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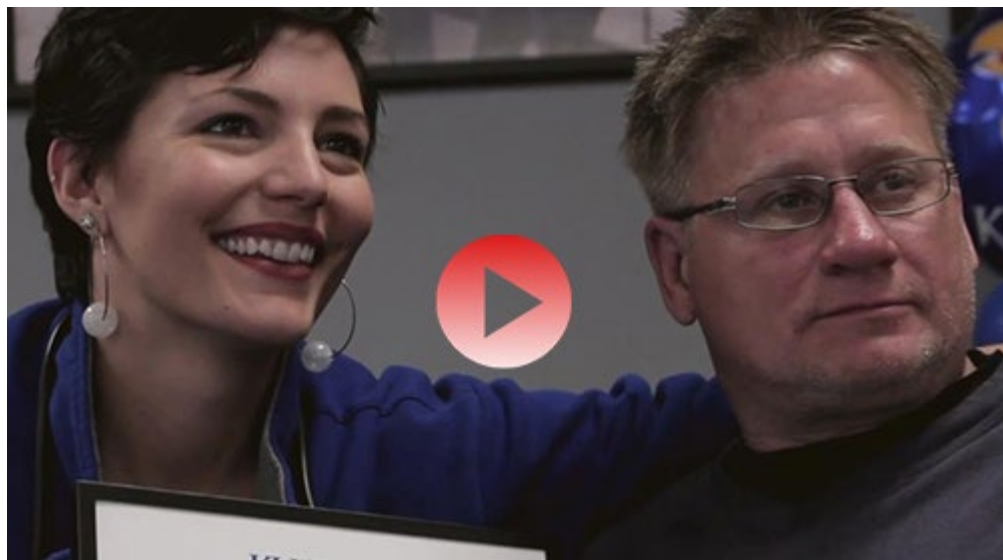
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# Legacy Teachers program honors patients for 'teaching' future docs

April 13, 2015

By Amy Geiszler-Jones



In medicine, sometimes the best teachers are patients.

For University of Kansas School of Medicine-Wichita students Christina Bourne and Nate Davis, those teachers were a man with chronic diabetes who showed Bourne the importance of continued care and follow-up, and a 2-month-old baby who showed Davis how being prepared can literally make a difference in a life-or-death situation.

Bourne and Davis thanked those patients for the impact they've had on their education during the inauguration of the new [Legacy Teachers](#)© program at the medical school. The program, developed about a decade ago at the University of Missouri-Columbia-School of Medicine, is open to all third-year students.

"This is a well-deserved program that we will have on an annual basis," said Dr. Scott Moser, professor and vice chair for education in the department of family and community medicine. "We learn some of our most important lessons from patients and yet all the teaching awards go to the faculty."

## **The lesson: continuity of care and physician-patient interaction**

Bourne met patient Gerald Brusso more than a year ago during a health fair for the homeless. After being laid off and

losing his health insurance, Brusso couldn't afford the \$400 monthly prescription bill to keep his diabetes in control. Brusso, who says he was on the verge of homelessness, had stopped at the fair to have his blood sugar tested.

With what she called "off-the-meter high" readings, Bourne invited Brusso to visit the KU School of Medicine-Wichita's JayDoc Clinic. The student-run clinic serves those unable to otherwise afford medical care, run in partnership with the Guadalupe Clinic on Saturday mornings. JayDoc provided Brusso with a medical home, and Bourne then worked with him to find effective medications he could afford.

"Our monthly interactions showed me how powerful a physician-patient interaction can be," Bourne wrote in her award letter for Brusso. "(He) trusted us enough to take our advice. He began feeling better and because he felt better he was able to find employment."

Now insured through his employer, Brusso no longer qualifies for care at the JayDoc Clinic, but that's not stopping Bourne from making sure he stays healthy. When she spots him working out at the Wichita Downtown YMCA, she chats with him.

### **The lesson: be prepared to save a life**

Davis was among the medical staff who rushed to a Code Blue at Wesley Medical Center's pediatric intensive care unit. Baleigh Hinkle wasn't breathing because her lung had collapsed from complications she suffered after she became septic from a urinary tract infection.

As medical staff worked on the little girl, Davis tried to comfort and reassure the anxious parents. He drew from parallels in his own life to show compassion - Davis has twin girls the same age as Baleigh and his son's first hours after birth had been very critical.

"The resuscitation was successful and I had the opportunity to follow (her) through most of her course in the hospital," wrote Davis in his award letter. "It was terrifying, yet a touching and rewarding experience to see her go from Code Blue to discharge. Her life was saved by the hands of residents, young doctors - people not too far away from where I stand now. I'll never forget how life can instantly change so dramatically and how being prepared for those situations can save a life. That's big stuff."

The experience has left a lasting impression on Davis.

"There are only a few patients you'll remember for the rest of your life," Davis said, sitting across the table from Baleigh who was bouncing on her mother's lap during the ceremony. "She's one who will be in my mind forever."

KU School of Medicine-Wichita

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1010 North Kansas

Wichita, KS 67214-3199

316-293-2635



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