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**EXCELA HEALTH WELCOMES NEW PHYSICIANS
TO LATROBE HOSPITAL FAMILY MEDICINE RESIDENCY PROGRAM**

LATROBE, PA, July 31, 2012 ... Excela Health is pleased to welcome seven new physicians to its Family Medicine Residency Program. Established in 1974, the three-year-program is accredited by the American Osteopathic Associate and the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education and affiliated with Jefferson Medical College of Thomas Jefferson Medical College of Thomas Jefferson University and the Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine (PCOM).

These physicians were among 2,263 applicants from allopathic and osteopathic schools looking to join Excela Health's program.

The new residents, whose training officially began July 1, will alternate between Latrobe and Westmorland Hospitals as they advance through their clinical rotations.

From the Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine, **Zachary P. Walton, DO**, had visions of an exciting career in emergency medicine. During his undergraduate days at Duquesne University he had volunteered weekly in the emergency department at UPMC Mercy, and knew how exhilarating that environment could be. Despite the satisfaction of helping people in acute distress or restoring normal rhythm to a fibrillating heart, Dr. Walton gained more than clinical expertise during the first year of an emergency medicine residency with the Lehigh Valley Health Network; he learned he wanted more than an

episodic relationship with those in his care. “How accountable could I be to a patient with whom I had no prior encounters? In many cases, I could not help but wonder, ‘Could I have helped my patient prevent this?’”

He recognized he was missing out on the continuity of care and long-term relationships that come with a primary care practice. The Greensburg native looks forward to providing “quality, long term health care to a diverse population” and teaching his patients about leading a healthy lifestyle preventing disease.

Dr. Walton is assigned to Norvelt Family Medicine

The decision to become a physician is very personal to **Elizabeth Spaar, DO**. Navigating through a scary and vulnerable situation after her son was born with multiple medical problems, she turned to his doctors for answers. “Already having an interest in the science of medicine, I was compelled to start medical school to explore the art of medicine that comes from the doctor-patient relationship.”

An alumna of Indiana University of Pennsylvania with a degree in history Dr. Spaar pursued graduate studies in Latin American and United States history before enrolling at Lake Erie College of Osteopathic Medicine. “Intellectually, I felt pulled in two directions: psychiatry and family medicine having also explored neuroscience and chemistry as an undergrad, but ultimately it was the doctor-patient relationship that drew me in.”

Dr. Spaar comes to Latrobe Hospital from Harrisburg with her husband and three, soon to be four, children. “I’ve chosen family medicine for several reasons, my primary being the opportunity to establish a long-term relationship with my patients before problems have developed. Through well visits and the acutes of day-to-day life, I will become part of their lives and gain their trust. So many patients come in with problems such as depression or anxiety, often related to stressful events in their lives. As a family medicine physician I will be able to screen for these problems in regular exams and will know how to approach my patients so they can accept help. That’s the kind of difference I hope to make.”

Dr. Spaar was pleased to be accepted into the Latrobe Hospital Family Medicine Residency. “I’ve seen the value of a dedicated rural family physician. Family medicine, after all, is the one area of medicine where the relationship extends beyond the disease to the whole patient and even out into the whole family and whole community.”

Dr. Spaar is assigned to Latrobe Family Medicine.

Having a physician who can look into his patients’ eyes and say, “I’ve been through this, too” is something not many patients will experience. **Kevin Michael Bartolomucci, DO**, knows exactly what the highs and lows of cancer treatment will be, because he had cancer himself.

For this Greensburg native, everything was going according to plan. From Greensburg Central Catholic High School to Duquesne University, this Magna Cum Laude graduate in Health Science was on his way. Then, during his second year at Lake Erie College of Osteopathic Medicine, his fiancé discovered a lump on his thyroid. After experiencing several incorrect diagnoses and a lot of anxiety, he was hit with the diagnosis of cancer. Looking back the 26-year-old knows these moments will make him better equipped to prepare his patients for their long journey with a chronic illness. “Although having cancer is a negative, I was able to turn my experience into a positive one. I whole-heartedly believe my struggle with cancer has put me in a better position to fulfill my goal of being a family physician; one who is capable of providing patient centered care.”

Having taken a year off from his graduate studies to concentrate on recovery, Dr. Bartolomucci is undeterred from achieving his goals and plans to help his patients realize they, too, have the ability to surpass their illness and succeed in whatever dreams they have. Anticipating a fall wedding, Dr. Bartolomucci is assigned to Norvelt Family Medicine.

.For some, playing doctor is a game for children, long forgotten as an adult. **Tawny Sauriol, MD**, turned that favorite pastime into a career. Coming to

Latrobe Hospital's residency program from the University Of California San Diego School Of Medicine, Dr. Sauriol, 33, has worked hard to make dreams reality.

Experiencing from an early age what hard work means, she observed her single mother of three work three jobs to support her family. Having low academic expectations, Dr. Sauriol pushed self doubt aside and moved forward. During junior college she was exposed to the world of medicine while working at a company that provided continuing medical education credits to health professionals. "I recall the sense of excitement in their experiences and the reward that resulted ... and I started to envision what it would be like to be a doctor."

