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## Department of Pediatrics

George Magnus Johnson  
*University of North Dakota*

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UNIVERSITY OF NORTH DAKOTA  
1883-2008  
CELEBRATING 125 YEARS

DEPARTMENT OF PEDIATRICS  
UND SCHOOL OF MEDICINE &  
HEALTH SCIENCES



George Magnus Johnson, M.D.  
Professor of Pediatrics

Pediatric Department History  
University of North Dakota School of Medicine & Health Sciences

Preamble:

A full-fledged Department of Pediatrics first became a necessity at the University of North Dakota School of Medicine in 1972, at which time UND became a four year degree-granting medical school. This was a time of painful and difficult change, not only for the newborn four year medical school in a small state, but for the fledging Department of Pediatrics. The first Pediatric Department Chairman, Dr. Howard Joos, a pediatric cardiologist hailing from Syracuse University told me himself, those years ago, that he “felt lost” because he knew little or nothing of the state, its infrastructure and its pediatricians. He was told by the Dean’s Office to base himself in Grand Forks and establish a pediatric residency where there had been none before. From this discouraging and difficult time with new and unknown challenges daily the Pediatric Department has attained the status by 2005 as the favorite, number one, third year clinical rotation by an overwhelming vote of the students over the past four years. The 2007-2008 scores on Part II, National Board of Medical Examiners, Pediatrics, is at a cumulative score of 75% for Bismarck, Grand Forks, and Fargo. This is 25 points above the national mean, and as high a score garnered by pediatric students anywhere. UND medical graduates matriculating into pediatrics now attain top residency spots, culminating in such positions as chief pediatric resident in such institutions as the University of Minnesota, University of Iowa, Mercy Hospital in Kansas City, University of Colorado, University of Utah, etc.

The University of North Dakota School of Medicine and Health Sciences still does not have a pediatric residency. This idea was shelved after the tenure of Dr. Joos because of starting and maintenance costs of a pediatric residency. Other anticipated problems for a small state medical school vis-a-vie a pediatric residency was the probable difficulty of pediatric residency certification according to basic criteria for pediatric residencies (6 residents per year, etc.) established by the American Board of Pediatrics. Yet, despite the residency constraint, 70% of new pediatricians returning to North Dakota since 1985 have been our own students. So the time and expense to enthruse undergraduate clinical clerks in Pediatrics has paid high dividends to the infants, children, and adolescents of North Dakota.

Chronology:

This, therefore, is the chronological story of those events over the years from an early, hesitant beginning in 1972 until the present time (2007).

Obviously before the University of North Dakota School of Medicine became a degree-granting institution there were no formal clinical departments. But in the early years there indeed was a selfless, generous humanitarian of a pediatrician, Louis B. Silverman, M.D. of Grand Forks, who oriented first and second year students to babies and what the rest of pediatrics was all about. Dr. Silverman was a wonderful choice for “beginning pediatrics” at UND School of Medicine. He was North Dakota’s third fully trained and qualified practicing pediatrician, a true “mensch,” a humanitarian.

There were so many issues in all phases of the medical school program to be accomplished in the first years of the four year school pediatric problems could not always be a top priority. Dr. Tom Johnson, the first four year dean, wisely traveled the remote corners of the state to each legislator's home to gather support. His staunch ally, the nationally famous legislator, Brynhilde Hauglund from Minot, told her legislative friends "we will have a four year medical school, fully accredited, no matter what." Dr. John Vennes, professor and chairman of microbiology, conceived the idea of a community-based medical school for our milieu. He soon was right fully recognizing as the hero of the development of the medical school. Dr. Lee Christopherson, the renowned Fargo neurosurgeon, was the only one who could get by with alternately castigating and cajoling negative Fargo physicians and administrators about the four year medical school. Dr. Keith Foster of Dickinson, Dr. Richard Johnson of Minot, Dr. D.G. McIntyre of Rugby, Dr. George Johnson of Fargo, Drs. Wally Nelson and Robert Eelkema of Grand Forks all were early, steadfast supporters of the four year school. None except Dr. George Johnson was a pediatrician. Dr. Joos, the first pediatric chair left the school four years after he arrived, in 1976. Pediatrics during that time certainly was not a major or even a center-stage discipline. In fact, there was no department chair, no department faculty, other than John Martsof, M.D., state pediatric geneticist, from May, 1976 until September, 1977. Pediatrics then slowly, gradually moved into center stage with the appointment of an experienced, young pediatric cardiologist, Dr. Gerald Atwood of Vanderbilt University.

During the tenure of Dr. Atwood, his early years were in Grand Forks, which had few pediatricians. Most of North Dakota's pediatricians, the only tertiary neonatal intensive care unit, the only pediatric intensive care unit, and many of the pediatric inpatients with subspecialists to serve them were in Fargo. Support for the expected development of a community-oriented pediatric residency was weak, if not almost nonexistent. The state had no money for enough full-time pediatric faculty required by the Board of Pediatrics for a quality residency. Even in Fargo there was in the late 70's and early 80's a dearth of pediatricians to carryout all the clinical tasks. Little clinical research could be accomplished.

Dr. Atwood eventually decided to resign from UND School of Medicine to become a full-time intensivist and cardiologist at Fargo Clinic/St. Luke's Hospital. Dr. William Rosen, a practicing pediatric clinician with a leadership role and vast experience in the neonatal intensive care unit (NICU) became chairman in 1982. The situation for pediatric students in Bismarck was far from ideal, since their main or presiding preceptor in pediatrics was often gone out of the country. Students in Bismarck did not like pediatrics, did poorly (often) on the national exam and, of course, did not often choose pediatrics as a profession. One bright spot during the early 1980's was the development by Dr. Terry Dwelle, pediatric coordinator in Bismarck, of a foreign pediatric elective called the Third World Elective. Often students went to Africa for an elective. This elective, extant for six years became popular among clinical clerks whetting their interest in a pediatric career. But it had to be terminated after an outstanding student, who later became a pediatric resident at the University of Minnesota, barely escaped death by a few days. She left a mission hospital in Liberia only days before a rebel massacre killed many of the staff, her friends and mentors.

