

PRESS RELEASE

First Graduates of FSU College of Medicine Now Practicing Physicians

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By Doug Carlson

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TALLAHASSEE, Fla.-- Fourteen members of the first class of students to graduate from The Florida State University College of Medicine recently completed the journey to becoming full-time practicing physicians. When the students arrived at the College of Medicine as part of the inaugural class in 2001, they were taking a calculated gamble by choosing to be part of the first new medical degree program created in the United States in nearly a quarter-century. Since their enrollment, physician workforce estimates in the United States have shifted dramatically from talk of a potential surplus to current projections of a severe physician shortage. In June 2006 the Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC) called for a 30 percent increase in medical school enrollment by 2015. The AAMC based its position on several factors, including population growth, a doubling of the number of people over age 65 between 2000 and 2030 and an aging U.S. physician workforce in which one of every three active doctors is older than 55 and likely to retire by 2020. Twenty-seven members of the original College of Medicine class graduated in May 2005. Because the length of residency program training varies depending on specialty, 13 members of the class continue in residency training in specialties ranging from internal medicine to pediatric neurology and surgery. The 14 others completed residency training in July and now are part of the first group of practicing physicians to have studied and trained at the College of Medicine. Ten of the 14 (71 percent) are practicing in Florida, with five of those practicing in rural, medically underserved areas. Four of the 10 Florida physicians are practicing family medicine. Witnessing the transition is especially rewarding for faculty members who helped recruit the College of Medicine's first class. "The charge I gave to the admissions committee was to look for people who were ready to be pioneers," said Myra Hurt, who served as interim dean and director of the admissions process when the first class was admitted. "We didn't have facilities, and we didn't yet have accreditation, but these students believed in the mission and wanted to be a part of this medical school. As much as anything, they were our partners." Six of the college's 14 alumni practicing physicians are working in or near Tallahassee. Two of those -- Drs. Christie Sain and Alex Ho -- have joined the College of Medicine as part-time faculty members who teach medical students. "We are deeply proud of the academic and professional success of our students," said Dr. Alma Littles, senior associate dean for academic affairs. "We knew we had an educational model that would create the exemplary, compassionate, caring physicians that are now practicing in communities of need in the state of Florida and other areas of this country." The College of Medicine's first alumni practicing physicians are:

Dr. Kerry Bachista, emergency medicine, Winter Haven (Fla.) Hospital  
Dr. Mark Bochey, emergency medicine, University Medical Center, Austin, Texas  
Dr. Natosha Canty, family medicine, Capital Health Plan, Tallahassee  
Dr. Shayla Gray, family medicine, Madison, Fla.  
Dr. Fawn Grigsby Harrison, pediatrics, DeSoto Hospital, Arcadia, Fla.  
Dr. Michael Hernandez, internal medicine/hospitalist, Shands Jacksonville  
Dr. Alex Ho, emergency medicine, Tallahassee Memorial Hospital

Dr. Joda Lynn, emergency medicine, staffing emergency rooms in Perry, Apalachicola and hospitals in North Florida and South Georgia

Dr. Adam Ouimet, emergency medicine, Tacoma (Wash.) Emergency Care Physicians

Dr. Kevin Raville, emergency medicine, University of Rochester (N.Y.) Medical Center

Dr. Neil Rodgers, emergency medicine, Leesburg (Fla.) Regional Medical Center

Dr. Christie Sain, family medicine, Patients First, Tallahassee

Dr. Lorna Stewart, family medicine, TMH Hospitalist Group, Tallahassee

Dr. Amanda Sumner, emergency medicine, Carl R. Darnall Army Medical Center, Fort Hood, Texas