

Expanding the mission

COLIN HACKLEY

As the original and enduring faculty sponsor for FSU *Cares*, Elena Reyes enjoys helping both medical students and the patients they interact with.

By immersing students in the practice of multicultural medicine, she seeks to cultivate in future physicians a passion for working with the medically underserved, both in Florida and beyond.

Her devotion to the calling is now taking her in a new direction, as the College of Medicine's regional director for Southwest Florida.

It is part of the medical school's expanding presence in the region. In 2013, the college's new family medicine residency program at Lee Memorial Health System will open in Fort Myers. Reyes will play a vital role in developing its behavioral medicine curriculum.

As an experienced clinical psychologist and educator, Reyes already has produced a number of successful initiatives in Southwest Florida, including the development of a psychology postdoctoral program that has brought new clinical psychologists onto the College of Medicine faculty. She also laid the groundwork for the possibility of an accredited health psychology program in partnership with Healthcare Network of Southwest Florida (formerly Collier Health Services).

Florida State has partnered with Healthcare Network to operate a Health Education Site in Immokalee since 2007. There, students from each of the medical school's six regional campuses across the state can complete required and elective rotations that go a step further in preparing them to eventually care for patients from across the spectrum of Florida's diverse cultures.



Elena Reyes is the College of Medicine's new regional director for Southwest Florida.

"As Florida State's commitment to the region grows, so does our need for local leadership to guide educational efforts, manage operations and further strengthen relationships with our partner organizations," said John P. Fogarty, dean of the medical school. "While we will miss seeing her around the main campus, Elena will remain an integral part of the College of Medicine family as we expand our reach throughout the state."

Reyes is one of the medical school's founding faculty members, most recently serving as associate professor and vice chair for education in the Department of Medical Humanities and Social Sciences.

"This is a great opportunity to expand the school's mission by working with the family medicine residents and reinforcing the pipeline of primary care providers who are able to provide culturally appropriate care in Southwest Florida," Reyes said. "I'll also be involved in expanding opportunities at

the Health Education Site in Immokalee, where the social determinants of health that are discussed in our classroom really come to life for students rotating through our clinics."

As for FSU *Cares*, Reyes is nostalgic and confident all at once. She will be replaced by Kim Driscoll, assistant professor of medical humanities, as advisor and Ricardo Gonzalez-Rothi, chair of the Department of Clinical Sciences, as clinical advisor.

"Not being able to continue to advise the students in that capacity is clearly the most difficult aspect of this move," Reyes said. "I know they are in good hands with Drs. Driscoll and Gonzalez-Rothi. Also, this is a strong student organization with mission-driven leaders who have developed a sound foundation and organizational infrastructure over 10 years. They will continue to make the College of Medicine proud, and I look forward to hosting them this year when they return to Immokalee for their spring break trip."