

# the *heartbeat*

Official newsletter of the Doctors and Dentists for Tomorrow Program

Spring 2017

## Spring 2017 Semester Begins

The spring 2017 semester of the DDFT program at the College of Micronesia FSM has begun. Students reunited with friends after the holiday break, and excitedly greeted faculty as they returned to begin the new semester. Students will be taking Anatomy and Physiology, Chemistry, English, and the History of Micronesia. As with the fall semester, the focus will be on learning basic science concepts in an applied clinical setting as students prepare to become the future healthcare providers of the Federated States of Micronesia.

*"We're thrilled to have the students back on campus, and are looking forward to another incredible semester. Great things are in store for 2017!"*

- Dr Brian P. Mangum  
DDFT Faculty

*"This is an exciting way for us to showcase what the DDFT program is all about, what makes us unique, and how we are working towards a better Micronesia!"*

- Ms. Holly Lyons  
DDFT Faculty

## Hollywood Comes to Campus

Hollywood came to COM-FSM in the form of a local film crew that followed DDFT students to classes, labs, and even on hospital rounds. The short film will be used as a promotional tool, and will be distributed across the Federated States of Micronesia. The film crew spoke to students from each of the four states about their experiences in the DDFT program, what they are learning, and how the program is preparing them to be the future doctors and dentists of Micronesia. In addition to the classroom and laboratory experiences, the film crew also followed students as they worked in the Pohnpei State Hospital. Early clinical exposure to the hospital, clinics, and public health department is a key element of the DDFT program.



### In this issue

- Hollywood comes to campus
- Essential study tips for DDFT success
- Medical oddities and trivia
- DDFT holiday party features Mr. and Mrs. Claus
- Journal club: joys and challenges of becoming a physician
- And more...

## Medical Oddities & Trivia

Who would eat raw beef? Well, a man in China found out the hard way that you shouldn't. After seeing his doctor complaining of nausea, vomiting, loss of appetite and weight loss, physicians identified a fragment of the tapeworm *Taenia saginata*. Eventually, the man passed a 20-foot-long specimen of the beef tapeworm which had likely been growing inside his intestine for at least two years before doctors helped him flush out the lengthy stowaway.

The only bone in the human body that is not connected to another bone is the hyoid bone. Located in the throat, at the back of the tongue, this horse-shoe-shaped bone supports the tongue and its muscles. It is also known as the lingual bone, with lingual meaning tongue, and is suspended by ligaments from the base of the skull.

## Essential Study Tips

DDFT is an intense preparatory program for both medical and dental school. Sometimes the challenge of getting it all done can seem overwhelming. That's why our study skills experts have compiled this list of eight essential study tips for DDFT students.

**Cramming is bad:** waiting until the last minute to study is a bad idea. When you cram information at the last minute before a test – like at 4 am – the information only stays in your mind temporarily. When you need it later in the class, or even next semester, it's not there anymore.

**Use index cards:** organize your study notes on index cards and include only the critical information. This will make it easier to quiz yourself and others. Having a vocabulary word on one side of the card, and the definition on the other, is a great way to test yourself and your friends.

**Quiz each other:** speaking of index cards, use these to quiz each other between classes, while walking to lectures, at lunch, or even when riding on the bus to and from rotations at the hospital.

**Work with a group:** it's not just about quizzing your friends while walking to class, but about having a study group that you work with on a regular basis according to your schedule. Try to rotate yourself between several study groups so that you see how everyone works.

**Have a study schedule:** premed and medical school is about information management. So much information is given to you that you must have a schedule that allows you absorb it all. Having a study and life schedule will allow you to do this; and, it will make you feel like you have control of your life.

**Work at it every day:** while you do need some free time, in premed and medical school you have to work every day. Make sure you understand the material that was covered in your lectures and labs on the day it happens, not the day before the test. If you are confused, talk to your professors – we aren't as mean as we look and sound.

**Don't get down on yourself:** everyone has a bad day, a bad week, and even a bad month now and then. When this happens, don't get down on yourself. Try to maintain a positive attitude. Talk to your friends and professors. Then move on and do better. No one can change the past, but you can change the future.

**Set aside time to relax:** everyone needs down time. You can't balance chemical equations and memorize the anatomy of the upper arm twenty-four hours a day. Set aside some time every day where you can zone out and relax. But remember, not too much time!



