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NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Donald J. Lefeber Selected 2013 Research Fellow of the
Community Medical Foundation for Patient Safety**

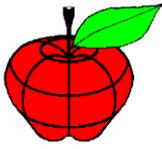
(BELLAIRE, TEXAS – February 26, 2013) Community Medical Foundation for Patient Safety (CMFPS), a nonprofit organization specialized in patient safety research and based in the Houston area, proudly announces the selection of Donald James Lefeber as its Research Fellow 2013. Lefeber is the current Director for the *Center for Integrated Health Care and Wellness* at the Foundation and a third-year student at the American College of Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine (ACAOM), Houston, Texas.

After earning his double degrees in international studies and Spanish at University of St. Thomas, Houston, Texas, Lefeber completed his public health certificate program at The University of Texas Health Science Center (UTHSC) at San Antonio, School of Public Health, 2010. He returned to Houston to pursue his academic and research interest in complementary and alternative medicine (CAM) and subsequently enrolled at ACAOM, where he is the student body president.

Selection was made after reviewing several qualified applicants. The Research Fellow must demonstrate his or her scholarly work and research potential in any health science that relates to patient safety and the mission of the Foundation to improve healthcare outcomes. With growing interest in CAM among patients and families, the Foundation is interested in the integration of CAM into traditional medicine, the appropriate use of CAM, and its efficacy.

Only a few years ago, a major institutional member of the Texas Medical Center operated two separate student health clinics, one exclusively for medical students and the other run by nurse practitioners. When asked about the rationale, the dean stated that it was unacceptable for nurses to treat his medical students. Traditional educational and training programs, even today, do not promote effective communication and teamwork to prepare future healthcare professionals to work cohesively together. Lefeber is committed to improving the ways health professionals work in a team, communicate, share new information, and learn from

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Lefebber comes from a long family line of healthcare practitioners in medicine, dentistry, and social work, and he and his family are proud *born-on-the-island (BOI)* members, which can be claimed only by persons who were born on Galveston Island, Texas. Following the footsteps of his grandfather the late Edward James Lefebber, M.D., University of Texas Medical Branch at Galveston, professor of medicine, ardent patient advocate, and expert in geriatrics, gastroenterology, cardiology, pathology and family medicine, Donald Lefebber has been studying ideas and concepts to improve the practice of medicine that is more compassionate, humane, holistic, effective, and safe for patients. Lefebber comments, "It's time to move quickly away from archaic educational models, traditions and attitudes that have long been barriers to working in a true healthcare team and adopt a new paradigm of respect and collaboration."

In 2012, Lefebber introduced fellow ACAOM students to UTHSC at Houston School of Nursing, Houston Geriatric Education Center's *Interdisciplinary Healthcare Competition*, an annual program that simulates problem-based interdisciplinary learning and collaboration for a diverse group of health science students. Introduction of CAM to this program vastly expanded the scope and understanding of geriatric care and services. His work is being documented and published in the peer-reviewed *The American Acupuncturist*, spring 2013 issue. In addition to his study of educational models for interdisciplinary team, Lefebber focuses on the training of best practices in real clinical settings. He created a unique partnership between ACAOM and Hope Clinic in Houston to deliver comprehensive health care that combines traditional western medicine and the eastern CAM. Unlike other struggling partnerships that offer CAM, such as acupuncture and herbal therapy, as obscured ancillary services, Lefebber and colleagues provide CAM as viable therapeutic options in context with the patient's overall treatment and management plan.

As the 2013 Research Fellow, Lefebber intends to study various theories and models to build his own conceptual model of integrative health care that incorporates the best eastern and western medical practices to achieve optimal outcomes and satisfaction for patients and families. Lefebber has been invited as presenter and expert speaker on CAM and interdisciplinary education. In 2011, he was inducted into *Sigma Xi, The Scientific Research Society*, as associate members of this prestigious organization.

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About Community Medical Foundation for Patient Safety

Community Medical Foundation for Patient Safety, established in December 2003 as a nonprofit 501 (c)(3) tax-exempt, active learning organization based in the Houston area, is a leader in patient safety research and education. Our mission is to *promote and support patient safety through research, education, and the demonstrated practice of patient-centered health care.*
