Dear Colleagues:

Welcome to Des Moines University! I am thrilled that you have made the decision to join the DMU team. This is an exciting time and I am confident that you will find working at DMU to be both rewarding and professionally fulfilling.

Des Moines University is a great place to begin or continue your career as a faculty member. A variety of resources are available here to support faculty career development. Your success is essential to the success and growth of the University. We have invested heavily in you and will continue that investment through the years, because we know that a dedicated faculty makes this university even stronger.

Significant keys to the growth and success of DMU are outcomes from our current university strategic plan – Vision 2015. Through the collective efforts of faculty, staff, students, alumni, and Board members, the plan has resulted in many exciting initiatives which benefit the entire DMU Community. I encourage you to read the plan and updates (available on Pulse) thoroughly. Develop a familiarity with the themes and strategies and identify areas where you can contribute.

Once again, welcome to DMU and to what is sure to become a rewarding experience in teaching, research and community engagement.

Sincerely,

Karen McLean, Ph.D.
Provost, Des Moines University
Teresa Aoki, M.D.
Internal Medicine
Associate Professor

Teresa Aoki completed her medical education at Universidad Peruana Cayetano Heredia in Lima, Peru. She completed her residency training at Southern Illinois University in Springfield. She also completed fellowship training at Jackson Memorial Hospital – University of Miami School of Medicine in Miami, Florida. Dr. Aoki holds certifications in internal medicine, pulmonary medicine, critical care medicine and sleep medicine.

Maria Barnes, Ph.D.
Biochemistry and Nutrition
Assistant Professor

Maria J. Barnes received her Ph.D. in nutrition and food science and an M.S. in physiology at Wayne State University in Detroit. After graduate school, she began postdoctoral training at Pennington Biomedical Research Center in Baton Rouge, LA. There she moved up the ranks to assistant professor of research and served as director of the Nutrition and Neural Signaling Laboratory. Dr. Barnes’ research interests include obesity-induced hypertension and diet-induced obesity. She employs animal models and molecular techniques to investigate central mechanisms that the adipocyte-derived hormone leptin may use to augment the development of hypertension; and the role that mu opioid receptors play in diet-induced obesity.
Thomas Benzoni, D.O., AOBEM, FACEP, ABFM
Family Medicine
Assistant Professor

After graduating from DMU (then COMS), Thomas Benzoni trained in Pontiac, MI, and Omaha, NE. He has worked in emergency medicine in Kentucky, New York, Nebraska and Iowa. He continues to work with many EM and EMS stakeholders, including the American College of Emergency Physicians, in which he has Fellow status; the Iowa Task Force 1 Urban Search and Rescue; the Iowa Disaster Medical Assistance Team, of which he is a founding member; the Iowa Department of Public Health in EMS and Trauma Care; the AHA in Mission Lifeline; and many others.

His interests run into anything educational, unconventional and not stereotypical. International medical relief work holds a special place. Keeping him in line is Noreen O’Shea, D.O., assistant professor of family medicine and his wife of 36 years.

Dr. Benzoni is boarded by the American Osteopathic Board of Emergency Medicine and American Board of Family Medicine. He holds appointments in family medicine under Dr. Bret Ripley and in global health under Dr. Yogesh Shah.

Kathryn Cardamon, M.P.T., PYC, CLT
Physical Therapy
Physical Therapist/Instructor

Kathryn Cardamon graduated from the University of Iowa with a master of physical therapy degree in 1994. She has worked in Iowa City at Mercy Hospital in acute care and outpatient. In 2003, she opened her own outpatient clinic to provide rehabilitation and fitness programming for patients and the community. Her practice specialized in orthopedics, women’s health, pelvic floor muscle dysfunction and lymphedema for breast cancer patients.

