Sons honor dad with endowment

By Ron Hartung
Special to the Chronicle

The sons of beloved pediatrician Pat Woodward are reaching deep into their pockets to help ensure that Gadsden County has the physicians it needs in the future.

Pat Jr., Fred, Daniel and Edward Woodward — with the permission of their publicity-shy father, “Dr. Pat,” and their mother, Mary Jane — have established the Pat M. Woodward, M.D. Legacy Scholarship Endowment at the Florida State University College of Medicine. Their donation will provide scholarship support for deserving third- and fourth-year students committed to practicing pediatrics or family medicine in Gadsden and other rural North Florida communities.

It also will provide scholarship support for Gadsden high school students who are considering medical careers and have been selected to attend the College of Medicine’s Summer Institute.

Dr. Woodward was greatly moved by his sons’ proposal, as outlined in a letter from Fred that Mary Jane read aloud to him. “I heard the words with a mixture of appreciation, awe and a degree of timidity,” he wrote in reply. “Please accept our gratitude.”

On Feb. 28, when the Woodward sons signed the gift agreement at the College of Medicine, Fred explained, “We wanted to do something to honor Dad while he could enjoy it. We can get at least a partial scholarship by next fall.”

His brother Daniel said they wanted to repay the generosity their parents have always shown them.

“It’s a generosity we’ve seen them extend to people they know and love in their own community, but they extend it far beyond that as well, to people who are in need, people who just need a friend or a kind word,” Daniel said.

He retired in 2001, the year the College of Medicine’s first students arrived. Nevertheless, he has strong connections with the medical school — principally in his relationship with Senior Associate Dean Alma Littles. He was her pediatrician when she was growing up in Quincy, her role model in his approach to medical care, her partner in medical practice.

Checks payable to the FSU Foundation can be mailed to Pam Wilson, FSU College of Medicine, 1115 W. Call St., Tallahassee, FL 32306. On the memo line write “Woodward F07896.”