

Medical Center Welcomes 23 Resident Physicians

By Ryan Schlehuder

Mackinac Island Medical Center has begun its summer rotation of resident doctors. From May until October, 23 licensed resident doctors will spend two to four weeks working at the facility to gain more experience in the family practice field.

The program, which has been in operation since the 1980s, usually rotates two doctors at a time. The program provides additional staffing for Dr. Don Weersing and his staff during the busy summer while it provides the resident doctors with clinical experience outside a large university setting.

Once physicians are licensed to practice medicine, they are required to participate in a three-year family practice program with medical facilities outside the university to gain board certification in family practice.

Their experience on the Island will be an eye-opener for many of them, said Dr. Weersing.

"Because of the wide range of different complaints that come in, and with the lack of back-up, the biggest thing they get from their experience on the Island is confidence in themselves," he said. "They're from large universities where every piece of equipment and any kind

Program Designed To Familiarize Area Businesses With Parks Sites

Mackinac State Historic Parks (MSHP) offers an ambassador program that provides free training about the

parks to employees of Straits-area restaurants, shops, and lodging facilities.

"We invite these businesses to join the program and take advantage of its benefits," said Gregory Hokans, MSHP chief of development and marketing. They include free admission for employees to Colonial Michilimackinac, Fort Mackinac, Historic Mill Creek, and Old Mackinac Point Light-house.

Park staff is available to give special tours of these sites, said Mr. Hokans, or staff members will visit area businesses to make presentations about the park system.

"The goal of our Ambassador program," said Mr. Hokans, "is to ensure that Straits-area front-line staff are provided with the information they need to succeed in serving the 1.4 million visitors that pass through our region each summer."

Bike Riders Roll Onto Island for Annual Event

By Eric Fish

On the evening of Saturday, May 19, hundreds of cyclists as part of the 18th annual Zoo-De-Mackinac bicycle tour poured onto Mackinac Island following the 51-mile ride from Boyne Highlands.

The bike ride, a leisurely scenic tour, began Saturday morning at the Boyne Highlands Resort and took riders along the shoreline of Lake Michigan to Mackinac City. A ferry ride to Mackinac Island to celebrate the accomplishment ended the weekend event.

An estimated 2,400 people participated in the 2007 Zoo-De-Mackinac, said founder Greg Drawbaugh, nearly 250 more than last year and setting a new record.

"It's just a good way to start the spring," said Julie Middlin, a four-year rider from Ferndale. "It's a good way to hang out with your friends for the weekend, but not sit in front of the TV."

Ms. Middlin participated in the event with six friends. Second-year rider Mariana Bravo rode with 12 friends this year, up seven from last year.

"Most of the people come from friends," Mr. Drawbaugh said. "Two people will come and have a ball, then come back with more. It's just a testament of how fun the weekend is and how good the ride is."

He started the event 18 years ago with the help of his brother. In the ride's inaugural year, it had eight participants. Now, riders come from California, Chicago, Georgia, and even as far away as the United Kingdom and Australia.

"We just kind of shook our heads and watched it grow," said Mr. Drawbaugh, who also helps market the affair to state-wide newspapers and through posters and other advertising techniques. "You just kind of shake your head and wonder where these people are coming from."

"It's a good atmosphere," said Dino Paglia, a first-year rider from Rochester. "A lot of people that were there were real friendly."

Dr. Nkiruka Obioha

Dr. Nkiruka Obioha was born and educated in her native home of Nigeria before coming to the United States in 2000 to pursue a career in family medicine.

"The U.S. is a first world country so you have everything at your disposal," she said of transitioning to American medicine practices. "You've got the medication, you've got the technology and you've got all the resources to work with."

She arrived on the Island Sunday, May 20, with her husband George and three daughters; four-year old Chisomaga, and 16-month-old twins Eneanya and Chikamara.

Following her stint on Mackinac Island, Dr. Obioha will resume her third year of residency at Henry Ford Hospital in Detroit and has a



Dr. Nkiruka Obioha

job lined up in Maryland following her graduation from the program in September.

Dr. Obioha said she enjoys the homely, small town aspect of the Island so far.

She will serve on the Island from May 20 to June 3.

of specialist is accessible on a whim. But here, we rely much more on our clinical equipment and intuition."

Dr. Weersing said resident physicians also must adjust to the Medical Center's communication system, which are low-band radios rather than pagers and cell phones.

"Having to speak over the radio sometimes is a little intimidating for them," he said.

Along with Dr. Weersing, Mackinac Island's only full-time, year-around physician, the Medical Center staffs three nurses, two secretaries, and six emergency medical technicians. The three nurses fill one full-time position, however, they are

always on call as the Medical Center is a 24-hour, seven-days-a-week operation, which includes said Dr. Weersing.

Resident physicians must take on whatever walks through the door, said Dr. Weersing. The most common treatments are orthopedic-type injuries and lacerations but the facility also sees a good share of heart and respiratory problems, and allergic reactions.

The Mackinac Island Medical Center provides only housing and a travel stipend for its resident physicians while their university programs fund their base salary. The resident physicians and their families are housed in the Medical Center's

apartments on the third floor.

The following is a list of names of the resident physicians for the summer and when they will arrive:

May 20 to June 3: Nkiruka Obioha

May 27 to June 8: Jennifer Tucciarone

June 3 to June 17: Summer Liston

June 10 to June 24: Nick Minnaar

June 17 to July 1: Kevin Young

June 24 to July 8: Aaron Fraser

July 1 to July 15: Tabindeh Khalid

July 8 to July 22: Madiha Farhat

July 15 to July 29: Keary O'Connor

July 22 to August 5: Kari Young

July 29 to August 12: Amanda Shoemaker

August 5 to August 19: Joong Eun Shin

August 12 to August 26: Luc Vlad

August 19 to September 2: Jill Miedema

August 26 to September 9: Sally Chu

September 2 to September 16: Jonathon Martinek

September 9 to September 23: Miriam Garcellano

September 16 to September 30: Sneha Cipriano

September 23 to October 7: Syna Kuttothara

September 30 to October 14: Natia DiPaolo

October 7 to October 21: Erin Diviney

October 14 to October 28: Alanna Wiarda

NOTE: One resident physician, Jing Li, has already completed a rotation (May 6 to May 20).



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