2020 Anniversary Report

50 years of medical education for Delawareans

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History and Background
The Delaware Institute of Medical Education and Research (DIMER) was founded in 1969, as an alternative to an in-state medical school, to address the concern of access to high-quality medical education for Delaware residents. Upon creation, DIMER formalized a relationship with Thomas Jefferson University for 20 admission slots for Delawareans at Jefferson Medical College (now Sidney Kimmel Medical College (SKMC)). In 2000, DIMER expanded its education relationships to include the Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine (PCOM), further increasing access to medical education for Delawareans. PCOM originally held five admission slots for qualified Delaware applicants; in 2019, the number of admission slots was increased to ten. DIMER is incredibly grateful to both institutions, who accept qualified Delawareans into their respective medical education programs and provide the highest quality training to future physicians.

The DIMER Advantage
Of the 151 medical schools listed by the Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC), 120 have more in-state students than out of state students. As a state with no medical school, this would ordinarily present a disadvantage for Delaware residents seeking medical education, and future careers in medical professions. However, through its relationships with SKMC and PCOM, Delaware has secured a minimum number of slots for qualified Delaware applicants. On average, SKMC and PCOM each receive an estimated 10,000 applications per year for ultimately no more than 280 slots per respective institution. As a DIMER applicant, Delaware resident applications are pulled from the overall application pool and evaluated only against Delaware applicants. Being one out of 90-100 significantly improves an applicant’s odds of receiving one of the 30 or more slots for Delaware matriculants. To date, SKMC has matriculated 949 Delawareans and PCOM has matriculated 225 Delawareans for a total of 1,206 DIMER students. DIMER provides one of the best medical education admission advantages in the country for qualified applicants from the First State.

Delaware Branch Campus and Residency
DIMER is not only focused on providing medical education opportunities for Delawareans, but also in the retention of Delaware physicians to serve our communities. DIMER’s relationships extend beyond its education partners and into Delaware’s health systems. DIMER medical students at SKMC and PCOM have an opportunity to conduct their third- and fourth-year rotations at the Delaware Branch Campus. The Delaware Branch Campus provides medical students clinical training at ChristianaCare, Nemours / A.I. duPont Hospital for Children and the Wilmington VA Medical Center. PCOM clinical rotations have recently grown to also include Bayhealth’s Kent and Sussex Campuses.
In addition to providing medical education opportunities, ChristianaCare and Nemours / A.I. duPont Hospital for Children offer an array of residency opportunities. Delaware residency match opportunities are not limited to Delaware Branch Campus partners, as Saint Francis also has a residency program, and Bayhealth will launch its residency program in 2021. Meanwhile, other health systems are also exploring graduate medical education options for the future. The range of options will provide increased opportunity for Delawareans to complete their medical training and serve their community in their home state.

Abstract Data and Outcomes
Since 1969, DIMER has matriculated 1,206 Delaware Students with 949 students to SKMC and 225 students to PCOM. Of the 1,206 DIMER students, 729 are male with 477 females represented. As we look at DIMER students by county: 680 originated from New Castle County while Kent and Sussex Counties were represented by a combined total of 465 students. For those Delaware medical students who have graduated from SKMC and PCOM, 334 went into primary care and 645 have gone into a specialty care. To date, the total number of DIMER students that have returned to practice in the First State is 229. Twenty percent have stayed to practice in Delaware, while 33.9% have ever practiced in Delaware (i.e. 13.9% of the 33.9% ultimately practiced elsewhere). The full DIMER Anniversary Report details data on the significant impact that DIMER and partners are making for the First State.

DIMER Board Activity for 2019
The DIMER Board was quite active in 2019. The Board of Directors met three times, and had many accomplishments spanning the year. The DIMER Board was instrumental in successfully securing additional state funding to increase the minimum number of Delaware admission slots at PCOM from five to ten, increasing access to high-quality medical education for Delaware applicants.

The DIMER Board recognizes the high cost for medical education and enormous debt students face upon graduation. The DIMER Board also recognizes that the current Federal-State Student Loan Repayment Program contains specific requirements for participation and funding. As such, the Board is working closely with the Delaware Health Care Commission (DHCC), Delaware Legislators, and partners such as the Delaware Health Sciences Alliance (DHSA), to create a Delaware Student Loan Repayment Program. This would provide for increased participation and funding support for those physicians with Primary Care focused specialties and serving in geographic areas of need throughout the State of Delaware.

Relationships are the foundation on which DIMER is built, including relationships with its educational and clinical partners, as well as with students, alumni and prospective students, families and alumni. Through its contractual partnership with DHSA, DIMER has implemented a robust strategy for engagement with DIMER students, alumni and the general community.

While DIMER’s charge is to ensure access to quality medical education for Delaware residents, DIMER’s mission and values extend beyond access. DIMER and its partners are committed to providing a network of support for its students and engaging students throughout the academic year in a variety of ways. The DIMER-DHSA partnership has resulted in providing personal letters to each student at the beginning of each academic year; co-hosting receptions with PCOM and SKMC for DIMER students to network with DIMER and institutional leadership; co-hosting a graduation reception with the Delaware Branch Campus for graduating students; and conducting participatory panels in every county with prospective students and families to discuss the many benefits of DIMER.
In 2019, the DIMER and DHSA leadership participated in and was represented at outreach events for current Delaware high school students interested in future medical professions in New Castle, Kent and Sussex Counties. Hosting outreach events for students and families is key to DIMER’s future success. Ensuring Delaware students understand the opportunities that are available to them through DIMER’s partnerships will help increase the qualified Delaware applicant pool, and ensure Delaware is well-represented from all three counties. Our outreach events provide an opportunity for students to hear from panels of experts including DIMER leadership, current DIMER medical students, DIMER alumni, DHSA leadership, and practicing physicians, as well as representatives from all our medical education partners and admissions offices. The panels provide insight into the DIMER program and admissions advantage for Delaware residents, recommendations for undergraduate studies, the application process for medical school, as well as the journey from medical student to resident to practicing physician. DIMER is optimistic that through continued partnership, outreach and engagement, more Delawareans will seek high quality medical education opportunities from our exceptional partner institutions.

Conclusion
Since 1969, the DIMER program has represented an incredible value for medical education in Delaware. The full anniversary report contains detailed information on demographics and data on DIMER graduates, as well as personal stories from state and institution leadership, including several DIMER alumni. DIMER’s approach to partnering with the DHSA, health systems and others has resulted in a robust array of services intended to facilitate a Delawarean’s pathway to medical school and improved chances of them returning to Delaware to practice needed specialties in their home communities. There remain important areas of investment, such as more robust student financial support. We are confident that with the support of the State and our many partners, we can improve healthcare access for our communities with the best-trained medical workforce anywhere. We are grateful to all who support DIMER.
For 50 years, the Delaware Institute of Medical Education and Research program (DIMER) has offered qualified residents of Delaware, a state with no medical schools of its own, the opportunity to receive a quality medical education.

Created in 1969 as an alternative to a state-supported medical school, the DIMER program sets aside 20 admission slots for Delaware residents to attend Sidney Kimmel Medical College at Thomas Jefferson University in Philadelphia, and 10 admission spots for Delawareans at Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine (PCOM). These are the minimum number of slots reserved for qualified first year applicants from Delaware and the schools often accept more, resulting in the two colleges functioning as Delaware’s medical schools.

As a former DIMER student myself and now the Cabinet Secretary for Delaware’s Department of Health and Social Services and a practicing family physician, I know our state needs more doctors, especially primary care doctors. A study by my department and the University of Delaware showed there has been a six percent decline in the number of primary care doctors in the state since 2013 even as our state’s population continues to age, creating a need for even more physicians.

That’s why we are thankful for the benefits the DIMER program is providing.

