

Dear OMI faculty, fellows, and friends!

Autumn is here, and so is our latest newsletter! As the seasons change, it is the perfect time to curl up in your favorite cozy spot with a hot beverage and a warm blanket to learn something new from the Open Medical Institute. During a recent seminar in Salzburg, one of our faculty members said, “If you have knowledge, let others light their candles with it.” This lovely sentiment truly highlights what our mission is all about. Swipe through the newsletter and catch up on our most important news!



OMI Made My Summer

“It might sound like a cliché, but for me, it was a life-changing experience,” wrote Dr. Nina Vrsaljko, an internal medicine resident from Zagreb, Croatia, in a thank-you note to Dr. Trip Gulick, course director of the OMI’s infectious diseases seminar that took place in September. Dr. Hugh C. Hemmings received a similarly inspiring message from Dr. Hana Harazim, a pediatric anesthesiologist from Brno, Czech Republic, who attended the anesthesiology and intensive care seminar in July. In her letter, she described how her boss and mentor, Dr. Petr Stourac, himself an OMI alumnus, encourages his mentees to apply for the OMI programs and how much she personally benefited from her participation. [Click here](#) to read through the thoughtful messages from our fellows.

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Shaping the Future of Healthcare in the Balkans

It all started at the 2023 lipid metabolism and atherosclerosis seminar in Salzburg. Almost one year later, OMI fellows Drs. Malik Ejubovic, Andrej Belancic, Ivana Cekic, and Marijana Vuckovic organized a cross-country symposium of their own. The event focused on cardio-renal metabolism and protection and took place from September 13-14, 2024, in Zenica, Bosnia and Herzegovina. We are grateful to Dr. Michal Vrablik, OMI faculty from the First Faculty of Medicine, Charles University in Prague, Czech Republic, who led the team of local faculty and 30 dedicated fellows from Bosnia, Croatia, and Serbia. This satellite symposium is a true testament to the OMI's mission of capacity building that transcends borders and enriches healthcare communities worldwide.

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Lifelong Memories from Salzburg

At the occasion of the 2024 AMSA award ceremony, hosted at the Industrials Club in Mexico City on September 18, 2024, 40 fellows from Mexico came together to reconnect and reminisce. Annually, the OMI hosts 90 Mexican doctors in Salzburg, with more than 750 individuals trained so far. In addition, a dozen OMI MEX courses take place locally each year. Undoubtedly, the OMI program has a profound and long-lasting impact, summed up eloquently by fellow Dr. Rodrigo Uribe-Pacheco, a neurosurgeon from Mexico City, who said: “OMI means planting seeds, building bonds, and making memories that last a lifetime.” Thanks to AMSA and its leadership, Pablo Legorreta, Gerardo Legorreta, and Becky Saenz, for having us!

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Spotlight on Pediatric Radiology in Georgia

Medical imaging is a crucial aspect of care when children face health issues like illnesses, sports injuries, or broken bones. Pediatric patients have distinctly different needs than adults and therefore require the expertise of radiologists with subspecialized training in pediatric radiology. From September 19-20, 2024, OMI alumna Dr. Elene Gotsiridze hosted a satellite symposium at the Medical Center Mrcheveli in Tbilisi, Georgia. OMI faculty Dr. Erich Sorantin from the Medical University of Graz provided up-to-date knowledge, bedside teaching, and an exciting ultrasound workshop. The event was an enormous success with 70 doctors from the region in attendance.

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Dr. Wolfgang Aulitzky Receives Honorary Fellowship Award

On September 20, 2024, the Alumni Association of Weill Cornell Medical College presented Dr. Wolfgang Aulitzky, Associate Dean for International Medicine and Distance Learning at Weill Cornell Medicine, with an Honorary Fellowship Award in recognition of his contributions to the institution. Since 1970, the award has been given annually by the Alumni Association Board of Directors to two outstanding (non-alumni) Weill Cornell Medicine faculty members whose scholarship, dedication, and leadership have greatly enriched the life of the college, its faculty, and students. Congratulations!

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Luminaries in Lipid Metabolism and Atherosclerosis

Dr. Antonio M. Gotto, Dean Emeritus of Weill Cornell Medicine, and his OMI faculty are among the most influential figures in lipid metabolism and atherosclerosis. For this year's course, we received close to 500 applications, and the 33 fellows present had the unique opportunity to interact with luminaries in the field, learning everything from the history of the cholesterol hypothesis to the latest clinical trials on lipoprotein(a), hypertriglyceridemia, and state-of-the-art expert management of obesity. Participants were regaled with stories from Dr. Gotto's career and learned many clinical pearls from the faculty. Discussions reminded both faculty and fellows of the universality of medicine and their shared commitment to preserving cardiovascular health.

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Together, We Can Make a Difference

On October 2, 2024, board members, friends, and faculty of the Open Medical Institute gathered at Schloss Arenberg for the annual donor appreciation dinner. Together, we honored the incredible individuals who dedicate their time and energy to support our program in multiple ways. The evening was full of touching speeches, joyous guests, and a delicious feast. Dr. James M. Callahan, Medical Director of CHOP's Global Pediatric Program, reflected on 30 years of partnership. Dr. Antonio M. Gotto received a special honor from the local government for his commitment to the program. Board members Verena Horstmann and Dr. Thomas Bodmer received the 2024 OMI awards for their unwavering support and generosity. It was a true pleasure to be surrounded by warm-hearted individuals dedicated to making a difference.

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Taking Surgical Training to the Next Level

Anatomy labs are a critical part of training in spine surgery. This experience is becoming increasingly rare in modern training and is thus all the more valuable. The vertebral column, neural, and vascular structures represent complex anatomy and require surgeons to carefully hone their understanding of this spatial relationship. To accomplish this, the labs offered during the neurosurgery seminar in Salzburg last week were a unique opportunity. Fellows worked closely with renowned surgeons to perform intricate stepwise approaches, explore anatomical relationships, and practice techniques in a realistic environment. For some of them, this was their first exposure to fundamental procedures. For others, it allowed them to attempt more complex procedures in a safe, controlled setting.

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Call for Applications 2025

Are you ready to take your career to the next level? The 2025 OMI programs are open for registration, and we cannot wait for your application! Join motivated colleagues from around the world for seminars, observerships, and satellite symposia in your medical specialty. Leading experts from the United States and Europe are enthusiastic to share their knowledge and experience with you. To learn more about the OMI and apply for our programs, visit our website!

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Yours sincerely,



Prof. Dr. Wolfgang Aulitzky
CEO | Open Medical Institute
A Program of the American Austrian Foundation

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Contact:

Salzburg Stiftung der American Austrian Foundation (AAF) | Open Medical Institute
Schloss Arenberg | Arenbergstrasse 10 | 5020 Salzburg | Austria
www.openmedicalinstitute.org | seminars@openmedicalinstitute.org