FSU medical school holds white coat ceremony

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(Photo: COLIN HACKLEY/FSU College of Medicine)

The members of the Class of 2022 were officially welcomed into their chosen profession Friday evening during the Florida State University College of Medicine's White Coat Ceremony.

The 120 students and their families packed Ruby Diamond Concert Hall. One by one, the students were "coated" by a faculty member – or, in several cases, by a loved one who's also an M.D.

At the end, they recited the Student Oath, in which they pledged "to dedicate my life to the service of humanity."

The main speaker was 2014 alumnus Brett Thomas, who grew up in Wakulla County and now is practicing family medicine at a Federally Qualified Health Center in Winston-Salem, North Carolina. He urged the students to take good care of themselves as well as their patients in the years ahead.

Participants in Friday's White Coat Ceremony stand and recite the Student Oath in front of their families and friends. *(Photo: COLIN HACKLEY, FSU College of Medicine)*

These were first-year students. So far, they've completed only their summer semester. The ceremony is designed to remind them, as Dean John P. Fogarty said, that "you are not just going to school – you are joining a profession." It's also designed as a pat on the back after probably the most intense summer they've ever had. "Yes, it was hard," Fogarty told them, "but you've discovered that you really do belong in medical school."

The College of Medicine graduated its first students in 2005 and now has 1,255 alumni. Its mission includes patient-centered health care and service to elder, rural, minority and underserved populations.