

WesternU/COMP professor named Northup Educator of the Year

HILARY F. FOSTER, OMS IV

In 1976, George W. Northup, DO, then the editor in chief for AOA publications, was recognized by the Student Osteopathic Medical Association (SOMA) for his dedication to osteopathic medical students. Since then, SOMA has annually presented the George W. Northup, DO, Educator of the Year Award to one faculty member at an osteopathic medical school who has significantly impacted students' medical education. SOMA's past Northup recipients have gone above and beyond their job duties to encourage and support their students. Many

have volunteered their time outside of the classroom to tutor students or participate in extracurricular activities. Others have opened their homes to students and have become trusted mentors and friends.

Elizabeth Rega, PhD, an associate professor of anatomy at the Western University of Health Sciences College of Osteopathic Medicine of the Pacific in Pomona, Calif, is the recipient of SOMA's 2006 George W. Northup, DO, Educator of the Year Award.

Each year during the SOMA spring convention and House of Delegates' meeting in Washington, DC, members from participating schools give short presentations about their nominees for the Northup award, and then a vote is taken. This year, SOMA chapters from 13 osteopathic medical schools presented videos, PowerPoint® slides and creative speeches about why their nominee should win.

In April, SOMA members from WesternU/COMP captivated the House of Delegates with a slide show describing Dr Rega's enthusiastic anatomy lectures. Their presentation showed how she uses pictures of her 5-year-old son, Darwin, to illustrate human anatomy and how she draws on her training as a biological anthropologist to teach human bone structure by making comparisons to dinosaurs.



The winner of the Student Osteopathic Medical Association's 2006 George W. Northup, DO, Educator of the Year Award, Elizabeth Rega, PhD, gives an anatomy lesson in her laboratory at the Western University of Health Sciences College of Osteopathic Medicine of the Pacific (WesternU/COMP) in Pomona, Calif, where she is an associate professor of anatomy. (Photo courtesy of WesternU/COMP)

“Dr Rega is an inspiration to all of us, and it is so wonderful when such a selfless and dedicated person is recognized for her efforts,” says SOMA Region III Trustee Sophia Ghebremicael, OMS III, of WesternU/COMP. “In the classroom, she goes above and beyond the call with review sessions, sample questions with answers and explanations, and extra hours in the anatomy lab—even on weekends. Dr Rega works hard and plays hard, and she does it all with a smile.”

Anatomy consultant

Dr Rega is no newcomer to being recognized for her devotion to students. In 1999, she was awarded the Mary Wig Johnson Faculty Excellence in Teaching Award from Scripps College in Claremont, Calif. She also received California State University’s Outstanding Achievement in Equity and Diversity Award in 1996 for activities promoting understanding issues of racial diversity. And recently, she was awarded tenure at WesternU/COMP after less than six years on the job.

Over the years, Dr Rega has received 11 research grants totaling \$192,300 and has contributed to more than 25 publications. Interestingly, she works as a consultant on human and primate anatomy for both The Walt Disney Co and Sony Pictures Imageworks. Her anatomic expertise can be seen in such animated characters as Disney’s Pocahontas, Mulan, Tarzan, Brother Bear and John Henry.

Dr Rega will be honored at the SOMA Foundation reception during SOMA’s fall convention, which will be held in conjunction with the AOA’s 111th Annual Convention and Scientific Seminar in Las Vegas in October. At that time, the SOMA chapter at WesternU/COMP will be pre-

SOMA lines up ‘awesome’ Northup nominees

Elizabeth Rega, PhD, was not the only outstanding instructor nominated for the Student Osteopathic Medical Association’s 2006 George W. Northup, DO, Educator of the Year Award. The following 12 nominees were described by SOMA chapters as “devoted,” “intelligent,” “the best teacher ever” and “awesome.”

- James W. Binkerd, DO, a professor of osteopathic manipulative medicine at the Touro University, College of Osteopathic Medicine—California in Vallejo.

- Anthony G. Chila, DO, a professor of family medicine at the Ohio University College of Osteopathic Medicine in Athens.

- Maria L. Evans, MD, an associate professor of internal medicine at the Kirksville College of Osteopathic Medicine of A.T. Still University of Health Sciences.

- Robert T. Hasty, DO, an assistant professor of internal medicine at the Nova Southeastern University College of Osteopathic Medicine in Davie, Fla.

- Diane R. Karius, PhD, an assistant professor of physiology at the Kansas City (Mo) University of Medicine and Biosciences College of Osteopathic Medicine.

- Michael L. Kuchera, DO, a professor of OMM at the Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine.

- Jonathan Leo, PhD, the assistant dean of student affairs and a professor of anatomy at the Lake Erie College of Osteopathic Medicine-Bradenton in Florida.

- Judith Maloney, PhD, an associate professor of pharmacology at the West Virginia School of Osteopathic Medicine in Lewisburg.

- Don Matz, PhD, an associate professor and the chairman of the anatomy department at the Des Moines (Iowa) University, College of Osteopathic Medicine.

- Reza Nassiri, the director of international affairs at the Lake Erie College of Osteopathic Medicine in Erie, Pa.

- Chris Reilly, PhD, an assistant professor of physiology at the Edward Via Virginia College of Osteopathic Medicine in Blacksburg.

- Howard S. Teitelbaum, DO, PhD, the associate dean for the Office of Community Outreach at the New York College of Osteopathic Medicine of New York Institute of Technology in Old Westbury.

—Hilary Foster

sented with \$250 in Dr Rega’s name, and a member of the chapter will be awarded a \$500 scholarship based on outstanding service to SOMA and the osteopathic medical profession.

SOMA is grateful to all the deans, faculty, physicians and leaders in the osteopathic professional family who, like Dr Rega, help mold osteopathic medical students into caring and enthu-

siastic DOs of tomorrow. Congratulations to Dr Rega for being named George W. Northup, DO, Educator of the Year. AOA

A fourth-year student at the West Virginia School of Osteopathic Medicine in Lewisburg, Hilary F. Foster chairs the SOMA Foundation.