

Day in the Life: Resident, Lee Memorial

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(Photo: Getty Images/Creatas RF)

My entire life I've often traveled, which has taught me to adapt and to appreciate change. I've actually come to enjoy chasing new adventures. Starting anew has become a part of who I am. It's something that's hard for most people to comprehend. They often ask why I chose to move across the country to be part of a new residency program, completely venturing into the unknown, after already completing my intern year elsewhere.

I explain to them that the Lee Memorial Health System FSU Family Medicine Residency program offers opportunities that other programs didn't. I wanted to help shape the new program by taking part in the class that is leading the way for all residents who will eventually train here. I also love working with the interns and students who, in turn, fuel my passion to teach.

My residency started a year ago in a large academic medical center where I felt like a number, one in a crowd of thousands of others. It gave me an appreciation for the close-knit environment of Lee Memorial Hospital, a community hospital, where everyone makes the effort to get to know your name and your story.

Being a part of the first group of residents I quickly came to realize how new the concept was to the area. Many people had never worked beside, or really knew the functioning capacity of a resident. I was a little nervous at first, but this turned out to be a blessing. I got to know many of the nurses, techs, and medical assistants on a personal level. They always greet me with a smile and enjoy learning about residency as I share my experiences with them.

As a Family Medicine resident I care for men, women and children of all ages, patients of my own. I see them in the hospital and clinic, put in orders and round on them daily. I admit and discharge patients and work closely with other providers when specialty care is needed. I even deliver babies.

I also work with the underserved, which desperately need the attention and care. They are pleasantly surprised to learn we're not just students. I tell them with a big smile that being a doctor means you're a student for life, and I take pride in that as I get to learn every day and my patients become an open book. They're always grateful knowing they have someone to care for them. No words can express how great it feels to hear that.

Being a resident means working long hours. On most rotations we average 80 hours a week with four days off per month. That's easily double the amount of time the average person works. The long hours can halt your life outside, but we realize we are responsible for the lives of others, and we gladly put their needs ahead of our own. This is what I chose to do and I wouldn't change a second of it.

Seeing the interns start their first days of residency brought a huge smile to my face. As the first chief resident, it is an honor to lead the inpatient team. The interns were so excited and so eager to take on the responsibility of saving lives. Their enthusiasm was priceless.

So, if you hear the words, "The resident will see you now," consider it a good thing. You get a hopeful and enthusiastic doctor, unrestricted by time who will listen intently and be meticulous. We practice medicine according to the most recent guidelines and base treatment on scientific research. We make sure you don't leave without all your questions answered and all your needs met. We report back to a supervising physician, which means you get a second set of eyes looking out for you; and most importantly, know that you are making an important contribution in shaping a young doctor's career path.

— Sherry Farag is a second year resident with the Florida State University College of Medicine Family Medicine Residency Program at Lee Memorial Health System, which is in its first year of operation.

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