Since 2012, both Thomas Jefferson University and the Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine have accepted more students than they committed to accept. Thomas Jefferson’s Sidney Kimmel Medical College accepts an average of 24 to 29 Delaware students each year. The acceptance rate for Delawareans was over seven times higher than that for non-Delawareans. The Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine meanwhile is accepting 16-34 Delaware residents to its Medical School each year. The acceptance rate for Delawareans was over 11 times higher than for non-Delawareans.

DIMER is not only achieving its objective of enabling access to medical school for qualified Delaware residents, a review of graduates from Delaware to determine how many returned to the state to practice shows that 33.9% of Jefferson DIMER students and 31.1% of Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine DIMER students were found after residency training to have had a license to practice medicine in the state. The overall return rate is 33.6%.

Programs are underway to further enhance this strong return rate, allowing DIMER students to receive significant parts of their training in Delaware.

I look forward to seeing what the next 50 years bring.

Kara Odom Walker, MD, MPH, MSHS
Welcome
Nancy Fan, MD, Chair
Delaware Health Care Commission

As written in our mission statement, the Delaware Health Care Commission “strives to foster initiatives, design plans, and implement programs that promote access to high-quality affordable care, improve outcomes for all Delawareans, and foster collaboration among the public and private sectors regarding health care.” During my chairmanship, building a sustainable health care workforce for optimal access to health care for all Delawareans has become a priority initiative for DHCC. When the DHCC assumed the administrative responsibility for the Delaware Institute of Medical Education and Research in 1996, it began a productive and meaningful collaboration to achieve this goal. As a crucial leg in a multi-prong approach, DIMER has provided for hundreds of students from Delaware the opportunity to attend medical school with in state admissions acceptance, despite not having a medical school in Delaware. The recent “2019 Healthcare Workforce Study” by Dr. Tom Ferry, demonstrated the benefits of the admissions partnership with Sidney Kimmel Medical College and the Philadelphia College Osteopathic Medicine for Delaware students.

With DIMER as a successful foundation, the other “legs” for recruiting and retaining physicians in Delaware have been expanded by the exposure for medical students to Delaware through the graduate medical education residency programs, at the Delaware Branch Campus at ChristianaCare; and the soon to be established programs at Bayhealth. While Delaware has also benefited from a federal Student Loan Repayment Program (analyzed in the “2019 Health Care Workforce Study”), recruiting and retaining physicians would be substantially enhanced with an additional state-sponsored Health Care Provider Loan Repayment Program, which has been developed in our neighboring states of Pennsylvania, New Jersey and Maryland. These programs have proven to be effective tools, and can be considered another fundamental “leg” to the overall framework of workforce retention.

Finally, I applaud DIMER for expanding its outlook and developing an initiative for greater outreach to high schools. Exposing students at an early stage of their education to the potential opportunities of a career in health care is a valuable pathway for students interested in a career in medicine but lacking resources or knowledge of the process.

As we look back on the 50 years of DIMER in this report, I know DHCC looks forward to continuing the collaborative partnership with DIMER in promoting medical education and advancing our health care workforce as we strive for access for all Delawareans.

The Delaware General Assembly created the Delaware Health Care Commission in June of 1990 to develop a pathway to basic, affordable health care for all Delawareans.

The Delaware Health Care Commission embodies the public/private efforts which have traditionally spelled success for problem solving in Delaware. The Commission consists of 11 members, 5 of whom are appointed by the Governor, 1 appointed by the President Pro Tempore of the State Senate, and 1 appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives. Of the 5 members appointed by the Governor, at least 1 member shall be a resident of each county. The Insurance Commissioner, the Secretary of Finance, the Secretary of Health and Social Services, and the Secretary of Services for Children, Youth and Their Families or their designees shall serve as ex officio members of the Commission.

By creating the Commission as a policy-setting body, the General Assembly gave it a unique position in State Government. It is intended to allow creative thinking outside the usual confines of conducting day-to-day state business. The Commission is expressly authorized to conduct pilot projects to test methods for catalyzing private-sector activities that will help the state meet its health care needs. To achieve its goals, the Commission strives to balance various viewpoints and perspectives.

In 1996, the Commission assumed administrative responsibility for the Delaware Institute of Medical Education and Research, which serves as an advisory board to the Commission. Placing the administration of DIMER within the Commission enhanced its ability to accomplish its primary goal of providing Delaware residents greater opportunity for a medical education, while also expanding its mission to help the state meet its broader health care needs.

The Commission strives to balance access, quality and cost concerns, and develop recommendations that represent the best policy for the most Delawareans.
This year the Delaware Institute of Medical Education and Research (DIMER) celebrates our 50th Anniversary. Created in 1969 as an alternative to a state medical school, DIMER provides an opportunity for Delaware residents to obtain a high-quality medical education by reserving admission slots for our qualified applicants at partner institutions; increasing the odds for acceptance of Delaware students.

Relationships and collaboration are the foundation upon which DIMER’s success has been built. This year also marks 50 years of our partnership with the Sidney Kimmel Medical College (SKMC) at Thomas Jefferson University, where we have matriculated 949 Delaware students. A great deal of credit to DIMER’s success goes to the father of DIMER and former Chair, Dr. Leslie W. Whitney, whose tireless efforts helped to implement DIMER and create the relationship with SKMC. This year we celebrate our 20th anniversary with the Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine (PCOM) where we have matriculated 225 Delaware students to date. Special thanks and acknowledgement should go to Dr. Vincent Lobo for his assistance in creating our partnership with PCOM. I would also like to take this opportunity to acknowledge and recognize the unwavering support DIMER has received since its inception in 1969 by all serving Governors as well as many legislators who continue to champion our efforts. To date and in total, 1,206 Delawareans have entered medical school through DIMER.

DIMER is not only focused on providing medical education opportunities for Delawareans, but also on the retention of Delaware physicians to serve our communities. DIMER’s relationships extend beyond our education partners and into Delaware’s health systems. DIMER medical students at SKMC and PCOM have an opportunity to conduct their third- and fourth-year rotations at the Delaware Branch Campus. Led by ChristianaCare, the Delaware Branch Campus provides medical students clinical training at ChristianaCare and Nemours/AI duPont Hospital for Children. We are pleased Branch Campus relationships for PCOM have grown to now also include Bayhealth at their Kent and Sussex campuses. In addition to providing medical education opportunities, ChristianaCare and Nemours/AI duPont Hospital for Children offer an array of residency opportunities. We are optimistic of higher retention for Delaware physicians with the 2021 launch of the Bayhealth residency program, and are hopeful Beebe and Nanticoke residency programs will follow.

DIMER acknowledges the financial burden medical education presents and the current shortage of primary care physicians in the state of Delaware. DIMER is proud to be working with the Health Care Commission and Delaware Legislators in hopes of providing the 2020 Delaware Student Loan Repayment Program for use in recruiting primary care physicians to areas of need throughout the state.

One of DIMER’s greatest accomplishments in recent years has been its partnership with the Delaware Health Sciences Alliance (DHSA) which affords us opportunities to enhance awareness and market medical education throughout the first state. Through our relationship with DHSA and its member organizations*, we have conducted outreach in all three counties providing information on DIMER and our partnerships, and opportunities for Delawareans. We are confident our efforts will yield more Delawareans seeking the high-quality medical education provided by our partners, as well as retention of high-quality physicians to serve Delaware.

DIMER has much to be proud of in its quest for providing access to high-quality medical education for Delawareans over the past 50 years. However, there is still much work for DIMER to do, as we seek not only to ensure access to medical education, but also to strengthen retention of Delaware’s finest physicians. We look forward to serving for you for many years to come.

*DHSA member organizations: ChristianaCare, Nemours/AI duPont Hospital for Children, Thomas Jefferson University, University of Delaware, Bayhealth, Delaware Academy of Medicine/Delaware Public Health Association, Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine.
The Delaware Institute of Medical Education and Research (DIMER) Celebrates Its 50th Anniversary.

