

# MU Sound Byte

Misericordia University  
Diagnostic Medical Sonography



Issue 1, June 2010

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Sonography- It is what it is!  
Slogan for class of 2010

## CARE Bill

The strive for national credentialing in sonography as well as all medical imaging modalities has been a focus for a long time by professional societies such as the SDMS and ASRT. While you may not realize, numerous hours as well as financial resources have been devoted for more than five years in this effort. The Consistency, Accuracy, Responsibility and Excellence (CARE) in Medical Imaging & Radiation Therapy Bill (H.R. 3652) is currently in the House Committee on Energy & Commerce with anticipation it will be supported by representatives on the committee to move it to the House of Representatives. The renewed interest occurred due to the articles earlier in the year regarding excessive radiation exposure. Several imaging professional groups were invited to Washington DC to educate our lawmakers on the lack of regulation in Imaging which ultimately can result in poor or litigious patient care.

Credentialing is not about a credentialed person being a better sonographer than non-credential. Credentialing is establishing minimum standard of knowledge and competency. Equally important is establishing credibility to the level of responsibility

sonographers' hold in the outcome of each and every sonographic examination.

Each one of us must preserve the value of what we do as a member of the healthcare team and educate not only the public, but healthcare professionals the amount of knowledge and skill it requires to perform a sonographic examination. To many individuals, including physicians it looks as if one can just lay the transducer down and magically this quality image appears. Sonographers know this is not true, thus certification is a stepping stone to create realization that it requires a certain level of knowledge.

Miniaturization of equipment was most recently in the news as being referred to the 'next stethoscope'. For some, this brings about fears of iphone sized equipment falling into unskilled hands thinking that everyone can certainly learn to use this by reading an instruction manual or just trial and error. It is the error that is concerning.

Thus, I hope that you have an greater understanding of why national credentialing is so important to the integrity of what we do everyday.

## Sonography Graduates Sixteen Students

On March 19, 2010 sixteen students graduated from Misericordia University's Diagnostic Medical Sonography Program. This was also the sixth graduating class from the program. The celebration was held at the East Mountain Inn, Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania. University administration, faculty and clinical instructors, and more importantly their loved ones were there to honor this great achievement. Academic Achievement Award recipient was **Hailey Comstock** and Perfect Attendance Award recipient was **Shannon Shovlin**.

As of this date, eleven of the sixteen have secured employment either fulltime, part time or per-diem. The reputation of the program has allowed this success in a current tight job market.

**Twelve graduates are RDMS with 12** having



Class of 2008-2010

passed the **abdominal sonography** exam and **8** passing the **OB/GYN** specialty exam. Thus far, all who have taken exams, including 13 who have taken the Physics exams have all passed on the first attempt. The program is very proud of this class this current 100% pass rate. Kudo's to the graduates, our clinical affiliates and program faculty. All are to be commended for their dedication!

### What's inside?

<i>Electronic Clinical Documentation</i>	2
<i>CME's</i>	2
<i>Clinical Associate Benefit</i>	2
<i>Program Highlights</i>	3
<i>New Bachelor's Degree</i>	3
<i>Thank YOU!</i>	3
<i>CARE Bill</i>	4

## 3D/4D sonography

The program is very pleased to share the University graciously supported the purchase of a GE P5 with 3D/4D capabilities. Offering education in 3D/4D will provide opportunities for students to appreciate the role of volume imaging, not only with OB, but also abdomen, thyroid and GYN. In addition, students will be able to save scan loops allowing for better transition into the clinical setting.



## Electronic Clinical Documentation

In the Spring of 2010, the program implemented the use of an electronic clinical records program to track students attendance and evaluations The paperless system allows for better consistency in monitoring arrival and departure time though the time clock feature, comparison of volume of exams the students participate in, competency forms, student evaluations of the site and site evaluations of the student. The program's initial goal is to have a more

consistent means to track student attendance and ensure our students demonstrate strong work ethics. Clinical site computer systems do not require any additional software, only access to the Internet. Overall, there has been favorable response from the clinical Instructors and students. I would be remiss to claim is has been 100% effective. There are a minimal number of sites that will not allow Internet access for students. The program's hope is that in the future

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*Help us "GO GREEN!"*

that will change by seeking alternatives to provide access for 'time in' and 'time out'.

