The Neurodiagnostics and Sleep Science (NDSS) Program recognized 13 new graduates at a celebration on May 8, 2014, at UNC Chapel Hill, and the graduation at UNC Charlotte on May 9, 2014. Graduates were excited to announce their post-graduation plans, which included assuming roles in patient education, leadership, management, and pursuing advanced degrees. Many of the graduates had already assumed a new position or moved up in their current position while they were enrolled as students in the NDSS program. The NDSS faculty is very proud of their accomplishments. Mary Ellen Wells, NDSS Program Director, said in her remarks on May 8, “We look forward to, and expect great things from you, graduates.”

Bradley V. Vaughn, MD, UNC Neurodiagnostics and Sleep Science Medical Director, Chief of the Division of Sleep and Epilepsy, UNC Department of Neurology, gave an inspirational address to the Class of 2014. He advised them to “Think Big,” as they emerge as leaders in the sleep field.

NDSS students complete a capstone research project and presentation during their final semester, culminating from their... Continued on page 2

NDSS Expands Student Practicum Opportunities in NC and Beyond

During the 2014 year, the NDSS program expanded practicum facilities across North Carolina and beyond. Due to the hard work of the NDSS students and faculty, practicum sites have nearly doubled each year since the program’s inception.

NDSS students complete their practicum rotation during their first summer as a student, which is the half-way point of their degree. “We call it the summer of leadership,” said Dr. Bradley Vaughn, NDSS Medical Director.

Since NDSS students are registered and practicing technologists, they participate in the practicum experience at an upper level. Students have unique opportunities to collaborate with manager... Continued on page 3
NDSS Program Coordinator Advocates for Education at National SLEEP Meeting

Auburne Overton, NDSS Program Coordinator and Assistant Professor, served on a discussion panel regarding the future of education for sleep professionals at the 28th Annual SLEEP Meeting in Minneapolis on June 1, 2014.

The panel was composed of individuals representing the leadership of stakeholders in education in polysomnographic technology including the American Association of Sleep Technologists (AAST), the Board of Registered Polysomnographic Technologists (BRPT), and the Committee on Accreditation of Polysomnographic Technologist Education Programs (CoA PSG). These individuals are part of a newly formed task force on education and the future of sleep technology.

The panel discussed the outcomes of a symposium held in September of 2013 where these same professional leaders, along with other key stakeholders, determined that the future of sleep technologists’ professional roles are not only going to be more complex, but that those working in our profession need to have advanced clinical, critical thinking, and leadership skills. The clear consensus of this group is that training the professionals of the future of our profession must hinge on formal education from accredited institutions.

In addition to sharing the outcomes of the September 2013 symposium, the panel also fielded questions on the topic and collected feedback from those attending the meeting. Future meetings of this task force are to include the development of a joint position statement on minimal education requirements, the implementation of required formal educational degrees for entry into the profession of sleep technology, and much more. We have come to the point in the evolution of sleep technology where instead of allowing the profession to drive the education of our workforce, we are requiring the workforce to obtain the education necessary to drive the profession.

Class of 2014 (from page 1)

An undergraduate course of study. Capstone projects provide NDSS students with the opportunity to establish a practical connection between their undergraduate major and the professional world. Two NDSS graduates were selected to present their capstone research at the May 8 celebration in Chapel Hill. Brittany Tolar presented “Comparing CPAP Compliance in Medicare Patients: Oronasal Therapy Vs. Nasal Therapy.” Gurpreet Singh presented “Tracking Patient Outcomes: A prospective study to determine the correlation between Epworth Sleepiness Scale (ESS) and Apnea Hypopnea Index (AHI).”

The celebration in Chapel Hill also included recognition of 2013-2014 NDSS scholarship recipients and the generous donors who made the scholarships possible: Tempur Sealy International, The Smith Family Foundation, Nihon Kohden, and Dr. and Ms. Bradley and Karen Vaughn.

To watch a video with highlights from the 2014 graduation celebration in Chapel Hill, go to www.med.unc.edu/ahs/ndss/bachelors-degree-program/2014-ndss-graduation-ceremony or http://vimeo.com/95442396.