Ms. Cardamon moved to Des Moines in 2009 and has continued to provide outpatient therapy services in central Iowa. She has a variety of experiences in the treatment of general orthopedic, neurological disorders, pelvic muscle dysfunction and lymphedema care. She is a candidate for certification in medical therapeutic yoga and is certified in treating lymphedema for all conditions.
Craig Clark, D.O., FACC, FAHA, FASE
Internal Medicine
Associate Professor

After earning his D.O. degree from DMU, Craig Clark completed an internal medicine residency at the University of Iowa-Des Moines program, receiving the outstanding senior resident award. He completed a research and clinical fellowship in cardiovascular disease at the University of Iowa Hospitals and Clinics, where he was appointed chief fellow, and spent a year as a VA Nation Quality Scholar. He recently completed a fellowship in heart failure/mechanical circulatory support/cardiac transplantation.

Dr. Clark has served as president of the Iowa Chapter of the American College of Cardiology, member of the ACC board of governors and adjunct clinical professor at the University of Iowa Carver College of Medicine and the Touro University College of Osteopathic Medicine. He is board certified in internal medicine, cardiovascular disease and advanced heart failure and transplant cardiology by the American Board of Internal Medicine and adult comprehensive echocardiography by the National Board of Echocardiography.

Francesca Di Sole, Ph.D.
Physiology and Pharmacology
Assistant Professor

Francesca Di Sole was a faculty member in the medicine department at the University of Maryland School of Medicine before she joined DMU. She obtained her Ph.D. in renal physiology, working between the University of Bari, Italy, and the University of Zurich, Switzerland. As a Ph.D. student, she developed her interest in the regulation of body salt and fluid balance and, in particular, the mechanisms of regulation of renal sodium handling. She has pursued these interests during postdoctoral fellowships at Georg-August-University of Gottingen, Germany, and at the University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center, Dallas (sponsored by an American Heart Association Fellowship), as well as in sabbaticals at different academic institutions and presently at DMU.

Dr. Di Sole has published her work in peer-reviewed journals and given presentations at regional, national and international conferences. She also was awarded a prestigious Carl W. Gottschalk Research Scholar Grant from the American Society of Nephrology.
Steven Harder, D.O., FAAFP
Family Medicine
Assistant Professor

After graduating from DMU (then the University of Osteopathic Medicine and Health Sciences), he completed a rotating internship at Northwest General Hospital in Milwaukee and a family medicine residency with the Northeast Family Practice Foundation in Waterloo, IA. He was an employed by Olmsted Medical Center in Spring Valley, MN, where he had been with the same practice since 1991. In this practice, Dr. Harder has seen patients in the hospital, clinic and nursing home settings. He served as the South Branch Clinic department chairperson and as medical director for multiple local institutions and nursing homes.

Dr. Harder’s professional interests include all aspects of family medicine. When not working, he likes to exercise, especially swimming and biking, as well as reading, traveling and spending time with family and friends.

Rebecca Hines, M.L.I.S.
Library
Education Librarian/Assistant Professor

In her role as the education librarian, Rebecca Hines enjoys helping students think critically about information resources and technologies. Prior to her appointment in 2015 as an assistant professor, she started working in an interim position at the library in 2013. She obtained her master’s degree in library and information science from Louisiana State University and has more than eight years of experience working in academic medical libraries. Her favorite database is PubMed. When not reading database user manuals, Ms. Hines spends her free time dreaming about future hiking trips in a national park.
Noah Marcus, Ph.D.
Physiology and Pharmacology
Assistant Professor

Noah Marcus earned his Ph.D. from the University of Wisconsin-Madison in the John Rankin Laboratory of Pulmonary Medicine. He recently completed a postdoctoral fellowship with Harold Schultz at the University of Nebraska Medical Center in the department of cellular and integrative physiology. Dr. Marcus’ research is focused on the reflex control of cardio-respiratory function in chronic heart failure (CHF). His recent studies have identified surgical, pharmacological and lifestyle interventions that have potential for improving autonomic and respiratory dysfunction in this disease state. His lab will focus on the role of enhanced chemoreflex function in renal injury and declines in renal function associated with CHF. Additional areas of interest include interrelationships between sleep disordered breathing, autonomic dysfunction and cancer.

