

Herald-Tribune

MUNICATIONS COMPANY

FRIDAY, MARCH 4, 2005 50¢

Set for their home openers

Today's games

Yankees vs. Pirates

McKechnie Field
Bradenton
1:05 p.m.

Devil Rays vs. Reds

At Ed Smith Stadium
Sarasota
1:05 p.m.



Baseball is back as the Pirates host the Yankees today in Bradenton and Cincinnati entertains the Devil Rays in Sarasota. Full baseball coverage, **Sports**

Med school campus opens in Sarasota

Students will get hands-on training in local doctors' offices and community hospitals under the Florida State University program.

By CHRISTINA DeNARDO

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SARASOTA COUNTY — Hundreds of local doctors have signed up to teach a group of medical students in their offices, at hospitals and in a historic pink house in downtown Sarasota.

Florida State University's College of Medicine is sending medical students to Sarasota for their two-year rotations instead of sending them to a traditional teaching hospital.

FSU is one of about two dozen schools that

send students to community hospitals and doctors' offices rather than to hospitals affiliated with the medical school. The program allows students to step into some of the same situations they'll encounter after they graduate.

The medical school will send nine students to Sarasota beginning this summer to work with doctors at Sarasota Memorial Hospital, Doctors Hospital and dozens of private practices. The number of medical students

PLEASE SEE FSU ON 17A



STAFF PHOTO / ROD MILLINGTON / rod.millington@heraldtribune.com

FSU Public Relations Coordinator Meredith Brodeur and retired Sarasota physician Dr. Preston Clement explore the Weissgerber house.

Medical students to train in Sarasota

FSU FROM 1A

coming to Sarasota is expected to grow every year.

"It brings a level of medical expertise to the community that we have not had before, and that is teaching," said Washington Hill, chairman of Sarasota Memorial Hospital's obstetrics and gynecology department, who has recruited physician teachers for the program. "I think that can only help the community and the health care we provide."

FSU faculty and local doctors say the medical students will get a more varied and comprehensive experience than students at traditional medical schools where residents are the teachers.

The community approach, they say, gives students access to doctors with more expertise and experience, and provides students with a glimpse of the most common health care services.

"This is real-world medicine," said J. Ocie Harris, dean of FSU's College of Medicine, who was in Sarasota on Thursday for the college's open house. "It makes sense to give them experience when this is how they are going to do their life's work."

FSU students begin their studies at the school's main campus in Tallahassee, where they study medicine and gain some hands-on experience through weekly clinical training.

The medical students then attend regional campuses in their third and fourth years.



STAFF PHOTO / ROD MILLINGTON / rod.millington@heraldtribune.com

The Florida State University College of Medicine's Sarasota campus is headquartered in the Hans Weissgerber house at 201 Coconut Ave. The building was moved from the bayfront near Gulf Stream Avenue to its new location more than a year ago.

and report diagnoses to the doctor. Students working with surgeons will serve as first assistants, holding instruments, making incisions and suturing.

The students attending FSU's College of Medicine say the school's alternative approach is what attracted them to the school.

"If I were to go to the UF, I believe that during my clinical years, I would end up being in the peanut gallery," said Beau Toskich, a 1998 Riverview High School graduate who will come to Sarasota as a third-year student. "I wouldn't be in the forefront where medicine is actually administered to the patient."

Andrew Gamenthaler, of Fort Myers, wants to practice medicine in Southwest Florida and believes the training he will get in Sarasota will give

ner of Second Street and Coconut Avenue more than a year ago.

Students will meet at the facility to attend weekly lectures and doctor-led discussions on specific medical topics and diseases.

The local medical community will benefit from having the students here, FSU officials said.

"A student tends to keep you sharper," said Bruce Berg, the school's assistant dean, who heads the Sarasota campus. "That kind of challenge is stimulating to the physician ... and the patients benefit."

"It always helps a physician to have a young student asking, 'Why did you do that?'" said Berg, who worked as a doctor and administrator for Sarasota Memorial Hospital for 25 years.

time in Florida, is based on other programs. Twenty of the nation's 126 medical schools use the model, including Michigan State University, the University of Minnesota and East Tennessee State University.

FSU opened its medical school in 2001 after overcoming opposition from medical school deans and the state Board of Regents. Many in the medical community had questioned whether Florida needed more doctors or another medical school.

The school eventually won approval from the state Legislature — the first new U.S. medical school in 20 years — because of its mission to connect students with family practice and other specialties in rural areas and inner cities. It now enrolls 173 students, with as

students at traditional medical schools where residents are the teachers.

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The medical students then attend regional campuses in their third and fourth years, where they do six-week rotations working one-on-one with veteran doctors in a variety of specialties: family medicine, pediatrics, internal medicine, obstetrics and gynecology, general surgery, psychiatry, emergency medicine and geriatrics. Currently, the medical students work alongside practicing doctors in Tallahassee, Orlando and Pensacola.

At doctors' offices they do such things as consult with patients, conduct initial exams

and report diagnoses to the doctor. Students working with surgeons will serve as first assistants, holding instruments, making incisions and suturing.

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Andrew Gamenthaler, of Fort Myers, wants to practice medicine in Southwest Florida and believes the training he will get in Sarasota will give him the skills to be a better physician.

"You are learning in a community that you are going to go back to practice," he said.

Though students spend nearly all their time doing clinical work, they have a place to study, check e-mail and meet faculty.

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While Sarasota County doctors are already eager to work with medical students, FSU faculty requires doctors who will work with students to have special training.

FSU faculty plans to use the renovated pink house to educate the doctors on such topics as aligning clinical work with the school's curriculum standards, giving feedback and evaluating students.

FSU's medical school model, which is being used for the first

time in Florida, is based on other programs. Twenty of the nation's 126 medical schools use the model, including Michigan State University, the University of Minnesota and East Tennessee State University.

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Some experts are now predicting a doctor shortage as a result of the baby boom generation and the demand for more medical care. FSU officials are optimistic that their emphasis on community medicine can hold off the shortage in Florida.

"We hope this school will help foster more students who will stay in Florida and Sarasota because we clearly are going to need them," Berg said.