Sherman L. Townsend

The Delaware Institute for Medical Education and Research (DIMER) was established in 1969 as Delaware’s alternative to an in-state medical school. This year marks the 50th anniversary of its founding. At its core, DIMER sought to provide access to high-quality medical education for qualified Delawareans — a mission that continues to this day.

The initial estimates for establishing an in-state medical school were in the tens of millions of dollars annually, although this estimate assumed a stand-alone medical school without necessarily leveraging the strengths of university and health system partners. Today’s estimates, 50 years later, are well above $100 million annually to establish and operate a medical school in the State of Delaware!

The longest-standing DIMER partnership is with Thomas Jefferson University’s Jefferson Medical College, now Sidney Kimmel Medical College (SKMC). The initial agreement between the State of Delaware and TJU was for a minimum of 20 annual first-year slots to be reserved for qualified Delaware students. The first class of DIMER students was admitted in the fall of 1970. Since that time, more than 1,000 Delawareans have attended that medical school through the DIMER program.

In 2000, DIMER added the Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine (PCOM) as a partner, with an agreement to provide admission to at least five qualified Delawareans per year. More than 200 Delaware students have attended PCOM since 2000 through the DIMER program.
In all, since the inception of DIMER, more than 1,200 Delawareans have completed medical school at our partnering institutions. Among those students are Janice E. Nevin, MD, MPH, the President and CEO of Christiana Care Health System, and Kara Odom Walker, MD, the Secretary of the Delaware Department of Health and Social Services. Clearly, the program has made an impact across the board, including in key leadership positions.

While this program has been extremely successful, it hasn’t always been without hiccups. In June of 2016, due to a budget process snafu, the funding for DIMER was eliminated on the last day of the legislative session. In a flurry of intense support from the medical community, including the Medical Society of Delaware, the Delaware Hospital Association, countless health care stakeholders, and of course the dedicated legislators who recognized the vital importance of this program, the funding was restored and DIMER continued.

In order for the DIMER partnership with SKMC and PCOM to continue to grow, more than $1,250,000 are allocated in the state budget annually. This funding is minor compared to other states in the western part of the country that have similar programs. It is our hope that DIMER can continue to expand to open the doors to more Delaware students.

The fundamentals of the current DIMER agreement are similar to 50 years ago: a fixed amount of funding is provided by the State to partnering institutions in order to provide medical education to qualified Delawareans.

The DIMER class spanning both institutions (SKMC and PCOM) is currently 39 students, the largest first-year class ever! Christiana Care Health System serves as a hub and a branch campus for SKMC and PCOM. This allows medical students to receive the second half of medical school education (third and fourth year) in Delaware. Indeed, several students who choose to come to the Delaware Branch Campus are DIMER students, but the campus is open to all students from SKMC and PCOM.

In another boon to Delaware’s medical training, it was recently announced that in the summer of 2019, PCOM will begin rotations for medical students at Bayhealth, both in Dover and at the new campus in Milford. Bayhealth will also begin residencies in Family Medicine and Internal Medicine in the near future, which are expected to contribute to the Delaware workforce.

Currently, three other institutions are providing residency education in Delaware: Christiana Care Health System, Nemours, and St. Francis Hospital. Many of those entering residency in Delaware are former DIMER students, and thus they can complete the arc of their training locally.

While an in-state medical school is how most states in the U.S. provide education, and indeed this has been discussed since DIMER’s inception, it is worth noting that DIMER provides the most economical and efficient partnership model. DIMER is Delaware’s “medical school” with a current budget of less than $2 million annually. The DIMER program and the Delaware Branch Campus program currently provide the full medical school curriculum, prior to residency.

In the last two years, DIMER (through the Delaware Health Care Commission) has partnered with the Delaware Health Sciences Alliance (www.dhsa.org). DHSA is a non-profit alliance of major educational institutions and health systems in the region. This partnership has allowed a renewed focus on recruiting, retention, and data gathering in order to alleviate Delaware’s current and future physician workforce needs.

It should be mentioned that there are also some scholarship opportunities for qualifying DIMER students. At the time of this article, approximately $175,000 is earmarked for small scholarships to help offset the cost of education. Discussions are underway to enhance
It is estimated that the median debt for attending medical school was $200,000 in 2018 and as high as $300,000 for private medical institutions.

Currently, the Health Care Commission, DIMER, and other key health-care stakeholders are developing a new student loan repayment plan that will better meet the needs in the First State. This plan important in the future to consider tuition offsets and robust incentives to recruit and retain students in Delaware. These programs can be tied to current specialties of need, such as primary care, women’s health, and behavioral health, as well as other important emerging areas of future need such as hospital medicine and general surgery.

The major challenges nationwide in medical education revolve around cost. This directly affects recruitment and retention of physicians in Delaware. While there exists an SLRP, it will be left to right: Himani R. Divatia, DO, Associate Program Director of Med/Peds; Jack Qiu, fourth-year SKMC; Zack Lorenz, fourth-year SKMC; David Cohen, MD (Infectious Disease)

NEXT STEPS: CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

DIMER has thus far relied on self-motivated students to apply to medical school. We have begun now to partner actively with undergraduate institutions in Delaware to recruit qualified medical school applicants. It is particularly important to the DIMER board that incoming medical school classes represent Delaware in all its diversity and geographical characteristics.

The major challenges nationwide in medical education revolve around cost. This directly affects recruitment and retention of physicians in Delaware. While there exists an SLRP, it will be

left to right: Anna Filip, MD; Ashley Panichelli, MD; Erin Kavanaugh, MD.

Reflection: How the DIMER Program Shaped This Physician’s Career • By Ashley Panichelli, MD

I can still remember getting the call. I was standing in the organic chemistry lab, waiting for the Organic Chemistry 1 class to finish up the reduction of an unknown compound, when I received a call from a phone number with a 215 area code. I had recently interviewed at Thomas Jefferson University’s Sidney Kimmel Medical College (SKMC), and I knew I should be hearing soon about my admission status. Dean Callahan left a voicemail (that I still have to this day!) alerting me to my admission to medical school, and just like that, my medical and DIMER career began.

From the beginning of my medical journey, the DIMER program served as a crucial ally, propelling and shaping my career. I was born and raised in New Castle, Delaware. After graduating from high school at St. Andrew’s School, I traveled to Vermont to pursue my undergraduate degree at Middlebury College. As I began to investigate medical schools, I found out about the DIMER program. Through my research I learned that as a Delaware resident, the DIMER program would support me financially, while also improving my chances of getting into a medical school near my hometown. After spending time away from my community, I knew that I wanted to return home for my future education and career and, from what I could determine, the DIMER program could help me along this journey.
Starting from my first day at SKMC, the DIMER program was important to my development both directly and indirectly. Financially, the DIMER program helped to provide desperately needed funding for tuition. As a family medicine physician, every dollar helps. More informally, the DIMER program helped me toward my career in primary care. As a second-year medical student, my fellow students led me to discover SKMC’s Delaware Branch Campus at Christiana Care Health System (CCHS). As part of the DIMER Program, I was able to complete all of my third- and fourth-year clinical rotations through CCHS.

By staying on one clinical campus, I was able to get used to one health system and electronic medical record. I was able to see patients across specialties; I saw patients in the emergency room whom I then saw in their primary care provider’s office or operating room. This experience allowed for much of the stress and worry to dissolve that normally comes with rapidly changing not only clinical rotations, but also site. I could simply take care of patients. Additionally, I got to spend time with physicians who were previous DIMER program participants and had stayed to practice locally. They were able to provide guidance beyond the subject of medical care. They welcomed me into my local medical community and helped illuminate the needs of the patients in my backyard.

Largely due to my earlier DIMER experiences, I pursued a residency in Family Medicine at CCHS. I currently practice as a primary care provider and faculty member for the Christiana Care Family Medicine Residency Program. Through my work, I am able to take care of my community while teaching young physicians and students.

