

# Trends & Highlights

Osteopathic medical education continues to develop and keep pace with, and even surpass, the growth and development in medical education in general. At the start of the 2006 academic year, there were 20 colleges of osteopathic medicine, three of which have branch campuses. This means that there are 23 training sites for the D.O. degree. The data presented below are derived from the American Association of Medical Colleges' *AAMC Data Book*, January 2005.

## Enrollment

Total enrollment in D.O. programs reached 13,406 in the 2005-06 academic year, an increase of 881 or 7% from the prior year, and an increase of 2,589 or 24% since the beginning of the 21st century (2000-01 academic year). The growth in first-year enrollment is more striking, reaching 3,908 in 2005-06, an increase of 262 or 7% in one year, and an increase of 34% over 2000-01. The colleges graduated 2,756 D.O.s in 2005, compared with 2,510 in 2001, an increase of 10%.

Total enrollment in allopathic medical schools reporting to AAMC (American Association of Medical Colleges) was 68,343 in 2005-06, an increase of 4% since 2000-01. First-year enrollment in allopathic medical schools in 2005-06 was 17,376, growing at the same 4% rate. The allopathic medical colleges graduated 15,736 M.D.s in 2004-05, compared with 15,796 in 2001, a slight decrease. In 2001 D.O.s accounted for 13.7% of U.S. trained medical school graduates; by 2005 that percentage had edged upward to 14.9%.

## Applications

The AACOMAS applicant pool for admission rose from 6,898 for the classes entering in 2001 to 8,258 for classes entering in 2005, an increase of 1,360 or 20%. With most applicants applying to more than one school, the number of applications submitted by each applicant is relatively stable at about six. Over the same time frame, the total number of applicants to allopathic medical schools through AMCAS (American Medical College Application Service) declined by about 3%.

## Demographics

For classes entering in 2005, women represented 50.9% of all applicants and 49.8% of first-year enrollment. While the percentage of women in the entering class declined slightly from the prior year, the *number* of women increased by 119 as a result of overall growth in the size of the first-year classes. Ten years ago, for classes entering in 1996, women accounted for 39.2% of applicants and 37.8% of first-year enrollees. In comparison, 49.8% of allopathic applicants and 48.5% of allopathic first-year enrollees were women in 2005. The increase in the number of women in allopathic medical education over time has been similar to their growth in osteopathic medical education, but not as great because women represented a greater percentage of applicants and enrollees in allopathic medical education ten years ago. This growth of women in entering classes is reflected in total enrollment and graduation statistics.

Applications by members of historically underrepresented minority groups (Black/African American, Native American/Alaska Native, and Hispanic/Latino) accounted for 11.8% of all AACOMAS applications in 2004-05, the largest percentage ever reported. Although the distribution varies from year to year, this represented the highest number of applications ever received from applicants identifying themselves as Black/African American, and the third highest number of applications ever received from applicants identifying themselves as Hispanic/Latino. Both first-year and total enrollment of underrepresented minority group members in osteopathic medical schools lags behind the percentage of applications. In 2005, both first-year enrollment (at 337) and total enrollment (at 1,147) by members of underrepresented minority groups are at a historical peak.

## Graduation

A record 2,756 students graduated with the D.O. degree in 2005, an increase of 43% over ten years ago. Women accounted for 36% of the cohort graduating in 1996, and 42% of the cohort graduating in 2005. As enrollment by women continues to increase, women likely will constitute approximately 50% of D.O. graduates in coming years. Women accounted for 47% of allopathic graduates in 2005. Underrepresented minority group members constituted 6.9% of osteopathic graduates in 2005, (a total of 189 graduates), a decline from a high of 9.2% in 1999. Their numbers suggest significant attrition or extended time of study when compared to the 261 underrepresented minority students who started medical school in 2001. AACOM does not currently track enrollment by student. Further research on the outcomes of individual students and cohorts might suggest approaches to improve graduation rates.