

PRESS RELEASE

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Class of 2010'S 94 Students Earn Their M.D. Degrees

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TALLAHASSEE, FL - Ninety-four more students have joined the ranks of College of Medicine alumni with M.D. degrees. At a commencement ceremony at Christian Heritage Church, an enthusiastic crowd of families, friends, faculty, community supporters and more applauded the Class of 2010. "You are our best ambassadors for this distributed model of education, based in the offices of community physicians," Dean John Fogarty told the graduates, who now head out to residencies that will last several years. "They've invited you into the lives of their patients and showed you what it is to care for patients in these settings. This special training, both here at the main campus and at each regional campus, has marked you as different. Treasure that difference. Maintain your focus on the patient." Dean Emeritus Ocie Harris, chosen by the graduates to be commencement speaker, said his wish was for them to have "a love affair with medicine for the rest of your life." "Medicine is a wonderful career and offers many exciting and stimulating challenges," he told them. "It offers personal satisfaction and a sense of accomplishment in great measure and will sustain your interest and enthusiasm throughout your lifetime if you let it. I hope at the end of your medical career you will highly recommend your profession to anyone seeking your advice." Here are a few glimpses from the ceremony:

- Charlotte Maguire, M.D., longtime supporter of and contributor to the College of Medicine, was recognized for her role as a mentor to female medical students. Graduating students Dani Barnes and Tiffany Williams, officers of the newly established Resident Division of the American Medical Women's Association, gave her a letter officially declaring that the new mentorship program was named for her. It read, in part: "Without the struggle of women like you, our careers as young women physicians would not be possible.... We commend you for exemplifying what it means to be a mentor and for nurturing and encouraging multiple generations of female physicians."
- Class President Tony Sochet had his classmates roaring as he explained to the gathered families what had consumed these students' every waking hour for the past four years. "Pediatrics was a trial by fire, and a passing grade was only given to the student after he/she had been pooped, peed and vomited on," he reported. "On Psychiatry, we diagnosed our patients, ourselves and all of you in the room with various mental disorders. Family and Internal Medicine turned us into hypochondriacs. Every cough, headache and change in bowel movement became a self-diagnosed terminal illness."
- Valedictorian Melissa Kozakiewicz noted that "the many hours, the time away from family and friends, and the sometimes frustrating situations" can change someone during residency. "I hope we can remember the importance of the physician-patient relationship," she said, "and that we are able to preserve the compassion we now have."
- With the help of literally a busload of well-wishers, Jimmy Moss got the loudest ovation, officially marking the triumphant finish of his journey from childhood homelessness to M.D. Never a showboat, he did allow himself a couple of nearly invisible fist pumps as he crossed the stage with his diploma in hand.
- The crowd said "Aww" in unison as Adam Branoff was hooded, then bear-hugged, by his physician father.
- As Shoshana Hacker posed onstage for her official commencement photo, a young relative in the audience shouted, "Paging Dr. Hacker!"

Also cheered were 10 members of the Bridge program who had completed the rigorous, three-semester Bridge to Clinical Medicine major and received the brand-new Master of Science in Biomedical Sciences degree. They will now join the first-year medical students in the Class of 2014, who arrive June 1.

Dean John Fogarty's introductory remarks
Dean Emeritus Ocie Harris' commencement address
Melissa Kozakiewicz's commencement remarks
Tony Sochet's Reflections on the Journey