

FSU MED STUDENTS MEET THEIR MATCH

One goes to new internal medicine program at TMH

By Doug Blackburn

Democrat senior writer

Unlike all but one of his classmates at Florida State's medical school, Austin Henkel isn't going anywhere after he graduates this spring.

Henkel, his wife, Ashley, and their young daughters ages 3 and 2, will be staying in Tallahassee while Henkel enters the new internal medicine residency program at Tallahassee Memorial HealthCare, which is sponsored by FSU.

Henkel, a native of Niceville in the heart of Florida's Panhandle, is the first FSU College of Medicine fourth-year student to enter the new internal medicine residency program on Match Day. He learned the good news Friday during a joyous celebration at FSU's student union ballroom, as 111 members of the Class of 2013 — the ninth class to graduate from FSU's medical school — learned where they will be starting their medical careers as new doctors.

"This is a great fit for me," said Henkel, who did his undergraduate work at University of Florida and

See MATCH » 2A





ABOVE: Sarah Genet celebrates as Florida State held its annual Match Day for fourth-year medical school students as they learned where they will go this summer as new doctors to begin a residency on Friday. **LEFT:** Dale Taylor is all set to go to UF. Match Day was held in the FSU student union ballroom.

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Article Continued Below

[See MATCH on Page A02](#)

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Continued » 1A

hopes to become an ophthalmologist. "For family reasons, this is going to work out great."

Corey Duncan, one of Henkel's classmates, matched at the Tallahassee Memorial Family Medicine Program. But the other 109 fourth-year students are headed out of town, almost two-thirds going to hospital residency programs out of state. This doesn't bode well for the Big Bend, or for Florida, because studies have determined that where doctors serve their residency is the No. 1 predictor for where they continue their medical careers.

But FSU, which promotes itself as a medical school with a mission that focuses on training primary-care physicians, continues to do well in that area. Without counting obstetrics-gynecology, a specialty that some institutions include as primary care, 58 members of the Class of 2013 — or 51 percent — are headed to primary-care residency programs. "We are excited by the continued success of our program in sending graduates to many of the top residency programs and I'm pleased to see so many of our students choosing primary care, including so many in family medicine," FSU Dean Dr. John Fogarty said. "More than 70 percent of our alumni now practicing in Florida are doing so in a primary-care specialty and today's match results tell us we will continue to be able to provide more of the doctors Florida needs most."

Match Day is an annual event conducted by the National Resident Matching Program, and it is the primary system for pairing medical school graduates with residency programs.

Not every soon-to-graduate FSU student attended Friday's ceremony with his classmates. Rashad Sullivan

drove to Wake Forest, N.C., to be with his wife, Natalie, who is finishing her fourth year at that university.

They successfully completed a “couples match” and will both begin their careers as physicians in Wake Forest.

He is slated for a preliminary year in general surgery.

“It’s been a great journey. It’s not really an ending, but our beginning together under one roof,” he said.

Sullivan, a native of Central Florida, earned a bachelor’s degree at Florida A&M and met Natalie while she was an undergraduate at FSU.

Dr. Gregory Todd, director of the internal medicine program at TMH, said he is glad to have an FSU graduate enter the program. He accepted a total of 10 residents on Friday, bringing the program’s total to 23.

“I think this is a really great match for us,” he said. “We’re up and running and we’ve gotten off to a good start.”

Some of the FSU students were clearly nervous as they opened the envelopes telling them where they will spend the next three to five years of their lives in front of a packed ballroom.

“This is worse than doing your first surgery,” said Bobby Missaghi before learning he was headed to University of California at Los Angeles for a residency in emergency surgery.



Andrew Calzadilla found out that he will be practicing internal medicine in Miami as Florida State held its annual Match Day for FSU fourth-year medical school students. GLENN BEIL/DEMOCRAT



Vikalp Patel celebrates as Florida State held its annual Match Day for FSU fourth-year medical school students Friday. GLENN BEIL/DEMOCRAT