Joy in Learning, Purpose in Practice, Faith at the Center,

Dr. Jeremy Jones

> "If you're not having fun while you're learning, what are you doing here?"
>
> — Dr. Jeremy Jones

Alexandra Holzworth, OMS-II

From the classroom to the clinic, Dr. Jeremy Jones brings energy, compassion and a whole person approch to everything he does.

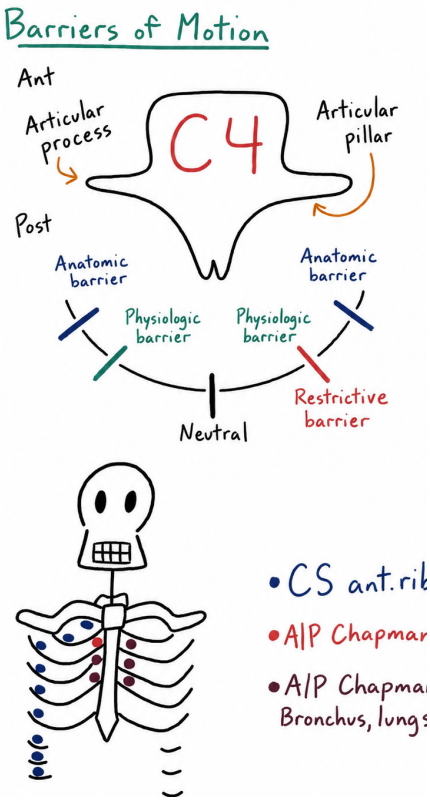
As a Dr. Jones lecture draws to a close after an extended session, exhausted medical students perk up instantly at the familiar sound of music as he launches Kahoot!, an interactive quiz game that reinforces the material they have just learned. For many students, the background music is nostalgic, reminding many of their high school classrooms, yet it brings an unexpected sense of energy to the room. Laughter fills the lecture hall as students create clever usernames and compete to answer questions, strengthening their grasp of the lecture material. When a winner is announced, applause spreads throughout the room, and students leave smiling, which is a small but meaningful shift in the middle of an otherwise demanding day.

Dr. Jeremy Jones, DO, is a Professor of Primary Care at Marian University College of Osteopathic Medicine. He serves as a clinical faculty member in Osteopathic Principles and Practices (OPP), Introduction to Clinical Medicine (ICM), and often gives lectures throughout each of the systems-based courses in the medical curriculum. In addition to his teaching responsibilities, he plays an active role in curriculum development, student assessment, mentorship, and outreach. His involvement extends into the recently developed San Damiano Scholars Program, the Catholic Medical Association, and the Near West Free Clinic.

Origins in Osteopathic Medicine and Pediatrics

Dr. Jones knew he wanted to become a pediatrician from an early age. After his sister was diagnosed with lymphoma, he spent considerable time accompanying his family to pediatric appointments and the children's hospital in Oklahoma City. Reflecting on those experiences, he shared that they "left an indelible impression on my soul," and from then on, he knew he was meant to be a pediatrician.

His path to medicine included an undergraduate degree in chemical engineering from the University of Oklahoma in 2003, though his calling to pediatrics remained constant. Reading *The Difference a D.O. Makes* by Bob Jones was Dr. Jones' first introduction into osteopathic medicine, which reinforced



Artwork: Baleigh Norman, OMS-III, Haley Marton, OMS-III

Drawings: Dr. Jones

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his desire to approach medicine through a holistic lens. Grounded in both his medical training and his Catholic faith, Dr. Jones emphasized the importance of treating the whole person. "If your body is suffering, your soul is suffering, and if your soul is suffering, your body will suffer," he explained. This perspective reinforces his belief that physicians should approach patients as a "body-soul composite," integrating physical care with a deeper understanding of the patient. He went on to earn his Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine (D.O.) degree from Oklahoma State University College of Osteopathic Medicine in 2008.

This philosophy is especially clear in his work as a pediatrician. He frequently uses osteopathic manipulative treatment to support patients through common illnesses, helping them recover more quickly and prevent complications. His desire to treat his patients holistically and incorporte osteopathic treatment shapes not only his patient care, but alo his approach to teaching.