In 1987 Dr. George Johnson, North Dakota native and North Dakota pediatrician at Mid-Dakota Clinic in Bismarck and from 1970 at Fargo Clinic/St. Luke's in Fargo, was appointed by

Dr. Tom Johnson, the dean. Several immediate changes were instituted. These included: daily bedside rounds, initially done by Dr. Johnson five days a week, monthly visits to Dakota Clinic pediatricians to thank them and encourage their essential participation as preceptors for outpatient pediatrics, "live seminars" in Bismarck, analogous to the popular twelve student focused seminars during the pediatric rotation in Fargo, appointment for the first time of a full-time pediatric coordinator for Bismarck, the highly experienced pediatric oncologist, Dr. Rudy Roskos, who had previously participated in the teaching program at Fargo Clinic/St. Luke's. Monthly trips by the department chairman to Bismarck were started, weekly quiz exams for pediatric clerks were stopped, replaced by an end of rotation combination teaching session/exam. Stringent criteria for passage of pediatrics, more stringent than any other clinical rotation were set. A clinical pediatric research elective was developed for fourth year students under the aegis of Dr. Larry Burd, the nationally known SIDS and fetal alcohol researcher. All pediatricians on the volunteer faculty were regularly visited or contacted and thanked for their efforts by the chairman. Gradually, persistent interest by students in pediatrics and in a pediatric career grew. Weekly conferences (Pediatric Grand Rounds), case-based since 1970, continued to be a centerpiece of department activities. Pediatric Grand Rounds have been particularly effective during the past year because of outstanding medical student presentations. Without exception during 2007-2008 every presentation has been thorough, well presented, and well supported by the literature chosen by the medical student. Considerable time has been expended by Dr. George Johnson and by Dr. Stephen Tinguely in assuring the students will have a complete presentation and thus an outstanding experience. This has proven to be the case as just noted. This monthly presentation is looked forward to by the entire pediatric staff not only in Fargo, but around the state. By the early 1990's student scores on NBME, Part II, Pediatrics rose from the 65<sup>th</sup> to the 75<sup>th</sup> percentile (computed over a year's time). Yearly participation in the affairs of the national organization pediatric clerkship directors (COMSEP) commenced. A new national pediatric core curriculum developed collectively by this group soon proved to be an invaluable teaching tool. For the first time ever a book publication, case-based, was published by UND Pediatrics, edited by Medical School Dean David Wilson, a pediatrician, contributed to in a major way by pediatric faculty, especially Drs. Rosen and Blaufuss, and the chair, Dr. Johnson was published. In 2000, 12 students, almost 30% of the graduating class opted for Med/Peds or Pediatric careers.

By 2001, Dr. Stephen Tinguely, long-time general pediatrician and subspecialist in cystic fibrosis management, became pediatric chairman and clerkship director, the third Mayo Clinic trained pediatrician in a row (Drs. Rosen, Johnson, and Tinguely) to assume the job. Dr. Tinguely was known and highly respected throughout the state. Under his leadership the North Dakota Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics became known in Academy circles as one of their very best small state chapters. Dr. Tinguely has continued and expanded the programs and philosophy of pediatric education started by his predecessor, Dr. Johnson. Daily patient rounds are maintained, the pediatric conference has been enhanced in a major way with interactive video to Grand Forks and Bismarck, monthly visits to the Southwest AHEC by the department chair have continued and, as cited before, the designation by a wide margin of the pediatric clinical rotation as "the best" at UND Medical School is now three years standing. NBME scores in Bismarck, Grand Forks, and Fargo are congruent and have stabilized at 75%, 25 points above the national mean. Student work-ups, promulgated in considerable degree by the new first and second problem-based learning curriculum, has resulted in succinct, thorough

patient work-ups by student clerks. For the first time ever a UND pediatrician has been nominated as a member of the distinguished American Board of Pediatrics (Dr. Tinguely, the current pediatric chairman).

Many objectives and goals have been achieved. Much remains to be done by the tiny full-time (mostly part-time in reality) faculty plus the fine but widespread volunteer faculty. Maintenance of these high standards may be even harder than initially achieving them.

But certainly by now, 2008, third year pediatric clerks have come to fully realize the meaning of the motto of the pediatric rotation coined in the 1980's by Dr. George Johnson "CARE OF CHILDREN IS THE FINEST PRIVILEGE."

In June of 2008 Dr. Mark Blaufuss stepped down as a .20 FTE after 24 years of service. Drs. Christopher Tiongson and Sarah Lien, pediatricians in the MeritCare Health System, have been hired part-time to replace Dr. Blaufuss. Dr. Tiongson has been assigned to coordinate the inpatient portion of the clerkship and Dr. Lien has been assigned to coordinate the outpatient portion of the clerkship.

For the school year 2008-2009 seven students have opted for pediatric residencies (10% of the class).

Dr. Stephen Tinguely has developed a foreign pediatric outreach elective as a follow-up to the one sponsored by this department in the 1980 and 1990's. This year seven students convened for a month, with one of those weeks in the company of Dr. Tinguely. This month in Peru was a resounding success and will be continued yearly.

Dr. Tinguely has also received a signal honor, being asked by the graduating students to present the UND Medical School Commencement Address for 2009.

Respectfully submitted,

George Magnus Johnson, M.D.  
Professor of Pediatrics  
University of North Dakota School of Medicine & Health Sciences

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