The DIMER program was crucial in my development as a clinician. As a primary care provider and Delawarean, I urge continued support of the DIMER program. We need smart, hardworking, innovative doctors to fall in love with our community, grow roots, and continue to help elevate the health of our patients and neighbors.

Ashley Panichelli, MD is a family physician working for the Family Medicine Residency Program at Christiana Care.

REFERENCES

CONTRIBUTING AUTHORS
SHERMAN L. TOWNSEND is the Chair of the Delaware Institute of Medical Education and Research. He served as a trustee of the University of Delaware for 30 years and was one of the founders of the Delaware Community Foundation. He is a retired First Vice President of Merrill Lynch and resides in Dover.

Acknowledgment
DR. OMAR KHAN provided helpful comments and input on a draft of this manuscript.
On behalf of the Board of the Delaware Health Sciences Alliance, I am tremendously pleased to contribute to the creation of this landmark publication - the 50th Anniversary Report of DIMER.

As a Delawarean, I have personally seen the meaningful impact of DIMER and its partners on health throughout the First State. This includes recruitment of highly qualified Delawareans, and the provision of opportunities for medical school through two outstanding DHSA member institutions: Sidney Kimmel Medical College (SKMC) at Thomas Jefferson University and the Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine (PCOM).

The Alliance was formed over 10 years ago with the mission of improving Delaware’s health through partnerships between health-centered institutions. On DIMER's 50th anniversary, the DHSA is a different organization and stronger than ever. The Founding Partners of DHSA (ChristianaCare, Nemours/A.I. duPont Hospital for Children, Thomas Jefferson University and the University of Delaware) are joined now by Bayhealth, the Delaware Academy of Medicine/Delaware Public Health Association and the Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine. Our leadership is collectively committed to the highest quality medical and health sciences education and programs for Delaware’s benefit, and we are incredibly proud of our partnership with DIMER to help make this happen.

Over the last year, I have seen how the DIMER Board, led by Mr. Sherman Townsend, works tirelessly to advance opportunities for Delawareans. I have observed and participated in Health Care Commission meetings, led by Dr. Nancy Fan, with the aim to make our lives better and healthier. I have heard our leadership, including Governor John Carney, Lieutenant Governor Bethany Hall-Long, and Cabinet Secretary for Health & Social Services Dr. Kara Odom Walker, commit their time and energies to serving Delawareans through these programs in which we are all partners.

As an alternative to a state-based medical school, the “Delaware Medical School” is, in fact, the DIMER Program (which provides for enhanced admission to qualified Delawareans); plus the Branch Campus model (wherein students from SKMC and PCOM can carry out their entire 3rd and 4th year of medical school in Delaware institutions like ChristianaCare). Combine this with the opportunities for residency education after medical school at four Delaware institutions (Bayhealth, ChristianaCare, Nemours/A.I. duPont Hospital for Children, Saint Francis Healthcare), and loan repayment for DE practice after residency - and we have a robust program, at low cost, with tremendous outcomes.

I encourage you all to read the recent issue of the Delaware Journal of Public Health, guest edited by Secretary Walker, on Health Policy (https://djph.delamed.org). I hope you can attend a public meeting of the Delaware Health Care Commission and the DIMER Board. I would love for all of you to see how your colleagues and friends - all of us in these pages, and many beyond - work in partnership to provide Delawareans more choices for medical education, create more opportunities for serving Delaware as highly trained physicians, and help create a healthier Delaware for us all.
I especially want to acknowledge the leadership of the DHSA member institutions in supporting our DIMER partnership: Dr. Janice Nevin (ChristianaCare), Dr. Steve Klasko (Thomas Jefferson University), Dr. Dennis Assanis (University of Delaware), Dr. Jay Greenspan (Nemours), Dr. Jay Feldstein (PCOM), and Mr. Terry Murphy (Bayhealth).

This report would not have been possible without the expertise of Mr. Timothy Gibbs, Executive Director and Dr. Kate Smith, Program Manager, both of the Delaware Academy of Medicine/Delaware Public Health Association. The overall guidance and attention to detail provided by Ms. Pamela Gardner, DHSA Program Manager, is sincerely appreciated.

It is a joy to work with our partners at DIMER, the Delaware Health Care Commission, and the State of Delaware. Together, we are making Delaware a healthier place for us all.

Omar A. Khan, MD, MHS
President & CEO
Delaware Health Sciences Alliance
Jefferson, now Sidney Kimmel Medical College (SKMC), has been the Medical College for the state of Delaware over a half a century. Along with that designation has been a close working relationship with DIMER. There have been in place various events sponsored by SKMC to ensure that DIMER students remember their Delaware roots. In recent years, a dinner with DIMER members and 1st and 2nd year students occurs every fall, shortly after the winter break. The dinner is hosted by SKMC and DIMER at our favorite Italian restaurant. Both of these events have been very successful.

For the incoming Class of 2018, we had 9,907 applications, including 79 from DIMER applicants (approximately 0.8% of the total pool). We made 457 offers of admissions last year (25 of them to Delaware residents). This means approximately 32% of the DIMER applicants received an acceptance, compared to an acceptance rate of 4.4% for the general application pool. This year, to date, we have received a total of 9,442 applications.

Although the application cycle is not complete, of the 349 offers made to date, 21 (out of the total 84 DIMER applicants, 34 of whom we interviewed) of them have been to DIMER applicants. Once again, even though the DIMER applicants only make up 0.8% of the applicant pool, they have received 6% of the total acceptances. These numbers are driven, in part, by our goal to have at least 20 well-qualified medical students from Delaware in each matriculating class. To this end, the Dean of Admissions, the Director of Admissions, and staff work closely with the members of DIMER board throughout the year.

In 2019, twelve students matched to first year postgraduate positions in Delaware, one each in internal medicine, medicine/pediatrics and psychiatry; two in emergency medicine; and three in family medicine, all at ChristianaCare. Four students matched to the pediatric residency at Nemours/AI duPont Hospital for Children. SKMC’s relationship with ChristianaCare, Nemours and DIMER is in full bloom, and is poised to continue to prosper.
Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine (PCOM) has served as the official osteopathic medical school of Delaware for nearly twenty years through the partnership with the Delaware Institute of Medical Education and Research (DIMER).

Dr. Vincent Lobo (DO ’65) was instrumental in facilitating and establishing the partnership between DIMER and PCOM. Although the initial state contract required PCOM hold five seats for Delawareans, we have exceeded that goal since 2007. We are proud of those results, and equally as excited for the recognition of our efforts by the State with a renewed contract providing additional funding and commitment of ten seats for Delawareans in the first year class.

The entire PCOM community is appreciative and grateful to the DIMER Chairman of the Board, Mr. Sherman Townsend, for his support and work with the legislature to create this successful outcome. We acknowledge the need for more Delawareans to return to the state and grow the physician workforce (especially primary care). PCOM is committed to our ongoing efforts to help meet those needs, with a robust recruitment initiative throughout the entire state.

By partnering with DIMER for all these years, PCOM has been able to provide high quality medical education for individuals with a passion for healthcare. It is our hope that these caring, competent students will return to Delaware to serve their hometown communities. We are excited about what the future holds as DIMER and PCOM journey together on this exciting pathway.
Why DIMER Today?
The ChristianaCare Branch Campus Perspective
Neil B. Jasani, MD, MBA, Chief People Officer
Lisa C. Maxwell, MD, MHCDS, Chief Learning Officer

ChristianaCare’s strong affiliation with the DIMER program provides medical students from Delaware the opportunity to receive a high-quality medical education in partnership with Delaware’s state supported medical schools, Sidney Kimmel Medical College (SKMC) at Thomas Jefferson University and the Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine (PCOM). Through this partnership, ChristianaCare offers these students the opportunity to complete their 3rd and 4th year clinical rotations exclusively in Delaware at ChristianaCare, Nemours/AI duPont Hospital for Children and the Wilmington VA Medical Center through the Delaware Branch Campus.

