

Lee Health Welcomes Eight New Resident Physicians on Match Day 2021

March 24, 2021 - Eight new family medicine residents will begin their training at Lee Health through The Florida State University College of Medicine Family Medicine Residency Program.

The first-year residents were announced at the annual Match Day celebration on Friday, March 19. The new residents include:

- Sandy Bolis, DO, Edward via College of Osteopathic Medicine
- Jessica Byas, MD, St. George's University SOM
- Danielle Ferra, DO, Edward via College of Osteopathic Medicine
- Laura Hart, DO, Edward via College of Osteopathic Medicine
- Delia Bell Hernandez, MD, Wayne State University SOM
- Nicole Jimenez, MD, Florida State University COM
- Stacy Stephen, MD, Government Medical College Kottayam
- Audrey Wagner, MD, University of Missouri-Columbia SOM

The residency program, based at Lee Memorial Hospital with The Florida State University College of Medicine as its institutional sponsor, accepts eight new doctors each year for a three-year residency. Medical school graduates are required to complete residency training in their specialty of choice to become independently practicing physicians.

These new resident physicians were selected after a rigorous vetting and interview process of the more than 1,500 applications received from U.S. medical students and physicians from around the world for the 8 available positions.

"We are very proud of the strong interest in our program as proven by the number of applications received," said Alfred Gitu, M.D., Program Director of the Family Medicine Residency Program at Lee Health. We've matched with eight outstanding candidates this year as our program continues to grow with residents who are dedicated, compassionate and academically accomplished. "

The National Resident Matching Program announced 2020 as its largest residency matching program ever with a 2.7% increase in matches over the previous year. This year was also unique in that all interviews nationwide were conducted virtually due travel restrictions brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Lee Health launched the residency program in 2012 to address the shortage of primary care physicians in Southwest Florida.

About 60 percent of family medicine residents practice medicine in the same area where they undergo training. Of the 32 Lee Health program graduates, 19 (59 percent) have chosen to remain in Southwest Florida to practice.

About Lee Health

Since the opening of the first hospital in 1916, Lee Health has been a health care leader in Southwest Florida, constantly evolving to meet the needs of the community. A non-profit, integrated health care services organization, Lee Health is committed to the well-being of every individual served, focused on healthy living and maintaining good health. Staffed by caring people, inspiring health, services are conveniently located throughout the community in four acute care hospitals, two specialty hospitals, outpatient centers, walk-in medical centers, primary care and specialty physician practices and other services across the continuum of care. Learn more at www.LeeHealth.org.