Hello,
Greetings from The Breezeway. In addition to meeting and greeting alumni around the state, our Office of Alumni Relations has been increasing communications with alumni via email and through the website, and now in print. There has been a lot happening at your medical school, and we want to keep you informed.

I have been on board as dean since October of 2015, and thanks to a transformational gift from the McGovern Foundation, our name was changed to McGovern Medical School last fall. Every day, faculty and staff are working to enhance our teaching, clinical, and research programs. These are exciting times.

Since becoming dean, I have sent out a weekly newsletter via email to all faculty, staff, students, and residents. I invite you to subscribe to Study Break (med.uth.edu), or just check in and take a look at what your medical school is up to on a weekly basis. I have found my weekly emails to be a nice way to update everyone on relief in top of mind for the week; I also love to receive feedback (Dean.Stoll@uth.tmc.edu), so please let me know what you want to see from your school and your alumni office.

I look forward to meeting you at an upcoming alumni event.

Warm regards,

Barbara J. Stoll, M.D.
Dean, McGovern Medical School

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Student Welcomes Hosted Around The State

The Class of 2020 has already made it to Houston to start classes at McGovern Medical School. But before classes began, McGovern Medical School hosted a series of the incoming class members closer to their hometowns.

On June 14, Catherine McNeese, M.D., ’00 and Cedric DuPont, M.D., ’01 hosted the Central Texas students in Austin. Houston-area students enjoyed meeting each other and alumni at the home of alumna Vicki Regan, M.D., ’87 and her husband, Tom, on June 21. And on June 29, Dallas-area students enjoyed a reception held at the home of alumna Amy Wilson, M.D., ’00 and her husband, John. At all of these receptions, students enjoyed Mexican food and refreshments along with alumni stories about the school and its traditions.

By Darla Brown
Office of Communications
Helen Elizabeth (Betty) Murphy, the medical school's first registrar, died in Waco Sunday, June 12, 2016. She was 89.

Known as “Mom Murphy” by medical school students, she joined the medical school staff in 1975 and retired in 1988. Despite her retirement from the school, Murphy made an indelible mark on the institution and the people within it. Since 1992, the Betty Murphy Award has been granted to the student in the entering class who best exemplifies her attributes, namely caring for others and kindness.

John Ribble, M.D., dean emeritus, remembered, “Betty Murphy, a strong outspoken and caring person, knew every student by name and was familiar with their joys and woes,” remembered John Ribble, M.D., dean emeritus. “She was their champion and worked diligently for their welfare. She was one of a kind!”

She is survived by her sister, Genevieve Sewell of Phoenix; daughter Mary Loots and husband Rick of Rogers, Ark.; son Patrick Murphy and wife Janet of Waco; and son Michael Murphy and wife Sue of Houston; seven grandchildren; and two great-grandchildren. She was preceded in death by her husband, Stanton Patrick Murphy, and daughter Kathleen.

Donations to the Betty Murphy Student Scholarship may be sent to UTHealth, Office of Development, P.O. Box 1321, Houston, TX 77251-1321 or made online at go.uth.edu/bettymurphysch.
DISTINGUISHED ALUMNUS AWARDS

Grant Fowler, MD
Department of Family and Community Medicine
McGovern Medical School

Jane Fitch, MD
Department of Anesthesiology
McGovern Medical School

Two outstanding alumni of McGovern Medical School will be honored in special ceremonies Friday, Oct. 21, at the Coast (formerly Trevisio).

Grant Fowler, M.D., ’84, and Jane Fitch, M.D., ’88, are the 2016 winners of the Distinguished Alumnus Award of McGovern Medical School and will be the featured guests of honor at the Distinguished Alumnus Award ceremony. Established in 1987, the purpose of the award is to recognize outstanding contributions of alumni in the areas of medical science and education, or the prevention and treatment of illness, as well as continued interests in McGovern Medical School and its students.

Grant Fowler, vice chairman of McGovern Medical School’s Department of Family and Community Medicine, remains medical education at the medical student and resident levels.

“I cannot overstate how much of an asset Dr. Fowler is at our institution,” wrote one of his nominators. “He has educated many residents, including me, over the years, and his impact on the trainees is everlasting.”

Board certified in family medicine, Fowler is additionally certified in geriatrics and sports medicine as well as in lipidology. He completed his family medicine residency at Memorial Southwest, UT Medical School, and is known as McGovern Medical School and additionally completed a certificate of training from the University of Houston Clear Lake. He joined the faculty at McGovern Medical School in 1987 as an instructor.