## Continuing Medical Education -CME Credits

Once again this year, we will be offering SDMS continuing education credits in appreciation for Clinical Instructorship. The maximum number of credits has increased to 6 per year. The cycle is from January 1 to December 31<sup>st</sup>. New forms have been e-mailed out to clinical instructors. Please feel free to make additional copies as needed. When submitting, be sure to include the log of time spent

with the student(s) and the evaluation form. Upon receipt of these documents, you will be issued your CME certificate via e-mail. Please note, the ARRT does NOT accept clinical instructorship credits. They are accepted by the ARDMS.

*"The maximum number of credits has increased to 6 per year. "*

## Clinical Associate Benefit Offerings

With the addition of the Bachelor of Science degree in Sonography and the Advanced Sonography courses being offered online, we hope you will take advantage of Misericordia University's offering of free tuition for up to six credits per fiscal year ( July 1 to June 30th).

The benefit can apply to all undergraduate or graduate level courses and does not need to be sonography related courses. In order to qualify for the benefit, the sonographer must be credentialed (RDMS or RVT) and work with our students on a

regular basis. The management of the credits is at the discretion of the JRCDS approved Clinical Instructor and Department Director in event multiple sonographers want to take courses. Contact Karen Klimas at 570-674-8013 with any questions.

## Highlights of the Program to Date

Since the inception of the program in September 2003, the program has graduated 75 students. Of those 75 graduates, currently 67 possess the RDMS credential. Please keep in mind there is still time for our 2010 graduates to earn their RDMS.

Employment has been strong, even in this current tight job market.

Overall, 66 of the graduates are employed or acquired employment after completion of the program. Of the most

recent class in which job opportunities are more challenging, eleven of the graduates had either full-time, part-time or per-diem.

The program is proud of all the graduates as they have reflected the mission of Misericordia University to build an excellent reputation. This reputation allows our graduates to be interviewed and frequently hired, not only in our geographical region, but elsewhere such as New York and Arizona. We have graduates who were

able to begin their careers in high risk obstetrics, teaching medical centers and outpatient imaging centers where specialized skills are required.

The success of this program is due to the dedication of everyone. Sheryl and Karen sincerely thank our Advisory Committee for their guidance and Clinical Instructors/staff for their input and working with our students on a day -to-day basis.



*"Many courses can be taken on-line or at various locations where Misericordia University offers their Expressway program"*

## New: Bachelor's Degree in Sonography

The program is pleased to announce the new **Bachelor of Science in Diagnostic Medical Sonography degree**. This is an adult modeled completion degree for practicing sonographers who may or may not have had formal education. The minimum criteria is possession of RDMS in either abdomen or ob/gyn. Each sonographer will be individually

evaluated for credits that can be awarded for RDMS or ARRT(S) certifications and any college credits they possess. For example, a sonographer who is RDMS with both abdomen and gyn/ob and 1 year of work experience, would earn about 40 credits towards the degree. Tuition rate is currently \$320 per credit.

## A big "THANK YOU" to our clinical sites—How can we assist YOU?

Misericordia University and the sonography faculty strive not only to educate the enrolled students, but enhance quality patient care within the communities we serve. Thus, we are always looking for opportunities to assist our clinical sonographers to reach their goals, either personal or through

enhancement of education to benefit their departments. Thus, please be aware the program is willing to meet with you to discuss your needs. Some items that can be discussed is customizing a current course, offering it at a location closer to you if enough sonographers attend, offering on-line or

inviting you to our simulated lab to learn new skills, such as 3-D or vascular. These are just of few ideas and welcome your ideas on how to meet your goals. You may wish to include your physicians in learning sessions. Contact Sheryl at 570-674-6790 to discuss your goals.