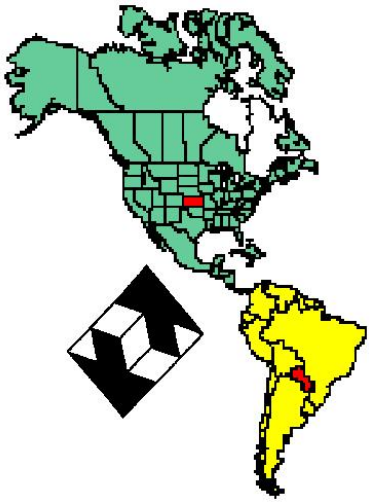


PARAGUAY-KANSAS FAMILY MEDICINE PARTNERSHIP

In 2002, the Partners of the Americas presented its "Award for Excellence" to the Kansas-Paraguay Partnership (KPP) and the Comité Paraguay/Kansas for their work on the development and implementation of the Family Medicine Faculty Exchange program. The award was received at the Annual Partners of the Americas International Convention in Quito, Ecuador, Nov. 22, 2002. The "Award for Excellence" recognized the KPP and the Department of Family and Community Medicine (DFCM) at KUSM-Wichita. The Family Medicine Faculty Exchange program is designed to:

1. Develop international faculty relationships and strengthen academic credibility for family medicine at the KU School of Medicine-Wichita and at Paraguayan medical schools.
2. Share clinical methods for working among diverse populations.
3. Develop opportunities to restructure health care using a family medicine-based model.
4. Obtain consultation regarding family medicine training at the predoctoral, residency, and continuing medical education levels.
5. Establish opportunities for Kansas medical students to study in Paraguay.

Edward Donatelle, MD, consults with physicians in Paraguay

The interchange between Kansas and Paraguayan family physician educators began in 1986 with a chance meeting between **Ed Donatelle**, **MD**, and **Wes Schmidt**, **MD**, at a national Society of Teachers of Family Medicine (STFM) meeting. Dr. Donatelle was the DFCM department chair at KUSM-Wichita. Dr. Schmidt, a practicing physician in Paraguay with family roots in Kansas, was the chair of the Health Committee of the Comité Paraguay/Kansas. As a result of their meeting, Dr. Donatelle consulted with Paraguayan medical schools in 1987 and arranged for Dr. Schmidt to do a fellowship in family medicine at KUSM-Wichita. Subsequently, Dr. Schmidt developed the first family medicine residency program in Paraguay.

Wes Schmidt, MD (left) teaches a medical Spanish at KUSM-Wichita.

There were several visits between Paraguay and Kansas between 1987 and 1994:

Raul Avila, MD, Dean of the University of Asuncion Medical School, visited Wichita.

Benedicto Ortellado, MD, toured urban and rural practices in Kansas.

John Hart, MD, Assistant Professor, Department of Family and Community Medicine, KUSM-Wichita visited Paraguay.

Dr. Schmidt returned to Kansas for a mini-fellowship and taught a medical Spanish class at KUSM-Wichita.

In 1999 the Family Medicine Faculty Exchange was rejuvenated when **Rick Kellerman, MD**, DFCM chair, visited Paraguay to further encourage the development of family medicine in Paraguay. He met with the deans of three medical schools, the Paraguay Society of Family Medicine and the Paraguayan Minister of Health. He helped develop and finalize a government proposal to provide continuing medical education to rural Paraguayan physicians and consulted with five residency programs.

Rick Kellerman MD, KUSM-W, (center) meets with the Academic Health Resources Committee and the minister of Health during his trip to Paraguay. **Wes Schmidt, MD**, is at the far left.

Enrique deMestral, MD, a faculty member at the National University of Asunción, visited Kansas in November 2000 to study American family medicine residency programs. When he returned to Paraguay he organized a family medicine department and residency program at the National University. The program now graduates five residents per year. Dr. Kellerman said "The inauguration of the family medicine department at the National University in Asunción is one more important sign of our mutual dedication to improve health care for all the citizens of Paraguay."

Left to right **Enrique deMestral, MD; Scott Moser, MD; John Dorsch, MD,** discuss medical student education.

Doug Woolley, MD, MPH, Vice Chair for Research, and Delos V. Smith, Jr. Professor in Community Geriatrics, was a medical exchange visitor to Paraguay in October 2002. He conducted medical education seminars and promoted family medicine throughout the country. He was most impressed with the quality and commitment of the Paraguayan family medicine faculty working at the residency programs and with the need to expand their ranks.

Dr. Maria Teresa Baran, Director General of the Regional Hospital of Encarnacíon, Paraguay, and program director of the Family Medicine Residency Program in Encarnacíon, visited Kansas in 2003 to gain information about residency education and training family physicians for Paraguay. While in Wichita, she made a presentation about family medicine in Paraguay. With the assistance of the DFCM, Dr. Baran was named the STFM International Scholar at the STFM Spring Conference in 2005 held in Toronto, Canada.

Doug Woolley, **MD,** (2nd from right) consults with family medicine residency programs.

Scott Moser, MD, Professor and Vice Chair for Education, continued the development and implementation of the Kansas/Paraguay Partnership's Family Medicine Faculty Exchange program on his visit to Paraguay in September 2004. He reported that "Key people in Paraguay's medical system and in medical education are adopting primary care principles to meet the health care needs of their communities, and these efforts could serve as models for the United States. The fledgling projects remain tenuous in the fragile political climate of Paraguay but their impact is dramatic." He visited the "golden triangle" of Paraguayan cities - Ascunción, Ciudad del Este, and Encarnación as well as several rural community health centers along the way. As part of his official duties on the trip, he assessed the teaching activities and

educational resources at the medical schools and family medicine residencies in each city and gave clinical lectures on evidence-based approaches to "ADHD" and "Chronic Pelvic Pain."