Fowler is past president of the Harris County Academy of Family Physicians and served on the board of the Association of Family Medicine Residency Directors. He frequently presents medical information and advice through public speaking and media opportunities. He has published Procedures for Primary Care, a procedures textbook authored by Denton A. Cooley, M.D., recipient numerous honors including 2017 Texas Academy of Family Physicians Exemplary Teaching Award and inductee into the Alpha Omega Alpha Medical Honor Society, as an alumnus in 2015.

Fitch is professor and chair of the Department of anesthesiology at the University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center in Oklahoma City. Following graduation from McGovern Medical School, she completed a transitional internship at St. Joseph’s Hospital-Houston and completed a certificate in anesthesiology at the University of Washington, Seattle, becoming chief resident. After residency, she pursued a fellowship in cardiothoracic and vascular anesthesiology at the University of Washington, Seattle, where she also served as a clinical instructor. She then joined Yale University School of Medicine as an assistant professor, fellowship director and associate operating room manager for Yale-New Haven Hospital. In 1998, Fitch returned to Houston, where she served at Baylor College of Medicine as associate professor, division chief, and remained until 2007, when she was recruited to the University of Oklahoma as professor and chair of the Department of Anesthesiology.

“Her contributions to the clinical care of patients and service to her department, medical school, and community have been exemplary and continue to make her a most deserving candidate for the Distinguished Alumnus Award,” wrote one of her nominators.

Fitch has served in numerous national leadership roles in her specialty, including being only the second woman to serve as president of the American Society of Anesthesiologists in 2016, as organization of 50,000, started in 1905. She is the 2016 recipient of ASA’s Excellence in Government Award. Fitch also is completing her term as immediate past president of the Society of Academic Anesthesiology Associations and the Association of Academic Anesthesiology Chairs. She has been active in international anesthesiology and was made an honorary member of the Romanian Society of Anesthesiology and Intensive Care. Fitch began her career in health care as an intensive care unit nurse, followed by nurse anesthetist.

The event honoring these distinguished alumni will begin at 6 p.m. on Oct. 21 with a reception and continue with dinner at 7 p.m. For more details and to attend, please contact Derrick Miller, director of alumni relations at Derrick.j.miller@uth.tmc.edu or 713-500-5181.

“Dr. Fitch’s contributions to the clinical care of patients and service to her department, medical school, and community have been exemplary and continue to make her a most deserving candidate for the Distinguished Alumnus Award.”

Carin Hagberg, MD

“Dr. Fowler is at our institution, he has educated many residents, including me, over the years, and his impact on the trainees is everlasting.”

Graham Segal, MD
The annual retreat for new medical students, hosted by the second-year class, was a great success August 12 – 13. Held at Camp Allen in the Piney Woods northwest of Houston, this year's retreat theme was “MedVengers,” superheroes, except with a medical student twist. Superheroes was the selected theme because it defines identity and community, two words that define the beginning of your medical journey.

The retreat featured a mix of fun and games, as well as more serious faculty presentations and workshops ranging from medical ethics to tips on building study skills. Friday morning included opening remarks from Dean Barbara J. Stoll, M.D., faculty, and small group discussions on surviving medical school. Friday afternoon outdoor games included relay races and friendly tug-of-war team competitions, leading up to an even busier evening.

No student retreat is complete without the long-awaited skit produced by and starring the host second-year students, who worked hard to top the skit they enjoyed as new students one year earlier. This year's skit included a variety of digitally recorded bits and live action performances. Following the skit, a late night costume party was lively and entertaining as all participants were encouraged to wear a superhero costume.

Henry Strobel, Ph.D. retired associate dean of alumni relations and faculty affairs, began organizing the annual student retreat for the incoming class of 1977. Strobel attended this year's retreat, but has passed the torch to Mark Farnie, M.D.,'87. With approximately 50 faculty and alumni participating, this was a stellar year for the retreat.

Visit med.uth.edu/alumni for more pictures from this year's retreat.

More than $100,000 has been raised to date for the Henry W. Strobel, Ph.D., Freshman Retreat Fund in response to a class-based challenge set forth by the Alumni Association in conjunction with McGovern Medical School.

In celebration of the 40th anniversary of the Annual McGovern Medical School Retreat for freshmen, each class is being challenged to raise $25,000 for the purpose of fully endowing the retreat fund. This fund will support students by keeping registration fees affordable and ensuring the sustainability of the beloved retreat for years to come.

So far, 133 donors from 33 classes, as well as a group of non-alumni donors, have participated in the challenge. Currently, the largest total commitment from a class is $9,673 by the class of 1979 and the largest overall commitment comes from the McGovern Medical School Alumni Association with a kick-off gift of $25,000.

