

Whether working with students or members of the community, Nicholas Espinoza, D.O., is dedicated to making a difference

By Anita Martin



As a new assistant dean in the CORE, **Nicholas Espinoza, D.O. ('90)**, coordinates third- and fourth-year clinical experiences for students at St. Vincent Mercy Medical Center in Toledo, Ohio.

Espinoza's got a knack for forging connections, whether between students and doctors, community members or among cultural groups. For years, he served Adelante, Inc., a not-for profit resource center providing the Hispanic community in Northwest Ohio with mental health services, support for victims of domestic violence and substance abuse prevention and intervention.

"I served as a board member, assisting the development for programs to help people with substance abuse problems, which ranged from tobacco to crack cocaine," he says.

When he wasn't practicing family, occupational or urgent medicine—or facilitating migrant health care—Espinoza has also moonlighted as a ringside physician for the Toledo Golden Gloves boxing club.

These days, he's focusing more on his private practice in Perrysburg, Ohio. But he still makes time to work around the greater Toledo area—Oakmont Medical Hospital, Bay Park Community Hospital, St. Charles Mercy Medical Hospital and St. Anne's Hospital, where he has courtesy privileges.

Ohio Occupational Health also employs Espinoza to help manage the return of plant workers who have sustained work-related injuries. And some weekends he provides urgent care at the Blanchart Valley Hospital.

"I think that's about enough," he laughs.

But even with all of his commitments, he still makes time to connect daily with third- and fourth-year medical students at the hospital. Espinoza began working with students as a CORE medical equity teacher with **Harold C. Thompson III, D.O.**, to oversee and advise them, if necessary, on multicultural issues pertaining to their internships and residencies.

And now as an assistant CORE dean, Espinoza supervises about 35 students, interns and residents from OU-COM and other participating colleges in Ohio and surrounding states.

"I've always enjoyed working directly with students," says Espinoza, who fondly remembers his own time spent as a student at Ohio University.

Espinoza's talent for making connections extends to his private practice, too. His group practice makes use of hospitalist internal medicine specialists (Intermed) to care for acutely ill patients who need in-hospital medical care.

"Our Intermed colleagues, Drs. J. Retholz, Sheldon, Cifuentes, Orlo, Hooker, Blood and M. Retholz—all D.O.s—work great with us, our patient families and continually support the CORE teaching activities of the students, interns and residents," Espinoza says. "Many of the Intermed physicians themselves trained right here at this CORE site and have chosen to stay here and practice. We are very fortunate for that."

Occasionally Espinoza returns to Athens to talk with students, and he fondly recalls the euphoria of spring. "I remember how nice it felt when the weather warmed up and the trees started to bloom," he says.

Espinoza interned at Parkview Hospital, and received board certification in family medicine in 1999. He and his wife, Carole, have two daughters, Valerie and Jacqueline.