The Delaware Branch Campus at ChristianaCare provides a unique opportunity for students to rotate at a top-rated tertiary care medical center and growing inner city community hospital. Training is offered at additional sites including the Center for Heart & Vascular Health, The Helen F. Graham Cancer Center, Women’s and Children’s Health Services and the Breast Center.

ChristianaCare offers a strong culture of teaching and opportunity to build community. Students are a valued team members and work directly with fully engaged faculty and residents. Students experience the opportunity to build strong interpersonal relationships and receive one-on-one mentoring with faculty and personalized Letters of Recommendation.

Our commitment to exploring the science of medicine keeps clinicians at the top of their specialties and attracts the best and the brightest to serve as faculty and mentors in our undergraduate student rotations. ChristianaCare is where tomorrow’s health care providers learn state-of-the-art medical care.

Students who have participated in the Delaware Branch Campus have matched in top rated, well-established residency programs nationally in the top five specialties of family medicine, internal medicine, anesthesiology, emergency medicine and pediatrics.

Over the last eight years, we have successfully graduated eight Branch Campus classes totaling 122 students, who have completed all 3rd and some 4th year clerkships in Delaware hospitals. The Class of 2020 will graduate in May, and we will begin to prepare for the upcoming academic year (2020-21) in which 16 PCOM students will be joining the Class of 2022, as well as, six students from SKMC.

The Delaware Branch Campus is a voluntary track. It is open to all students, but priority is given to DIMER students. Of all DIMER students from 2013 projected through 2020 from SKMC and PCOM (including the class of 2020), 36% have chosen to be part of the Delaware Branch Campus.

Of all Delaware Branch Campus students from 2013 – 2020, 56% have a Delaware connection of some kind. That connection may include being a Delaware resident at time of medical school application or a University of Delaware graduate or a University of Delaware graduate who participated in the Med Scholar track.

In addition to the Delaware Branch Campus, ChristianaCare hosts hundreds of medical student rotations each year from SKMC and PCOM, as well as, many other area schools totaling over 700+ rotations. Many of these students rotating at ChristianaCare match into one of our 32 residency/fellowship programs and many of our graduating residents/fellows choose to stay and practice in Delaware.
In July 2019, we welcomed our first cohort of Physician Assistant (PA) students to the newly established “Clinical Campus” program with six PA students from SKMC and two PA students from PCOM. This program offers universities the opportunity to select participating students with roots in Delaware or interest in working in Delaware upon graduation. Every clinical campus student will rotate through each of their Core Rotations at ChristianaCare. Core Rotations include Internal Medicine, Family Medicine, Emergency Medicine, Behavioral Health, General Surgery, Pediatrics and OB/GYN. This longitudinal clinical experience will allow students to become fully immersed in the ChristianaCare culture, while gaining clinical experience. In turn, ChristianaCare will be investing their time and energy into the training of potential permanent Delaware healthcare providers.

In addition to the newly established Clinical Campus Program for PA students, ChristianaCare has long term standing relationships with affiliate programs from Arcadia University, PCOM, Thomas Jefferson University and Drexel University. ChristianaCare provides 200+ clinical rotations to PA students each year in core areas and elective specialties across the health care system.
Why DIMER Today?
Nemours/Alfred I. duPont Hospital for Children Campus Perspective
Steven M. Selbst, MD, Vice Chair for Education, Department of Pediatrics
Pediatric Residency Program Director, Director of Graduate Medical Education

The Nemours/Alfred I. duPont Hospital for Children is a multispecialty, tertiary care, 200-bed free-standing children’s hospital located in Wilmington, Delaware. As the only children’s hospital in Delaware, our hospital offers the entire spectrum of pediatric medical and surgical subspecialties. We are fortunate to have been recognized by a variety of national organizations as a site for outstanding teaching and clinical care.

We have pooled the considerable resources of three major institutions to create exciting, high-quality programs in patient care, biomedical research, and medical education. We enjoy the strong financial backing of Nemours, the broad patient base of the Alfred I. duPont Hospital for Children and ChristianaCare, and the rich academic heritage of Sidney Kimmel Medical College (SKMC) of Thomas Jefferson University. These partnerships have enabled us to develop a unique educational program. DIMER students who train with us are able to gain a wealth of experience working with nationally-recognized physician-educators in a variety of pediatric disciplines and with patients in the hospital, clinic, and private practice settings. Students rotate through the medical/surgical units, general pediatrics clinics, newborn nurseries, and private practitioners’ offices. They gain experience with the various aspects of well-child care and normal growth and development as well as common and uncommon pediatric diseases. We also offer advocacy training for students and residents to learn to become a voice for children’s health in the clinical setting and the community.

For many years, the DIMER program has provided Nemours/Alfred I. duPont Hospital for Children with a wonderful resource of local trainees who are passionate about serving the population of Delaware. We are thrilled to have DIMER students from SKMC rotate with us during their clinical (third) year. We welcome senior medical students (4th year) from SKMC and the Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine in a variety of clinical and research experiences. Through rotations for 3rd and 4th year medical students, we are able to introduce the students to our renowned children’s hospital and expose them to the broad scope of Pediatrics.

Many DIMER students go on to pursue residency in Pediatrics at Nemours/Alfred I. duPont Hospital for Children. DIMER students who enter specialties such as Family Medicine and Emergency Medicine at local residency programs, such as Jefferson or ChristianaCare, also gain valuable pediatric training here. Several DIMER graduates of our Pediatric Residency Program have become our Chief Residents and many have pursued fellowships and attending positions here and at other prominent institutions. One has even joined our residency leadership team, helping to train the next generation of Delaware physicians! Through DIMER, we have been able to recruit physicians who go on to serve their home communities in a myriad of ways, including teaching and advocacy. We look forward to partnering with DIMER for many more years.
Bayhealth announced its plans to launch a residency teaching program, or Graduate Medical Education (GME), in March 2019. The announcement was an exciting one for the community and health system, as the residency training program will assist in bringing more doctors to central and southern Delaware, enhancing the culture of learning at Bayhealth, and fostering improvements to patient care and the patient experience.

As a part of our commitment to medical education, Bayhealth also partners with area medical schools to host medical students for a portion of their Undergraduate Medical Education (UME) clinical rotations. Upon graduating medical school, these students may later apply for one of Bayhealth’s residency programs.

Bayhealth Surgeon and GME Chair Assar Rather, MD, FACS, FASCRS; Senior Vice President, Chief Medical Officer and Designated Institutional Official Gary Siegelman, MD; administrative leaders; and a group of more than 20 physicians worked for more than a year to establish GME. An assessment and full implementation plan was developed and outlines a proposed start date of July 2021 for family medicine and internal medicine programs, with general surgery and emergency medicine to follow in subsequent years.

In July 2019, Bayhealth was awarded a Rural Residency Planning and Development Program grant from the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA). HRSA awarded $20 million in grants to healthcare systems developing new rural residency programs while applying for accreditation through the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME). Bayhealth was awarded $750,000.

The application for the Family Medicine Residency program was submitted in August 2019, with a site visit by the ACGME in October. Family Medicine Residency Program Director Brintha Vasagar, MD, MPH, FAAFP, is working on faculty and curriculum development in anticipation of welcoming eight residents in 2021. Ahead of the start of the program, Bayhealth will open a new family medicine outpatient clinic in Dover where residents will care for patients under faculty supervision. This practice is estimated to bring more than 30,000 full-spectrum primary care visits, including adult, pediatric, and obstetric care, per year to the community.
The Internal Medicine Residency Program continues to progress as well with a program director beginning at Bayhealth in early 2020. The Internal Medicine Residency program application was submitted to ACGME in November 2019 with a site visit expected in February 2020. The program will appoint at least 10 residents in its first year. These residents will care for inpatients at Bayhealth’s two hospital campuses – Bayhealth Hospital, Kent Campus in Dover and Bayhealth Hospital, Sussex Campus in Milford. Residents will have an opportunity to work alongside faculty to develop skills, knowledge and expertise necessary to become outstanding physicians.

