

# Healthy venture

## FSU's College of Medicine makes local, state impact

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Anyone driving past the Florida State University campus can't help but notice the commanding presence of the College of Medicine building at Stadium Drive and Call Street.

Having such a prominent institution in this community is important, not only for its commitment to helping to provide training for the next generation of medical professionals locally and statewide, but also for the economic benefits it generates for the local economy.

The FSU College of Medicine is a major economic force in Tallahassee and Florida because of its direct mission to get its students training in communities throughout the state while developing a base for biomedical and biotech research.

This is commendable as some will remember the doubters a little more than a decade ago who questioned the approval of a community-based medical school, the first of its kind in 25 years.

This week, Dr. John Fogarty, dean of the college, addressed the Health Care/Health Sciences Roundtable of the Economic Development Council of Tallahassee-Leon County.

He pointed out that the college is able to boast of some heady economic development figures. Based on a study by MGT of America:

- In its first 10 years, the College of Medicine has had a \$750 million impact on Tallahassee's economy.
- The current economic impact locally is now estimated at \$100 million annually.
- Statewide, the economic impact is \$160 million annually.

In addition, the college has been able to build a research portfolio of more than \$40 million since 2001. These are key indicators of the college's success in attracting

researchers in medical studies to Tallahassee. It also is the kind of town and gown connection that has the potential for an even greater benefit to this community in that the work at the college also can be instrumental in spawning private business ventures.

But the College of Medicine's primary role is to contribute to the health care of residents, especially in rural and minority communities. Currently it has regional training sites in Immokalee and Marianna and six regional campuses, including Fort Pierce, Pensacola and Daytona Beach. It is sponsoring a new residency program in internal medicine at Tallahassee Memorial HealthCare, and in family medicine in Fort Myers.

A study from the Association of American Medical Colleges indicates that the college is becoming a leader in its recruitment of family-practice physicians, and is creating a diverse workforce of medical-school graduates.

In comparison to other medical schools, the report indicates the College of Medicine is:

- Among the top producers of primary care physicians
- Among the top producers of family physicians
- Graduating a greater percentage of African-American physicians than more than 90 percent of other medical schools
- Among the top 20 percent of schools in the percentage of graduates who are Hispanic.

These are impressive facts supporting the importance of the college's role, not only in Tallahassee, but Florida, in addressing health needs, connecting doctors to local communities and in creating economic growth.