Dr. Andrés Szwako, Clinical Supervisor, Family Medicine Residency Program, National University, Asunción, visited Kansas in October, 2006. Dr. Szwako is also the Director of Family Medicine Continuing Education at the National University and the Area Coordinator and Lecturer for post-graduate family medicine programs for the National Institutes of Health in Paraguay. He met with faculty on both the Wichita and Kansas City campus, toured all three KUSM-W affiliated residencies, visited hospitals and both urban and rural private practices. Dr. Szwako gave a presentation about Paraguay to local health care leaders and attended the DFCM annual retreat.

Maria Teresa Baran, MD, (center) meets with KUSM-W students on her visit to Kansas.

The annual meeting of the Kansas Paraguay Partnership was held at KUSM-Wichita, March 5, 2005. The theme of the meeting was "Kansas and Paraguay-Partners in Medical Education." Special guests included the Honorable **James Spalding**, Paraguayan Ambassador to the United States and **Malcolm Butler**, President, Partners of the Americas, Washington DC, the parent organization for KPP.

Scott Moser, MD, (left) focused on undergraduate family medicine development on his visit to Paraguay.

The meeting highlighted the role of the Department of Family and Community Medicine and the Paraguayan family medicine physician educators in promoting the development of family medicine in Paraguay. Drs. **Rick Kellerman** and **Scott Moser** made presentations about their experiences during their visits to Paraguay. Medical students who had completed international electives in Paraguay participated in a panel discussion about their experiences.

Malcom Butler presented a plaque to **Dean S. Edwards Dismuke, MD,** commemorating receipt of the 2002 Partners of the America "Award for Excellence" for the Family Medicine Faculty Exchange program. Mayor **Carlos Mayans** gave a welcoming speech. Special guest was **Cecilia Coello**, wife of Ambassador Spalding and a former Wichita State University student.

Andrés Szwako, MD, discusses medical education in Paraguay on his visit to Kansas.

The result of the collaboration between the DFCM and Paraguayan physicians has had a dramatic effect on the development of family medicine in Paraguay. The international medical student elective in Paraguay has resulted in seven KUSM-Wichita medical students studying in Paraguay. The number of family medicine faculty has increased at Paraguayan medical schools. The number of residency programs in Paraguay has increased from 1 to 5 and the number of graduating residents has increased from 6 to 50 per year. Postgraduate training to practicing physicians in rural Paraguay was established. The family medicine residency office at the University

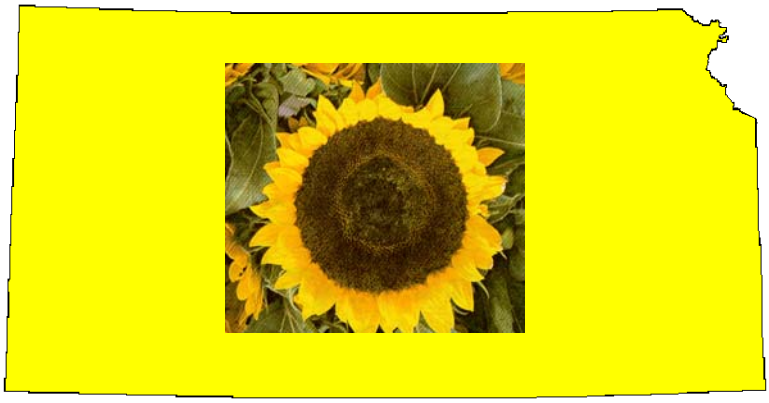
medical complex in Asunción has been renovated and a high speed computer for residents to access online literature was purchased with donations from Kansas family physicians.

The KPP and Comité Paraguay/Kansas have made progress in promoting family medicine as a way to improve the medical care for all people. Dr. Kellerman emphasized the importance and success of this relationship, stating, "We want to continue the 20 plus years of medical exchange between our respective medical schools, residency programs, and physicians. A few years ago, Chancellor Hemenway challenged all KU faculty to have an international experience. Our department took this very seriously and we rededicated ourselves to the Family Medicine Faculty Exchange. I only hope Paraguayan physicians have learned as much from us as we have from them."

Left to right: **Scott Moser, MD**, **Ambassador James Spalding, Rick Kellerman, MD**, and **Malcom Butler**, President of the Partners of the America, with the "Award for Excellence" plaques at the KPP meeting held at KUSM-Wichita, March 5, 2005.

Partners of the Americas is the largest international volunteer organization working to promote social, economic and cultural development in the western hemisphere. It was initiated by President John F. Kennedy in 1963 as the "Alliance for Progress." Kansas and Paraguay began their partnership in 1968. The "Award for Excellence" is presented each year to outstanding volunteer projects that reflect innovation, collaboration and resourcefulness at the international level. **Merrill Raber**, **PhD**, chair of the KPP Health Committee, helped organize the Family Medicine Faculty Exchange. Before retiring, he was a behavioral scientist at the KUSM-W Family Medicine Residency Program at Via Christi. The exchange will continue in 2008 with a visit to Paraguay by **Steve Penner, MD**, Clinical Associate Professor at KUSM-Wichita and the 2003 American Academy of Family Physician National Volunteer Exemplary Teacher of the Year.

Paula Worley, MS4, assists in surgery during her Paraguay elective



Partners of the Americas Award for Excellence

Presented in Quito Equador
November 2002

In recognition of the exceptional achievement of

Kansas-Paraguay Partners

in development of

the Family Medicine Exchange Program

This citation is conferred to

The Department of Family and Community Medicine, University of Kansas School of Medicine - Wichita and the Paraguay family medicine departments and residency programs.