



2022 July Grants and More

Contact: Thomas H. Webb, Jr., Executive Director

Phone: 479-755-6880

twebb@thedegenfoundation.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Fort Smith, AR (August 16, 2022) – The Degen Foundation awarded grants totaling over \$207,800.00 in June to the following nonprofit organizations to provide medical care and promote health and education with the primary emphasis in assisting the needs of the uninsured and underserved population.

The Arkansas Colleges of Health Education (ACHE) received a grant in the amount of **\$9,815.00** to provide Student Education Enhancement Virtual Reality (VR) units for all medical students of ARCOM as well as the ACHE Physical Therapy and Occupational Therapy students to utilize in Anatomy. The purchase provided ten units and ten software licenses for students; one for faculty; ten software apps; one locking mobile laptop cart that can store and charge up to 24 laptops. These units will be located in the ARCOM Anatomy Model Lab and will greatly enhance the student's experience in the Anatomy Course.



Top left: Dr. Lance Forshee, Assistant Professor of Anatomy all grins after receiving the Virtual Reality units

Top right: Kylie Dominick and Christina Beauford – OMSII DO medical students that assist in research Dr. Raja Rachakatla, Associate Professor and Acting Chair of Anatomy, and Dr. Forshee.

Bottom left: Tom Webb, Degen Executive Director getting instructions from Dr. Forshee

Bottom right: Students Christina Beauford and Kylie Dominick demonstrate how to use the units

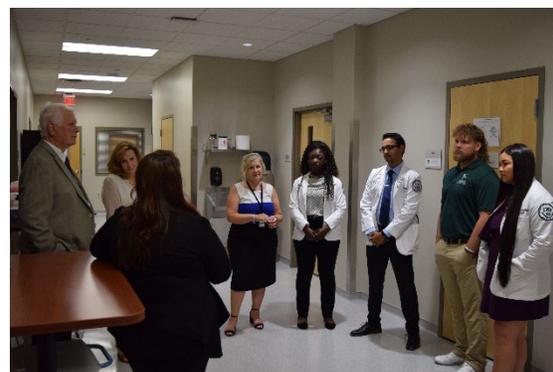


2022 July Grants and More

To continue the advancement of the clinical skills of our students through learning and assessment, a grant in the amount of **\$171,699.62** was awarded to ACHE to provide updated software, hardware, and equipment to the Center for Clinical Skills Development. It has been demonstrated that advanced and expanded opportunities such as this can lead to ever-increasing safety measures as learners and residents develop and practice their skills beyond what is typically retained through a standard textbook education.

Kerrie Sanders, Manager of the Center for Clinical Skills Development explained how much the upgrade improved discussions between students, “the patient” and the faculty that are assessing case scenarios due to enhanced sound recordings, diminished delays in processing communication, higher quality video both in recordings and live stream or student encounters so faculty can focus on clinical skills as they are performed and well as improved redundancy in recordings to reduce loss of service.

The grant also provided for upgrades to the high-fidelity mannequin control system and software that allows for more realistic functionality. It comes with a soft electronic medical record (EMR) as well as real-time data logs visible to the students that show interventions, diagnostic orders, and medications as they are prescribed. Ms Sanders hopes this improved functionality will more closely resemble true hospital settings so students can be more acclimated once they start clinical rotations as well as improve patient safety.



Top left: Kerrie Sanders, explains the updates to Tom Webb, Degen Executive Director and Jackie Krutch, Director of Advancement for ACHE.

Top right: Ms. Sanders, Tom Webb, Ms. Krutch and Rebecca Ameis visit with ACHE Students Victoria George – DO; Trishan Patel – DO; Trent Gattis – OT; and Jessica Bradshaw – PT

Bottom left and right: Students gather for a demonstration with mannikin “David” to hear more about the upgrades.

THE DEGEN FOUNDATION

2022 July Grants and More

The Donald Reynolds Cancer Support House was awarded a grant for **\$17,788.00**. The Support House is a place where cancer patients and connect with each other; have a place to call their own to voice their fears, concerns, and questions. This grant will allow weekly support groups for men, women, and children to be facilitated by licensed mental health professionals with expertise and training to help patients deal with the anxiety and fear that often arises from a cancer diagnosis.



Pictured is Melissa Sikes, Executive Director accepting the check from Tom Webb and Rebecca Ameis of The Degen Foundation

The Fort Smith Children’s Shelter was the recipient of a **\$8,500.00** grant to purchase indoor physical fitness equipment in an effort to promote “whole body and brain health.” This will provide the children in the facility to have coping opportunities to support psychological, emotional and behavior challenges of each youth. The plan is to add kettlebells, medicine balls, bars, bumper plates and plate rack jump ropes and bands and timers with workout training guides and new rubber flooring in their gym.



Pictured with Tom Webb is Ami Curry, Executive Director of the Children’s Shelter and Lauren Pruitt, Director of Development



2022 July Grants and More

The Foundation encourages grants with large “ripple effects,” that is, those which generate benefits that spread beyond their primary grantee into the wider community, as well as “seed money” grants, whereby Foundation support provides a needed catalyst or first step to a significant, and preferably ongoing, positive core value effect.

Please be sure to visit our website: www.thedegenfoundation.org for more information.

ACHE Student Scholarship Endowment Fund Reaches \$1,000,000.00

In July 2021, the Arkansas Colleges of Health Education Board of Trustees established this fund that positioned the institution to build permanent scholarship funds for all current and future educational programs.

The Fort Smith Regional Healthcare Foundation (formed from the sale of Sparks Hospital) and The Degen Foundation made initial founding contributions totaling \$700,000 that were given as a challenge for raising matching funds in future campaigns.

In June 2022, the Fort Smith Regional Healthcare Foundation Board made another contribution of \$150,000 and challenged The Degen Foundation to match this gift. With no hesitation, the Degen Board of Directors gifted another \$150,000.00 to the fund which now totals over \$1,000,000.00.

We are proud to support this organization that is growing **osteopathic physicians, doctors of occupational therapy and physical therapy (and soon physician’s assistants)** for our region. The Degen Foundation looks forward to seeing this fund grow with additional gifts, resulting in scholarships distributed to our hardworking students.