Future plans include developing the family medicine residency practice, internal medicine residency practice, resident call rooms and lounges, lecture halls and education facilities, and a new medical staff lounge all to make the experience for the residents worthwhile.

“This is truly an exciting time for Bayhealth as we look toward our future,” said Senior Vice President, Chief Medical Officer and Designated Institutional Official Gary Siegelman, MD. “These medical education programs are an investment not only in Bayhealth’s future, but in southern Delaware’s communities as well.”
How did your journey as a DIMER student affect your educational trajectory?

I am forever grateful for the opportunity to go to Jefferson, now Sidney Kimmel Medical College (SKMC), one of our nation’s leading medical schools, as a DIMER student. Today, I’m proud to lead an organization that supports the educational journey of future physicians, including DIMER students – it allows me to pay that gratitude forward.

What do you most enjoy as a Physician Executive in Delaware?

As ChristianaCare moves from health system to a system that truly impacts health, we are committed to excellence in all that we do. As such, we are deeply embedded in our community and are investing in the health of those who live here. We are truly living the ChristianaCare Way – serving our neighbors as respectful, expert, caring partners. As someone who has lived most of my life in Delaware, the opportunity to positively impact the health of every community within our state and the surrounding region is a remarkable privilege and one of the aspects of my role I enjoy most.

In your opinion, what is most important to retaining Delaware talent in the field of healthcare?

As a community based academic health system, we have a deep interest in developing young physicians and other health professionals who want to become part of the Delaware medical community. The fact that students who study here at ChristianaCare have access to regional centers of excellence and nationally recognized peers and mentors is important to retention efforts. Our partnership with DIMER plays a key role in attracting and recruiting students who are already Delawareans. The presence of learners in our system, also means we attract and retain outstanding clinical faculty who come from all over the country.

In the absence of a ‘state medical school’, how can DIMER best be leveraged for all Delawareans to benefit?

The Delaware Branch Campus for SKMC and PCOM students is Delaware’s medical school and provides a Delaware-based medical education for many students, including many DIMER students. The two plus years these students spend with ChristianaCare and Nemours provide a strong foundation of knowledge and hands-on experience to help them build a successful career impacting the health and wellbeing of our neighbors and our communities. Quite simply, DIMER’s initial support of students from Delaware has a positive long-term impact that supports the health of all Delawareans.

How invested should the state’s health systems be in medical education?

ChristianaCare is already heavily invested in supporting both undergraduate medical education and graduate medical educate. In addition to the Delaware Branch Campus, ChristianaCare provides over 700 core clerkships for medical students from SKMC, PCOM, and other medical schools from across the country. In addition, we have 32 residency and fellowship programs with over 270 residents and fellows training with us every year. With our unique, data-powered care coordination service and a focus on population health and value-based care, we are shaping the future of health care and remain focused on training the next generation of health leaders to support new opportunities to provide innovative, expert care to those we serve.
"As a life-long Delawarean, I am proud to represent the First State as a DIMER medical student at the Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine. The DIMER program has given me an incredible opportunity to attend a fantastic medical school in Philadelphia. However, DIMER is much more than just a program to get Delaware students to medical school. The DIMER program advocates for each Delaware student at PCOM and Sidney Kimmel Medical College to ensure that we are provided invaluable opportunities as students at these institutions. DIMER invests in the Delaware students and encourages us to challenge ourselves in our education and aspire to return to serve the communities that we grew up in. For me, I am honored to represent this program, and I brag about it often. I am thankful for this opportunity to attend PCOM and long for the day when I can return to Delaware as a practicing physician."

-Omneya Ayoub
Medical Student, PCOM

"DIMER has been a part of my life for the past three years, where I developed new friendships and have become a mentor to younger generations in Delaware. The organization has allotted me the opportunity to pursue a career in medicine as a Delaware resident. Through DIMER I have gained the knowledge about residency programs and am better prepared to apply in the coming year. I am thankful for their continuous support and ample networking events to meet and connect with prestigious mentors in Delaware."

- Omneya Ayoub
Medical Student, PCOM

"As both a graduate of the Medical Scholars Program at the University of Delaware and a DIMER student, I have been blessed with the opportunity to pursue my dream of becoming a doctor. I am grateful for all the resources and support DIMER has provided Delaware students over the last 50 years and look forward to being a part of the next generation of physicians in the state.

- Nicholas Jennelly
Medical Student, SKMC at Thomas Jefferson University
Delaware is one of four states that does not have a state-sponsored medical school. In 1969, DIMER was created. Twenty positions were reserved at Sidney Kimmel Medical College for Delaware residents, thereby affording an opportunity for medical education. Later, 10 positions at the Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine were added. I was privileged to be selected as one of the students for the class of 1974 at Sidney Kimmel Medical College.

I was born and raised in Milford, attended Milford High School, and attended the University of Delaware. At the end of my junior year I was selected to be admitted to the first DIMER class. I firmly believe that DIMER increased my chances of being accepted to medical school. DIMER placed no obligation for returning to practice in Delaware but, even today, it is hoped that the students will return and practice in the state.

After graduation I completed residencies in General Surgery and then Cardio-Thoracic Surgery. Unfortunately, at that time, cardiac surgery was not available to people in lower Delaware. After nine years practicing in Pittsburgh, I realized that I missed living in lower Delaware and near “the beach.” I then joined the staff at Bayhealth Medical Center in Dover. I have practiced surgery there for the past 30 years. Several years ago I retired from surgery and am now the Medical Director of the Wound Care Center at Bayhealth.

DIMER afforded me the opportunity to attend medical school and pursue a career in surgery. This program is an asset for any Delaware resident hoping to become a physician. The odds of acceptance into medical school are enhanced because of this program. Now, as a board member, I realize that the scope of DIMER goes beyond securing positions for medical school. It’s also involved in loan re-payment. More recently, informational programs are being presented in the communities to increase Delawarean’s awareness of DIMER. I would encourage any resident wishing to pursue a career as a physician to avail themselves of this program.

“Thank you to DIMER, and especially to Mr. Sherman Townsend, for helping me to realize my dream of practicing primary care here in Central and Southern Delaware. More than 20 years after beginning my medical education at Jefferson Medical College (now Sidney Kimmel Medical College), I feel humbled and immensely fortunate to be providing family medicine and hospice care to the residents of the same community in which I was born and raised. My family and I are forever grateful.”
“So, what brought you to Delaware?”

When I meet new patients in my office, many of them ask me this question.

I was raised in Dover, Delaware where I learned first-hand the value of hard work while growing up in the kitchen of my family's Chinese restaurants. I watched my parents work tirelessly to provide my brother and me with better opportunities than they had. My interest in medicine began at an early age through deep admiration for the pediatricians and family medicine physicians who took care of me. After graduating from high school at Saint Thomas More Academy, I went on to pursue my undergraduate degree at Bucknell University and then my graduate degree at Columbia University. While applying to medical school, I considered schools along the entire East Coast, but my top choice was Jefferson Medical College (now Sidney Kimmel Medical College).

From my very first steps into my medical career, the DIMER program has played an integral role. By partnering with Sidney Kimmel Medical College (SKMC) and Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine (PCOM), DIMER supports Delaware residents in obtaining a high-quality medical education. This support from DIMER comes in multiple forms. First, DIMER increases the odds of acceptance for Delaware residents into SKMC or PCOM. Second, DIMER provides financial support throughout the four years of medical school. Third, DIMER provides invaluable opportunities for networking and mentorship with practicing physicians who have already gone through the DIMER program.