DDFT students and faculty gather for COM-FSM Opening Convocation

## Fall DDFT Semester a Success

DDFT students had a successful first semester at COM-FSM. Students excelled in Expository Writing, Advanced Reading, Human Biology, Computer Applications, and Statistics. With the success of students in the fall semester, everyone is looking forward to many great achievements in the months ahead, as students, faculty, and staff return refreshed from their holiday breaks.

## Journal Club: Joys and Challenges of Becoming a Physician

DDFT students will have a chance to learn about both the joys and the challenges of becoming physicians and dentists through a new journal club. For the spring 2017 semester, under the direction of DDFT faculty, the journal club will focus on Dr. Robert Marion's book, *Learning to Play God: The Coming of Age of a Young Doctor*. This book follows Dr. Marion as a young pediatrics intern as he faces the most challenging year of a young physician's life.

### No one said becoming a doctor was easy

In telling his story, Dr. Marion presents twenty gripping and extraordinarily candid cases which DDFT students will use to learn about many common medical conditions that interns face in their first year of training. Students will also explore the complex emotions that young doctors are challenged with in the face of sleep deprivation, critically ill patients, and making life-and-death decisions. The journal club will help students be better prepared for the emotional challenges of medical and dental school, as well as enhance their critical thinking skills as they discuss cases with their faculty.

## Grand Rounds

A 52 year old female presents to her internist for a regular check-up. Her blood pressure is 162/100 mmHg. She is 142 pounds, 5'6" tall, does not exercise on a regular basis, and is the mother two adult children. She is currently separated from her husband of twenty years. What stage of hypertension is the patient in? What should the patient's ideal weight be? And what would be your first steps in managing this patient?

DDFT students, if you know the answer, send an email to Dr Mangum. The first five correct responses will receive four extra credit points on the midterm examination in Anatomy and Physiology.

## English Class Focuses on Medical Issues of Micronesia

The medical issues facing the future doctors and dentists of Micronesia are vast and complex. From non-communicable diseases – such as cardiovascular disease, diabetes, and cancer – to infectious disease threats – like leptospirosis, Zika virus, and typhoid – DDFT students need to understand what these threats are, the impact they have on the people of the FSM, and what research is being undertaken to address them. This will be the focus of the spring 2017 semester's English class.

Under the direction of DDFT faculty, students will read a series of research articles on the most pressing issues to the health and wellbeing of Micronesia. Students will then develop proposed solutions that use both medical as well as public health approaches. Students will then present their findings to faculty for critique and feedback on a weekly basis.

Such an approach will not only expose students to the medical issues facing the region, but also develop their ability to think critically as the future healthcare leaders of tomorrow. Students will also develop the ability to read and appraise the medical literature – both critical skills for the future healthcare providers and leaders of the FSM!

## Steps-to-Success Program Provides Additional Support

The DDFT program is challenging. It goes beyond what is normally taught in the first year of a premedical program, and focuses heavily on clinical application of basic science materials.

Every student receives access to the wrap-around services offered by the program, such as mandatory study hall, counseling sessions with personal and academic advisers, additional lectures on medical ethics, and so forth.

Because of the intensity of the program, sometimes students need additional support for success.

Recognizing this, the DDFT faculty and staff have developed a program to identify and work with those students who require additional support. The Steps-to-Success program provides more frequent meetings between students and faculty members, study skills assistance, and when needed one-on-one tutoring sessions. The DDFT faculty and staff are committed to the success of the program, as each DDFT student represents the future health security of Micronesia.

*“Steps-to-Success is just one more way that the DDFT program is working hard to ensure that these students have all of the tools they need to become the future doctors and dentists of Micronesia!”*

- Mr. Robert Spegal  
DDFT Program Manager



# DDFT Holiday Party Features Secret Santa with Mr. and Mrs. Claus

On December 9th, DDFT students and faculty gathered together for an end of the semester party at SEI Restaurant. Mr. and Mrs. Claus distributed presents for all in a Secret Santa style gift exchange. Many DDFT students sang Christmas carols, in English and in their native languages. Students were given humorous awards based on their personalities both inside and outside of the classroom, such as Mr. Manners and Ms. Inquisitive. Students, faculty, and staff had a wonderful time before dismissing for the holiday break.

## Doctors and Dentists for Tomorrow (DDFT)

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