Where are they now? Notes from NDSS Alumni

Tanisha Burke (Class of 2013)

“I work at Carolinas Sleep Services as a registered Sleep Tech. To date I have written two editorials and I am in the process of getting my research from our capstone project published in a medical journal. I am currently pursuing Physician Assistant School as well as a leadership position. I have started my own direct sales business and am able to enjoy concerts and family now that I have a little more free time in my schedule.”

Steve Adams (Class of 2014)

“For the first month after graduation I didn’t do anything but relax and work. Then, some time in July, I was called into my boss’s office and told I would no longer be splitting my work time between days and nights. I am still working at Dayton Children’s Hospital in the sleep center but I no longer do night studies—I was promoted to lead tech/co-sleep center coordinator! I am in charge of our CPAP program, quality assurance, and I am the clinical assistant...”
NDSS Program Director Completes PhD

NDSS Program Director Mary Ellen Wells fulfilled graduation requirements and completed her Doctor of Philosophy degree in Curriculum & Instruction at North Carolina State University. “Finally,” was the main word Dr. Wells used to describe the culmination of her four-and-a-half years of intense study at NCSU.

“It has been challenging, yet very rewarding to complete this program while concurrently teaching in the NDSS program,” Dr. Wells said. “My concentration was Instructional Technology, and my professors at NCSU were the best of the best in this area. Since the NDSS program is primarily online, I was able to immediately incorporate the latest tips, tricks, and online instructional strategies I learned from my studies at NCSU right into the NDSS courses.”

Dr. Wells’ dissertation, titled “Mobile Learning in Medical Education: A Case Study Through the Lens of Sleep Education,” involved creating a sleep medicine “app” for smartphones and tablets.

“The UNC Department of Neurology was so supportive of this project and the neurology residents were great participants,” said Dr. Wells. “There really aren’t any sleep apps for physicians or other health care workers, and my hope is to continue this project to provide easily accessible sleep education to many health care disciplines.”

The graduation ceremony was on May 10 at the PNC arena. Dr. Wells attended with her family, and afterward had another celebration for her second son Kree, who turned one that same day.

Practicum Opportunities Expand (from page 1)

ment, physicians, and durable medical equipment (DME) providers, to be part in interdisciplinary teams, to work in quality assurance and biomedical, to evaluate facility policies and procedures, to participate in planning and marketing of a facility, and to work directly with other technologists in a variety of modalities. Students also create three research projects during the practicum (i.e. education, quality assurance, and business), which they present to NDSS faculty and health care administrators.

2014 practicum locations included the following:
Carolina’s HealthCare System, Charlotte, NC
Feeling Great! Sleep Medical Center, Jacksonville, NC
Gaylord Hospital, Wallingford, CT
Kettering Health Network, Dayton, OH
Nash Hospitals, Inc., Rocky Mount, NC
Pasadena Hospital, Pasadena, CA
Duke University Medical Center, Raleigh, NC
Raleigh Neurology Associates, PA, Raleigh, NC
Sandhills Neurology, Sanford, NC
SleepMed, Inc.
Summa Western Reserve Hospital, Cuyahoga Falls, OH
UNC Hospitals, Chapel Hill, NC
Vidant Health, Greenville, NC
Wayne Memorial Hospital, Goldsboro, NC

Follow NDSS on LinkedIn!
LinkedIn is an easy way to get the latest NDSS news and keep up with the accomplishments of students, alumni, and faculty. https://www.linkedin.com/groups/Neurodiagnostics-Sleep-Science-UNC-Chapel-4961779/about.

to our sleep center medical director. I don’t believe any of this would have been possible without my NDSS degree. Away from work I was able to put my racecar back together this summer and I just returned from three days of racing in Sandusky, Ohio. “

Veronica Loftin (Class of 2014)
“I am currently employed with SleepWorks, Inc (Medbridge Healthcare). Since graduation I have moved up from just being an acquisition technologist to also a scoring tech. I plan to continue working with this company and hope to be able to advance to a leadership position in the future. Although I am currently not pursuing higher education, I plan to start working towards a MHA degree within the next one to two years.”

