



Shermeeka Hogans-Mathews

'Such a blessing'

In the College of Medicine, serving the underserved is a cherished phrase. Although all students have served, few have been the underserved.

Shermeeka Hogans-Mathews has. At one point, she was a single-parent college student on Medicaid. She knows how it feels to have physicians refuse to accept your insurance.

What she doesn't know, apparently, is how to give up.

The American Medical Association Foundation looks for that kind of grit when it gives out its Minority Scholars Awards. This year, it gave out 13 of those \$10,000 scholarships. One went to Hogans-Mathews, who just completed her first year of medical school.

"I am completely humbled," said Hogans-Mathews, 29. "It's almost unbelievable, yet such a blessing."

Hogans-Mathews grew up in rural Liberty County and became a first-generation college student. For two years she taught high school science in Gadsden County. Although she's now the married mother of three kids, for a time she was a struggling single parent and full-time college student. It was tough to get health care. For many others, it still is.

"She is committed," said faculty member Curtis Stine, M.D., "to eliminating health-care disparities."