Kaaren Olesen, D.O., M.S.
Specialty Medicine
Assistant Professor

Kaaren Olesen earned her D.O. and master of health care administration degrees simultaneously at DMU. She completed her internship and residency in obstetrics and gynecology at Genesys Regional Medical Center in Flint, MI. She is board certified in her specialty.

Dr. Olesen started in OB/gynecology practice in 2002 with West Des Moines OB/Gyn Associates. In 2014 she retired from obstetrics and opened her gynecology-only private practice, Women’s Care Clinic PLC, in February 2015. She taught at DMU in the OB/gyn course and various individual labs and lectures from 2003-2012. She re-joined the DMU faculty in December 2014.

Active with medical mission work in Asikuma, Ghana, West Africa, Dr. Olesen is married to Jamie Bunn, D.V.M. They have two school-aged sons and two dogs.
Tracy Porter, D.P.T.
Physical Therapy
Assistant Director of Clinical Education/
Assistant Professor

Tracy Porter received her undergraduate degree in biology from the University of Northern Iowa before earning her M.S.P.T. degree at DMU and then her D.P.T. at Washington University. Prior to joining DMU, she was the academic coordinator of clinical education for the Physical Therapist Assistant Program at Mercy College of Health Sciences. She was in clinical practice for nearly 15 years with 21st Century Rehab PC in central Iowa. Dr. Porter’s professional interests include clinical education and women’s health; her research interests include clinical assessment.

Tabassum Taqi, M.D.
Family Medicine
Assistant Professor

Tabassum Taqi earned her M.B.B.S. degree from Dow Medical University, Pakistan. She completed her family medicine residency at Mercy Hospital in Des Moines in June 2015, serving as chief resident in her last year of residency. Dr. Taqi has diverse experiences in different aspects of medicine. She has worked in the U.S. and in Pakistan as a certified cardiac sonographer. She has also worked in Pakistan as a medical officer in internal medicine. With her special interest in health care for the underprivileged, she has worked as a volunteer in shelter homes and free clinics in Houston. She is comfortable in providing care for diverse patient populations, from pediatric to geriatric. She also is interested in chronic disease care, preventive medicine and ultrasound teaching.
Paul Volker, M.D.
Family Medicine
Assistant Professor

Paul Volker joined DMU after 27 years in group practice in Boone, Iowa. He taught medical students, practiced full-spectrum family medicine in clinical and hospital settings, and performed obstetrical, surgical and endoscopic procedures there.

Dr. Volker graduated from the University of Iowa College of Medicine and completed his family medicine residency in Waukesha, WI. He is board certified by the American Board of Family Medicine and has earned a certificate of added qualification in geriatric medicine. An active pilot, he also has an interest in aviation medicine and performs FAA pilot certification examinations.

In addition to his clinical role in the family medicine clinic, Dr. Volker brings extensive geriatrics experience to the DMU. He will work with Dr. Yogesh Shah in DMU’s memory clinic as well as co-direct DMU’s rural health elective and geriatrics courses.

Sarah Werning, Ph.D.
Anatomy
Assistant Professor

Sarah Werning earned her Ph.D in integrative biology from the University of California, Berkeley, and then worked for two years at Stony Brook University as an National Science Foundation postdoctoral research fellow. Her research focuses on the evolution of growth, life history and metabolism in marsupials and reptiles. Specifically, she uses descriptive and histomorphometric techniques to analyze modern and fossil bone tissue in order reconstruct the physiology and life history of extinct animals (including dinosaurs). Dr. Werning has done extensive herpetological and paleontological fieldwork in the deserts of the American southwest. At DMU, she will teach both histology and gross anatomy courses. Her nonacademic interests include the Chicago Blackhawks, Chicago Bears and tacos.