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Jackson Hospital provides house for FSU medical students

From staff reports
May 14, 2021



Medical students are moving into the Sixth Avenue house acquired and renovated by Jackson Hospital in Marian their use while on rural rotation here. They and representatives of FSU and the hospital posed for a group photo room of that house during an open house event on Tuesday.

DEBORAH BUCKHALTER, FLORIDAN

From staff reports

The Florida State University College of Medicine, in partnership with Jackson Hospital, Sunshine Health and Badcock Corporation hosted an open house event on Tuesday to celebrate the first housing program for medical students that spend a year on a rural track of study at Jackson Hospital in Marianna.

The FSU Rural Program offers students the opportunity to spend their third year of medical school integrated into a rural medical community, gaining an in-depth understanding of rural values and social disparities.

One in five Americans lives in a rural area, yet only 11 percent of physicians practice in these communities. The FSU College of Medicine educates and develops physicians who are responsive to community needs, especially through service in rural, minority and underserved populations.

One hope in the program is to change the above statistic by giving medical students an early immersion in rural health care, a look at how much of an impact they could have if they settled into a rural-based practice, and how rewarding that could be for them on multiple levels.

FSU and Jackson Hospital have been in such partnership since 2005, according to FSU's Doug Carlson, Director of Public Affairs and Communications in the FSU College of Medicine.

Until now, students in the program have had to rent their own places if they lived here during that year of rotations with local doctors across all areas of medical care. Aside from the expense of paying for a place to live, the medical students were further challenged by decreasing availability of housing after Hurricane Michael destroyed so much of it.

But thanks to Jackson Hospital's recent acquisition and renovation of a large house on 6th Avenue that was damaged in Hurricane Michael, participating students will no longer have to scrounge around for housing on their own or make daily treks back and forth from Tallahassee or other distant points.

Other key partners in making the house a home include Sunshine Health, a Medicaid- and Medicare-focused health insurance company that provided a significant amount of funding to furnish the home, and the Marianna Badcock, which offered deep discounts and gifts-in-kind to further support the efforts.

The first residents of the house, essentially adjacent to the hospital, include a young married couple, both partners seeking medical degrees.

The house has room for up to six. There are five full-timers this time around, with one staying there part-time.

And there's one more special option for medical students, one that has been in place almost from the start of the FSU/Jackson Hospital rural track partnership.

John and Becky Trott house one student or couple per year in a cottage adjacent to their home. They have a couple this year. The man in the relationship isn't in medical school, but the woman is. They can't live in the hospital's house because it's strictly for medical students, but the Trott household fits their need just right. John Trott said he was provided housing through the kindness of another homeowner, while he was in graduate school many years ago, in exchange for what he said was an extremely light burden of occasional help in maintenance tasks.

The Trott couple was on hand at the open house, as were their new medical student guests and those who will be living in the hospital's house.

Several other members of the community dropped by, as well, to join in the celebration with FSU College of Medicine Dean John P. Fogarty, Senior Associate Dean Alma Littles, James Platt, CEO of Jackson Hospital, Craig Hansen with Sunshine Health, and others.