A kickoff celebration will be held at the UBCNM Homecoming Gala in June, which will also honor its first UBCNM graduating class, from 2001. You may visit www.bridgeport.edu/donate to find more information on the development campaigns for the new center and to provide support for the project at any level.

Dual-Degree Options for ND Students

Naturopathic medical students at the UB also have the opportunity to attain their MS in acupuncture and/ or human nutrition in addition to their ND degree. The MS in human nutrition can be attained within the same 4-year time frame as the ND degree, while the combined ND/MS in acupuncture is a 5-year program.

Proven Educational Quality and Performance

A team of UBCNM students won $500 and a glowing trophy at the ZRT Cup (ZRT Laboratory, Beaverton, Oregon), which was held last August in conjunction with the American Association of Naturopathic Physicians Annual Convention in Phoenix, Arizona. Team members were Nicole Hall, Kyle Miyasaka, Keith Sanders, Lisa Laughlin, and Ailsa Louden and were coached by faculty member Dr Frank LaRosa. The UB team bested teams from naturopathic schools throughout North America during the competition. The team advanced in the grueling multi-day elimination competition by successfully answering more than 400 questions covering the medical and biological sciences that make up the naturopathic curriculum. Interim dean Dr Elizabeth Pimentel said: "They certainly did us proud! Their hard work paid off, as was evident in their rapid responses and confidence under pressure. This year marks the second consecutive year that the team has won the ZRT Cup and prize money. Last year, the team donated a portion of their prize to the UB Health Sciences Development Fund to help refurbish the health sciences student lounge.

The mission and goals of the UB support the vision of a truly changed healthcare system with integrative options in healthcare for everyone, not just for those of means.

Within the context of an integrated division of health sciences, the UBCNM is uniquely positioned to have a major part in the realization of this vision. This starts with well-educated and qualified graduates who are committed to these same principles, and that is exactly what we strive to produce every day. At the UB, we are committed to changing the future of healthcare one practitioner at a time!

For more information on the UB, please visit http://www.bridgeport.edu/academics/graduate/naturopathic.