A class can meet its $25,000 goal in any number of ways. For instance, five people could each pledge $1,000 per year for five years, or 25 people could each pledged $1,000 a year for five years. Each gift, no matter its size, makes a huge impact and supports students as they prepare for their medical education.

The retreat was first organized in 1977 by Strobel, retired associate dean of alumni relations and faculty affairs. Every year, it is a place where friendships are formed, memories are made and new journeys are begun. It features superheroes, valuable wisdom for surviving medical school, informative faculty presentations, fun games, lots of laughter and time to bond with fellow students, alumni and faculty.

This year's retreat, hosted once again by the second-year class, featured the theme “Superheroes” and was held at Camp Allen in Navasota, Texas, Aug. 12-13. Donations to the retreat fund can be made online at go.uth.edu/retreatchallenge or for more information, contact Derrick J. Miller, Director of Alumni Relations, Derrick.J.Miller@uth.tmc.edu or at 713-500-5181.

$101,590 and COUNTING DONATED to STROBEL RETREAT FUND

by Jessica Vanderpool
Communication Specialist
Annual Giving
What are your hopes for today’s McGovern Medical School students?
I hope that we all continue to strive to learn and keep up with technology with the intent that we will be better able to care for our patients. I hope that the physicians we are educating will learn the importance of selflessness, compassion and to always keep patient care at the center of our lives.

What inspires you?
My wife’s endless desire to seek out different ways to help other people, whether it’s donating to our university or trying to support our local medical school and hospitals, or supporting various church and community fundraising events because these things help other people.

Who is your mentor?
I believe that my life has been influenced by many people. I learned my work ethics and family values have been molded by my father. I learn about the technical aspects of my work from numerous orthopedic surgeons and other physicians. And underlying it all I believe that I learned about compassion and humility and caring and serving others from the life of Jesus Christ.

What’s a day on the job like?
Begin with an early start including a short workout and a cup of coffee. Round on our inpatients making sure each patient has a plan for the day followed by a busy clinic day or an OR day with consults and calls thrown in there to make things interesting. At the end of the day, I look forward to a quiet evening and home cooked dinner with my wife, followed by a brief nap and a final workout and final preparation for any cases the next day, then an early turn in and early start the next day.

What skill is most vital to your job?
As an orthopedic surgeon, manual dexterity and the ability to mentally picture fracture patterns and joints depicted on a monitor when performing arthroscopic surgery is important, but foremost, communication with my patients and my teams and colleagues.

What music is on your iPod/iPhone?
Ray Charles’ “What I’d Say,” Ronnie Milsap’s “It was Almost Like a Song.”

What is the one thing you can’t live without and why?
My wife, Rebecca. She is my life and my reason for existing.

What fulfills you most?
Knowing that my work has helped to improve the lives of others around me, especially our patients.

Who would you most like to meet (alive or deceased) and why?
I would like to meet Jesus to learn about God’s plan for us and how we can learn to strive to live our lives well in all that we do during the course of each day.

What has been your greatest adventure?
Life is my greatest adventure: from growing up in a military family to becoming a physical therapist to marrying a wonderful wife, having two great sons, becoming a Physician and orthopedic surgeon, being deployed twice with the military, performing exciting and rewarding surgeries and watching my children grow into their adult lives. Life brings more challenges and adventures ahead of each of our lives.

CONVERSATIONS
From The Leather Lounge

An interview with
Victor Ursua, M.D., ’03
Orthopedic Surgeon
Residency:
Orthopaedic surgery at LSU Shreveport

EDITORIAL
Derrick J. Miller
Director of Alumni Relations

Send in your Class Notes.
Let us know what is happening with you and find out what your classmates have accomplished. Please email us at ms.alumni@uth.tmc.edu regarding your personal and professional accomplishments for our “Class Notes” section of the website.

UPCOMING EVENTS
• October 21 Distinguished Alumnus Awards at Third Coast (formerly Trevisio)
• October 22 Alumni Reunion at La Colombe d’Or
• December Austin Student Wel come Reception
• December College Station Student Welcome Reception

For more information on these events, please visit our website at www.uth.edu/alumni or contact Derrick J. Miller at Derrick.J.Miller@uth.tmc.edu or 713-500-5181.

Have a new phone number? Changed your email address? Want to receive the bimonthly electronic version of The Breezeway? If so, please take a moment to update your contact information at www.uth.edu/index/alumni-form.htm or fill out the enclosed card and return in the pre-paid envelope.

CONTACT

Send in your Class Notes.
Let us know what is happening with you and find out what your classmates have accomplished. Please email us at ms.alumni@uth.tmc.edu regarding your personal and professional accomplishments for our “Class Notes” section of the website.

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