Samantha Mason (Class of 2014)
“I am working as a nighttime RPSGT for Carolina’s Healthcare System and growing my own business, Old South Vintage Rentals. Since graduating, I have had more time to pursue my entrepreneurial dream!”

NDSS Graduates and Students Form Education Task Force for NCASM, Serve on Board of Directors

Two NDSS graduates and two current NDSS students joined the North Carolina Academy of Sleep Medicine (NCASM) and created the Education Task Force, in preparation for the November 8, 2014, meeting at the Friday Center in Chapel Hill. Another NDSS graduate is serving a two-year term as Treasurer for the Academy.

NCASM is the only chartered sleep organization in North Carolina for all Sleep Professionals. NCASM’s mission is to “promote excellence in sleep medicine health care, education and research, advocate for recognition of sleep disorders and provide exchange of sleep information to all sleep professionals in the State of North Carolina.”

The new task force is charged with writing editorials for the newly established newsletter, website development, meeting and membership planning, and creating a comprehensive database for sleep professionals throughout NC. The graduate and student profiles are as follows:

**Gurpreet K. Singh, BS, BA, RPSGT, RST**
**Task Force Chair**
Gurpreet is currently the Practice Manager for Medical Practice and Sleep Laboratory at Albemarle Pulmonary Medicine Associates in Elizabeth City, NC. She has extensive experience and education in sleep medicine and in information computer technology systems. Gurpreet is an advocate for advancing patient care and promoting sleep technologist and physician education around sleep medicine in North Carolina.

**Richard H. Johnson, RCP, RRT-SDS, RPSGT**
**Richard Johnson**
In 1989, Richard obtained an AAS in Respiratory Care Technology. He began his career in health care as a Respiratory Therapist for Duke Regional Hospital from 1987 through 2001. He has worked for Kiron Sleep Disorders Center from 2001 to present. Currently, he holds the following credentials: Respiratory Care Practitioner (RCP), Registered Respiratory Therapist-Sleep Disorders Specialist (RRT-SDS), Registered Polysomnographic Technologist (RPSGT). He is pursuing a BS degree in Neurodiagnostic and Sleep Science at UNC Charlotte. Richard is expected to graduate in May 2015. He is a member of the North Carolina Multiple Sclerosis Society (NCMSS), National Society of Collegiate Scholars (NSCS), and National Board of Respiratory Care (NBRC). Richard has one daughter who is a senior at Penn State University. He also enjoys being a church pianist.

**Tanisha Burke, BS, RPSGT**
**Tanisha Burke**
Tanisha earned a BS in Biology and BS Neurodiagnostics and Sleep Science at UNC Charlotte. She has been an active sleep technologist for the past 10 years at Carolinas Sleep Services for Carolinas Healthcare System in Charlotte, NC.

**Victoria Morris, RPSGT, RST**
**Victoria Morris**
Victoria has been a Sleep Technician with United Sleep Medicine since 2009. Her responsibilities include recording polysomnography, offering diagnostic and therapeutic services, and patient care and education. She is experienced with pediatric patients and with children with special needs. She also performs nocturnal EEG’s and CAP. Victoria is a student representative on the NDSS BS program advisory committee (2014).

**Steven O’Dell**
**Steven O’Dell**
Steven O’Dell is a polysomnographic technologist at the UNC Sleep Disorders Center. Steven received his BS degree in Neurodiagnostics and Sleep Science from UNC Charlotte and AAS degree in Polysomnography from Lenoir Community College. He performs PSG’s, including diagnostic and titration (CPAP, Bi-Level, ASV), and assists in training of students.

For more information, please visit www.ncsleep.org.

**UNC NEURODIAGNOSTICS AND SLEEP SCIENCE PROGRAM**

The Neurodiagnostics and Sleep Science bachelor’s degree program is offered by the University of North Carolina at Charlotte, College of Health and Human Services, Kinesiology Department, in collaboration with the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, School of Medicine, Department of Allied Health Sciences.

This innovative, online degree program is the first of its kind in the world. Employment opportunities include hospitals, specialized sleep and epilepsy labs, private practice, educational institutions, research facilities, and equipment design, sales, and manufacturing companies.

For more information about the program, visit www.alliedhealth.unc.edu/ndss.