As an undergraduate of the University of California at Irvine, she immersed herself in research with the Emergency Medicine Research Associates Program at Irvine Medical Center. During that year she gained appreciation for clinical study and patient interactions. At the San Diego Medical Center, she managed the Women's Free Clinic for four years while continuing her education, as well as participated in a general surgery internship. These electives gave Dr. Sauriol the chance to interact with residents and attending physicians. Her only regret: the lack of continuity of care that would have allowed her to see her patients' progress over time.

The married mother of two is looking forward to this aspect of family medicine. "This past year has been one of the most challenging years of my life. As an intern, mother of a teen-ager and toddler and a wife I sometimes struggle to find a perfect balance in my life. It is true I am exhausted most of the time, but I also have a deep sense of satisfaction that I am making a difference in my patients' lives and they are grateful for the care I provide them. This is what I have worked so many long years to achieve and I know I am bearing my goal." She is assigned to Saltsburg Family Medicine.

Growing up in Brooklyn, NY, **Frank Balloqui, MD**, knew there was a way out and a way back. His parents struggled to provide for their four children but stressed the importance of an education as a means to improve himself, his

family and his community. Far from that crime-filled neighborhood, Dr. Balloqui, 27, now looks forward to serving those who most need his help.

A graduate of Queens College with a degree in biology, Dr. Balloqui earned his medical degree from Ross University School of Medicine in the Caribbean. During a clinical rotation in family medicine at Bronx Lebanon Hospital, he was exposed to a diverse under-privileged population that needed support, basic education and medical care. “I realized right then that I wanted to be that doctor who is able to attend to anyone who walks through the clinic doors, whether the patient is a child, a geriatric patient, or anybody who is just in need of medical attention.”

Dr. Balloqui said his most “challenging and rewarding experiences” occurred assisting his attending physicians. “I was amazed at the depth of their knowledge and most of all their compassion and patience in treating these patients without regard for race, class and situation in life. It is my utmost desire and fervent hope to become a part of a residency program that will challenge and give me the opportunity to work with patients of diversity and become the best doctor I could be.”

Making the move from Brooklyn to Latrobe with Dr. Balloqui is his wife and dog. Thinking about the impact he can make during his residency assignment at Saltsburg Family Medicine, Dr. Balloqui said, “contrary to popular beliefs, a lot of good can truly come out the hood.”

From a small town in Connecticut, **Robert Busch, MD**, has big aspirations and experiences that support those dreams.

Dr. Busch earned his undergraduate degree in psychology and neuroscience from the Pennsylvania State University, during which time he studied aboard at the University of Western Australia in Perth. Following graduation he pursued research projects at the National Institutes of Health and at the University of Connecticut.

Prior to the start of medical school, he worked for a year as a behavioral psychologist for a program that assists residents of halfway homes. “It was a

good rudimentary exposure to patients and the lives they lead with debilitating diseases.” He also has prior experience with publications in behavioral neuroscientist research for the National Institutes of Health through Johns Hopkins University Bayview Medical Campus.

Accepted at St. George’s University of Grenada, Dr. Busch led several projects during his medical school years. He is co-founder of the SGU 2015 project, a collaboration with the World Health Organization and United Nations to combat neglected tropical disease and improve water quality. The 29-year-old also served as the president of the Neuroscience Society. “Organizing students was a lot of effort in light of busy schedules, but serving the community is important and is a manifestation of humanistic values put to work in a practical way.”

That same leadership is what Dr. Busch brings to his residency assignment with Latrobe Family Medicine. “Family practice within the community offers a variety of diagnostic challenges which no other field provides. The patients are as diverse as the diagnoses, providing an exciting and satisfying life vocation.” He hopes to one day have a group practice within a community setting with ties to a local hospital like Latrobe. “This residency is ideal, with its variety of cases and emphasis on preventive medicine.”

Heidi M. Nagel, MD, started medical school a bit starry eyed, having previously made a career as a computer programmer. With dual undergraduate degrees in music and biomedical science, the possibilities seemed endless. She considered several specialties – neurology, anesthesia, ophthalmology, internal medicine, even infectious diseases. Clinical clerkships during medical school at the University of Florida, as well as guest lectures by the president of Doctors without Borders, research at the Pasteur Institute in Paris, and a medical mission trip to Nicaragua converged to form her new sense of call.

Dr. Nagel began residency training in the pediatrics program at Wake Forest University, but found her scope of practice incomplete. “I was redirecting mothers with postpartum depression, uncontrolled diabetes and psychiatric

conditions. I was becoming distant from an aspect of medicine that was stimulating and rewarding. Just as children posed complicated biopsychosocial problems, so too did adults.”

Transferring to the Family Medicine Residency at Trident Health System/Medical University of South Carolina, Dr. Nagel’s training accelerated, but she found herself longing for a broader experience prior to becoming an independent practitioner. Dr. Nagel, 39, comes to Latrobe Hospital hoping to build a complete repertoire of experiences to best serve my future patients and reach my goal of serving my community in the most effective way possible as an honorable, knowledgeable and dedicated physician.”

She anticipates returning to Asheville, N.C., where she was a professional Violinist in the Asheville Symphony. She is assigned to Latrobe Family Medicine.