While applying for family medicine residency, I again considered programs along the entire East Coast, but my top choice was the ChristianaCare Family Medicine Residency Program. I knew it was a great program while I was there, but the true value is the confidence that I have in providing primary care services in my own practice once I graduated from residency. My mentors in residency shaped who I am as a physician. I am grateful for my residency training in Delaware that provided me with the skills and knowledge to practice family medicine where I am today.

I currently provide outpatient primary care services to individuals of all ages at the Bayhealth Primary Care Milford - Airport Road office. I also take care of newborns delivered at the Bayhealth Sussex Campus Hospital. During Delaware's growing season, I work with the Westside Family Healthcare outreach team on a mobile health unit that provides primary care services to migrant and seasonal agricultural workers in Kent and Sussex counties. I have particular interests in global health, refugee and immigrant health, primary care for underserved populations, community outreach, and patient advocacy.

I am very fortunate to be in the position that I am in now, and I could not have made it here without the support of my family, the experiences in my local community, and the opportunities afforded by the DIMER program. DIMER has allowed me to go to medical school, complete my residency training, and now practice family medicine – all close to home. DIMER invests in the talent within our own state. This is urgently needed especially in Kent and Sussex Counties where the number of primary care physicians continues to decline. So when my patients ask what brought me to Delaware, my answer is simple - I grew up here and am passionate about giving back to the community that raised me.
DIMER by the Numbers

DIMER ALL-TIME STATISTICS

Sidney Kimmel Medical College (joined 1970) (formerly Thomas Jefferson Medical College)

949 Doctors (MD)

Pennsylvania College of Osteopathic Medicine (joined 2000)

225 Doctors (DO)

Diversity based on gender (all time)

477 729

Gender change in enrollment over time

SOURCE: Study by Tom Ferry commissioned by the Delaware Health Care Commission
Medical Specialty

Definitions

**Family medicine** is the medical specialty which provides continuing, comprehensive health care for the individual and family. It is a specialty in breadth that integrates the biological, clinical and behavioral sciences. The scope of family medicine encompasses all ages, all genders, each organ system and every disease entity. Source: https://www.aafp.org/about/policies/all/family-medicine-definition.html

**Primary care** is that care provided by physicians specifically trained for and skilled in comprehensive first contact and continuing care for persons with any undiagnosed sign, symptom, or health concern (the “undiagnosed” patient) not limited by problem origin (biological, behavioral or social), organ system, or diagnosis. Source: https://www.aafp.org/about/policies/all/primary-care.html

About this infographic

Below are a line and pie chart of the different major medical specialty categories that students entered into after completing medical school.

What Type of Medicine are DIMER Graduates Practicing? (ALL TIME DATA)

- Family Medicine: 14%
- Other Primary Care*: 13%
- Surgery: 10%
- Other specialties**: 43%
- Non-medical practice (changed vocation): 2%
- Current Student: 15%
- No information available: 3%

* Other Primary Care includes: OB/GYN, Pediatrics, Preventive Medicine, and Psychiatry.

**Other Specialties include: Addiction, Anesthesiology, Cardiology, Critical Care, Dermatology, Emergency Medicine, Endocrinology, Ear/Nose/Throat (ENT), Gastroenterology, Genetics, Hematology, Hospitalist, Immunology, Infectious Disease, Internal Medicine, Maternal & Fetal Med, Neonatal Med, Nephrology, Neurology, Nuclear Med, Oncology, Ophthalmology, Orthopaedics, Pathology, Physical Med, Pulmonology, Radiology, Rheumatology, Sports Medicine, Transitional Year, and Urology.
Retention of DIMER physicians who return to live/work in Delaware and surrounding states

1. 1206 DIMER Students since program inception
   - SKMC at Thomas Jefferson joined in 1970
   - PCOM joined in 2000

2. 229 Returned to Delaware
   New Castle County 176
   Kent County 16
   Sussex County 37

3. 347 Returned to surrounding states
   Maryland 53
   New Jersey 45
   Pennsylvania 249

4. 104 Stayed in the Mid-Atlantic area
   District of Columbia 10
   New York 47
   Virginia 47

5. 345 Settled Elsewhere in the United States (Top 4)
   California 40
   Florida 45
   North Carolina 32
   Texas 21

6. 3 Left the United States
   Australia 1
   Germany 1
   Korea 1

Source: Report commissioned by Delaware Academy of Medicine / Delaware Public Health Association and the Delaware Health Sciences Alliance for a separate project and provided here as a courtesy. Joint Copyright © 2020, all rights reserved.
Attracting and Retaining DIMER Graduates

Elisabeth Scheneman, MA, Executive Director
Delaware Health Care Commission

The Delaware Health Care Commission administers a State Loan Repayment Program (SLRP) that provides financial assistance to medical and dental practitioners employed in underserved regions of Delaware, for accrued educational debt. Since 2000, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) has provided 50% of funding needed for this program, through competitive multi-year grant awards. The remaining 50% is provided by the State of Delaware, General Assembly on behalf of Delaware Institution of Medical Education and Research (DIMER) and through collaborations with healthcare institutions. Over the 20-year history of the Federal program in Delaware, DIMER has provided funding in support of loan repayments as follows:

"From 2012 to 2019 (year-to-date), Delaware has made 59 loan repayment awards for a total of $2,529,000. Of the 44 awards for which the service commitment has been completed, 40 awardees are providing services in Delaware, 3 are working outside of Delaware, and 1 could not be located. With 40 of the 43 located providers working in Delaware, that is an exceptionally strong 93% retention rate. . . The 93% retention rate following completion of the SLRP service commitment appears to be very strong. No comparison data in other states was located. However, the 93% retention clearly indicates the success of Delaware SLRP and argues for possible expansion and additional funding."

- Star-Med, LLC
Report commissioned by the DHCC
## Standard Budget
Sidney Kimmel Medical College at Thomas Jefferson University

Allopathic Medicine (MD)

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<td><strong>$78,076</strong></td>
<td><strong>$83,186</strong></td>
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*Cost of Attendance

### Standard Budget in the 1970's

Below are some comparative costs, in Philadelphia, in the early 1970s, for a medical school education.¹

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<td>Personal expenses</td>
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¹ Downloaded from https://archives.upenn.edu/exhibits/penn-history/tuition/tuition-1970-1979
Osteopathic Medicine (DO)

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<td>Federal Stafford loan fees</td>
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<td>Total Estimated COA*</td>
<td>$76,131</td>
<td>$76,890</td>
<td>$86,082</td>
<td>$84,622</td>
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*Cost of Attendance

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**Student Debt Snapshot**


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<td>Thousands of dollars</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>15</td>
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Current dollars

Constant dollars

Source: Association of American Medical Colleges, Graduate Questionnaire.
DIMER Health Panel Events
Pamela Gardner, BS, Program Manager
Delaware Health Sciences Alliance

The Delaware Institute for Medical Education and Research (DIMER) is committed to providing access to high-quality medical education for Delawareans and ensuring awareness of the admissions advantages for all Delawareans. Through its partnership with DIMER, the Delaware Health Sciences Alliance (DHSA), has implemented a robust strategy for engagement and outreach within the Delaware community. This strategy includes informative outreach events targeted to high school and early undergraduate students in all of Delaware’s counties. This is unprecedented in DIMER’s 50-year history.

We recognize that access to information and knowledge are powerful drivers of motivation. By creating awareness and informing Delaware students of their state’s DIMER opportunities, we are empowering students to pursue their passion and interests in medicine. We are especially interested in serving those who may not have otherwise had opportunity to hear about these possibilities.

At our outreach events, we provide students valuable exposure to experts from across DIMER and DHSA. Panelists include DIMER leadership/Board, current DIMER medical students, DIMER alumni and practicing physicians, as well as leadership and admissions representatives from DIMER medical education partners Sidney Kimmel Medical College at Thomas Jefferson University (SKMC) and the Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine (PCOM). The panel provides insight on the DIMER program and admissions advantages for Delaware students, recommendations for undergraduate studies, the application process for medical school, as well as the journey from medical student to resident to practicing physician. We also provide information on affordability of medical school and the options beyond, such as the Student Loan Repayment Program (SLRP) and other loan opportunities.