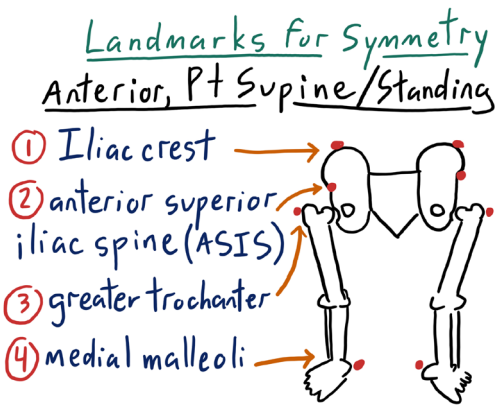
Journey into Teaching

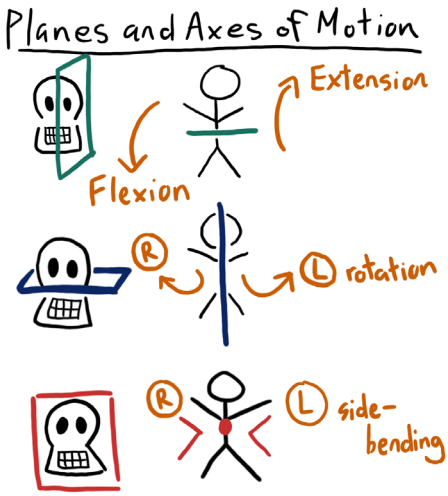
After graduating residency at Oklahoma State University Medical Center in 2011, Dr. Jones began his teaching career at Oklahoma State University Center for Health Sciences, serving as an Assistant Professor of Pediatrics from 2011-2016 and an Associate Professor of Pediatrics from 2016-2020. During this time, he worked closely with pediatric residents and developed a strong passion for medical education. Recognizing the challenges of long academic sessions for residents, he began incorporating interactive learning tools such as Kahoot!, Jeopardy, Connect Four, and other games to maintain engagement in lectures. Over time, these tools proved highly effective in keeping pediatric residents engaged and motivated, leading him to purchase a buzzer system for his residents. Reflecting on this approach, he shared that using his position to encourage his residents in the thick of medical training was important to him. "Yes, [residency] is really hard," he remarked, but his encouragement to residents remained constant: "let's have some fun while we're here."

His transition to Marian University in 2020 came as an opportunity to expand his role in medical education, bringing his clinical expertise and his commitment to creating an engaging learning environment. In addition to maintaining an interactive learning environment, he uses his role in the osteopathic curriculum to teach students about the value of osteopathic treatment techniques. Because Dr. Jones' initial pursuit of osteopathic medicine was rooted in his Catholic faith and desire to care for patients' physical and spiritual needs, he frequently encourages students at Marian University to practice and use hands-on treatment techniques alongside traditional medicine to adequately address the physical, emotional, and spiritual needs of patients. "I believe that if we're going to truly care for the patient in front of us, it's got to be a combination of all these things that manifests from our desire to actually have Christ-centered care...The Osteopathic Tenets guide one to take care of the patient's body and soul by naturally touching the body, and supernaturally helping God touch the soul".

Shaping the Osteopathic Curriculum

Dr. Jones found ways to incorporate engaging, visual content for students with a variety of learning styles to emphasize the importance of osteopathic education and hands-on treatments. Dr. Jones' teaching philosophy is rooted in the belief that learning requires repetition, visualization, and active engagement. He has described his own learning style as one that relies heavily on visual reinforcement, noting, "I'm definitely someone that needs





to see it and I need to draw it to remember it."Dr. Jones has incorporated this philosophy into his courses at Marian by creating a video repository of hundreds of osteopathic treatment techniques accessible to all medical students at Marian University. These videos feature Dr. Jones performing the treatment, while he talks through important landmarks, techniques, and helpful tips to maximize effectiveness. These videos serve as helpful guides for students across all years of training and offer an efficient way to access effective techniques, video tutorials, and tips for osteopathic treatment techniques.

Another way Dr. Jones makes complex concepts approachable is through his unique and widely recognized whiteboard drawings of concepts students are learning in their OPP class. His illustrations, often filled with diagrams, sequences, and simplified frameworks cover whiteboards throughout the OPP lab and serve as tools to help students organize and retain information. "Sometimes you remember figures... other times you have tables... and often you have diagrams or flow charts," he explains. Combined with a thorough history and physical exam, he notes that using these tables, diagrams, and flow charts enables students to incorporate osteopathic medicine seamlessly into their patient interactions.

He emphasizes that mastery takes time, reassuring students to be patient with the learning process. "It's really going to take several years of performing manipulative techniques before you feel like you're even fair at doing them," he encourages, "it just takes practice." Rather than focusing on immediate perfection, he highlights the importance of consistency and growth over time.

Lasting Impact

One of the aspects of being an educator that brings Dr. Jones the most fulfilment is seeing his students grow into confident, capable physicians. "The happiest thing for me is to see my medical students become my peers," he shared. He defines this transformation

not only through clinical competence, but through deeper development in reasoning, teaching, and purpose. He describes this growth as students learning to care for patients even in uncertainty, to educate others, and to recognize their role within a greater calling.

Ultimately, Dr. Jones hopes that students leave Marian with more than clinical knowledge. He encourages them to understand their purpose and to use their profession as a means of fulfilling that calling. As he explains, "when a student's mission is fulfilling their profession, their vocation, and their purpose... you've done it, you've become my peer."

Dr. Jones' influence reaches beyond techniques and clinical skills as he aims to shape students to be well-rounded clinicians who joyfully and purposefully care for their patients' body, mind, and spirit.

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