

PRESS RELEASE

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FsuCares Expands Medical Mission to Include Immokalee, Fla. Medical Students Also to Revisit Panama, U.S.-Mexico Border

CONTACT

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By Jennifer Schmidt

TALLAHASSEE, Fla.- Florida State University medical students and faculty have expanded their annual FSUCares spring break medical outreach program to include Immokalee, Fla., where they will work with medically underserved populations March 5-12. They also will revisit sites in Panama and along the U.S.-Mexico border during the organization's fourth annual spring break mission. In addition to providing health services to communities with limited access to health care, these trips serve to educate medical students about cross cultural medicine including the health issues of uninsured and culturally diverse groups. Thirty-five students and 11 faculty members will participate this year. Migrant farm workers, whose labor contributes to the agricultural harvest of our country, often have unmet health-care needs. In Immokalee, first- and second-year students will work with faculty to treat patients at Collier Health Services and will offer local health fairs for the migrant community. First-year students will visit McAllen, Texas, where they will serve the population on both sides of the U.S.-Mexico border in cooperation with the Lower Rio Grande Border Health Council and the Mexican consulate. First- and second-year students will travel with faculty members to revisit two sites in Panama, Central America, in cooperation with FSU-Panama. The medical students expect to see some of the patients first visited by FSUCares in 2002 in the remote Panamanian villages of Filipinas and Portobelo. With the funds raised for the trip, including a \$103,000, three-year gift from the Pfizer Foundation, and more than \$10,000 in proceeds from November's FSUCares 5K race, students will provide health services, medical supplies and books for medical students and children in the areas they serve. While making final preparations for the trip, students will be available for interviews in Tallahassee:

Friday, March 4

12:30 p.m.

**FSU College of Medicine Clinical Learning Center
(enter from parking lot on Stadium Drive)**

In Texas the students can be reached beginning March 7 through Dr. Angel Braña of the Office of Border Health at (956) 367-0557. In Immokalee, contact Prof. Elena Reyes, (850) 509-5938.