In 2019, DHSA hosted four DIMER outreach events targeting high school and early undergraduate students interested in future medical studies and professions. The events were held throughout Delaware and provided the opportunity for students in New Castle, Kent and Sussex counties to attend an event in proximity to their location within the state, making the events accessible for all. DHSA partnered with Delaware State University to host two outreach events at their Dover Campus, and DHSA member institution Bayhealth hosted the Sussex County outreach event at its Milford Campus. Events in all counties were extremely interactive and well attended by students and their families.
In collaboration with the DIMER Board, DHSA has implemented a post event survey to measure the impact of DIMER outreach programs. Early survey results show that prior to outreach events, 89% of respondents had no previous knowledge of DIMER, and 94% of respondents had not considered DIMER institutions prior to the event. After our education and outreach, 100% of respondents indicated knowledge of DIMER, and intent to include SKMC and PCOM among their future applications.

We believe that through the DIMER-DHSA collaboration, more Delawareans will seek high quality medical education opportunities through DIMER partner institutions. We believe that increasing knowledge and intent will result in not only a greater number of applicants, but those reflecting the diversity and county-wide representation of the First State. Our aim is to demonstrate not only DIMER medical school admissions opportunities, but continued education beyond: to the Delaware Branch Campus for clinical education, and to Delaware’s excellent residency programs for Graduate Medical Education. We intend to harness this energy and output to the betterment of Delaware’s healthcare workforce and, therefore, the health of Delaware communities.
DIMER Student and Alumni Engagement

Pamela Gardner, BS, Program Manager
Delaware Health Sciences Alliance

While DIMER’s charge is to ensure access to quality medical education for Delaware residents, DIMER’s mission and values extend beyond access. DIMER and its partners are committed to providing a network of support for its students and engage students and alumni throughout the year in a variety of ways.

Through its relationship with the Delaware Health Sciences Alliance (DHSA), DIMER has implemented a robust engagement strategy for students and alumni. The DIMER-DHSA partnership has resulted in several innovations:

- Crafting personal letters for each admitted & current student at the beginning of each academic year;
- Co-hosting receptions with PCOM and SKMC for DIMER students to network with DIMER and institutional leadership;
- Co-hosting a graduation reception with the Delaware Branch Campus for graduating students;
- Conducting participatory panels in every Delaware county with prospective students and families to discuss the many benefits of DIMER.
- In collaboration with DIMER Board member Dr. Lisa Maxwell, conducting focus groups with current Branch Campus students and residents to discuss ways to retain them in Delaware

As a sponsor of the annual meeting of the Delaware Academy of Medicine / Delaware Public Health Association, DHSA provides an opportunity for DIMER students to attend the event as guests of DHSA. The annual meeting provides valuable exposure for DIMER students to DIMER leadership, DHSA/health system leadership, legislators and community anchors. At the 2019 Annual Meeting (chaired by Dr. Omar Khan), DIMER Chair Sherman Townsend was presented with the Lewis B. Flinn President’s Award. This award is presented to an individual or organization that has achieved distinction by substantive contributions to the well-being of our community through education, leadership, philanthropy or service. Furthermore, the 2019 Annual Meeting honored Secretary Kara Odom Walker, MD, MPH, MSHS with a special acknowledgement given only one other time in the Academy’s existence.

Education and engagement are pieces of a larger puzzle in creating a dynamic healthcare workforce for Delaware. As DIMER’s partner, DHSA facilitates a healthcare workforce recruiting event called “Delaware Day.” Delaware Day brings all hospitals and health systems in Delaware together to recruit top talent to serve our communities. The inaugural 2019 event was held in Dover. As we look to future Delaware Day events hosted by DHSA in all three counties on a rotating annual schedule, we seek to provide the opportunity to highlight the full state to prospective physicians. The recruiting event is open to all those interested in recruiting for Delaware-based healthcare jobs. DIMER graduating residents and alumni are specifically invited as another expression of support from the First State, DIMER, and DHSA.

Photo credit: PCOM
The following pages contain a working list* of DIMER students who have completed their medical education and their degree type (M.D. from SKMC, and D.O. from PCOM), and the year that they matriculated (entered) into medical school. We use matriculation rather than graduation date as not everyone who enters a given medical school graduates from it due to transfers and medical school duration is not 100% consistent for all students. This section of the directory does not include current DIMER medical students. Resident and student directories can be found on pages 46 and 47.

These physicians are, or have, practiced in Delaware, elsewhere in the United States, or globally.

Entries are listed alphabetically by last name, and in order to economize on space, we have used only married last names if we found a maiden name as well.

*this is the first time such a list has been researched and collated. Information has come from a variety of sources, and while we have attempted to be both accurate and comprehensive, errors and omissions may have occurred.

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<td>Ari Abel, M.D.</td>
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<td>Anne Adam, M.D.</td>
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<td>Cheryl Albanese, M.D.</td>
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<td>Gregory Albert, M.D.</td>
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<td>Bradley Albertson, M.D.</td>
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<td>Christopher Aleman, M.D.</td>
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<td>Evaline Alessandrini, M.D.</td>
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<td>Mohsin Ali, M.D.</td>
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<td>David Aljadir, M.D.</td>
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<td>Brianne Allerton, D.O.</td>
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<td>James Andersen, M.D.</td>
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<td>Jonathan Andrews, M.D.</td>
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<td>Jeremie Axe, M.D.</td>
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Sonia Cheng, M.D. - 1997
Deepthi Cherian, M.D. - 2013
Dinu Cherian, M.D. - 2008
David Chiang, M.D. - 2008
Nikhil Chinmaya, D.O. - 2015
Richard Cho, M.D. - 2003
Hetal Choxi, M.D. - 2012
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Philip Durning, M.D. - 2017
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Mary Facciolo, M.D. - 1979
Christian Fagel, M.D. - 2013
Andrew Farach, M.D. - 2010
Hadi Fattah, M.D. - 2011

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DIMER DIRECTORY

Bahar Fazeli, M.D. - 2007
Samantha Feld, M.D. - 2012
John Field, M.D. - 2012
Justin Field, M.D. - 2015
Bonni Field, M.D. - 1985
Michael Fierro, M.D. - 2010
Barbara Figgs, M.D. - 1974
Marciana Filippone, M.D. - 1978
Jon Finamore, M.D. - 2015
Tina Finesmith, M.D. - 1987
John Fiss, M.D. - 2001
Christa Fistler, M.D. - 2001
Patricia Fitzpatrick, M.D. - 1978
Timothy Fitzpatrick, M.D. - 2000
Peter Fleischut, M.D. - 2006
Erin Fletcher, D.O. - 2005
Erin Fletcher, D.O. - 2006
Patrick Fogarty, M.D. - 1996
Everett Ford, M.D. - 1992
Amy Forsythe Morgan, M.D. - 1993
Bruce Foster, M.D. - 1977
Andrew Foy, M.D. - 2008
Bryan Franck, M.D. - 2008
Charles Frasso, D.O. - 2013
Marilee Frazer, M.D. - 1978
Kyle Frey, M.D. - 2014
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Rosa Fuste, M.D. - 1977
Teresa Gale, M.D. - 2002
Eric Gallagher, M.D. - 1996
Kimberly Gallagher, M.D. - 1996
Alexander Gambogi, M.D. - 2013
Kaanchan Gangal, M.D. - 2007
Michelle Gardecki, M.D. - 2008
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Samir Sethi, M.D.

*As of January 2020. This list is all-inclusive and contains names of inactive, lapsed and deceased individuals.
Acknowledgments and Thanks

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