

PRESS RELEASE

Seventy-Three New Doctors Graduate From FSU College of Medicine

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TALLAHASSEE, FL - Graduation day arrived Saturday for the 73 members of the Florida State University College of Medicine's Class of 2009. Although the event took place in a church, that didn't stop air horns from blasting, ecstatic families from cheering and graduation caps from sailing toward the rafters. "I encourage you to care deeply about your patients," Dr. Daniel Van Durme told the students in his commencement address, "for there is where the true joy and satisfaction of medicine is found. There will be some who will tell you to keep your distance and not get too attached to your patients. They will praise the value of objectivity in part to protect yourself when your patients do not recover and die. However, 'objectivity' can be a code word for treating someone like an object and not a living, breathing and feeling person." Class President Corinne Brann reminisced about the four years the students had shared: the reams of information they had absorbed, the mistakes they had made ("I'm convinced the faculty is hiding a tape of bloopers somewhere"), the ways they had supported each other, the new talents they had developed ("I gained the skill of falling asleep standing up"). She also thanked the IT department for all of its assistance. One advantage of having the ceremony at Christian Heritage Church was that people who didn't have great seats could watch the action on giant video screens on the walls. So they could see Christopher Rees Porta close-up when, after his father had shouted "Way to go, buddy," the graduate calmly corrected him with a smile: "Dr. Buddy, Dad." The family and friends of Kendra Jo Buscetta held up giant cards that spelled out, "NY LOVES KENDRA." And when Irmanie Eliacin crossed the stage, a woman called out, "Irmanie, I'm so proud of you, baby!" In his charge to the class, Dr. Charles Ouimet spoke of the College of Medicine's pride in these graduates. "We are not proud because you are smart; being smart has always been necessary for good doctoring, but it has never been sufficient," he said. "We are not exactly proud of **what** you are. We are proud of **who** you are, the kind of persons that, through dedication, self-sacrifice and love of mankind, you have become. You forfeited the right to be ordinary." By coincidence, both Dr. Ouimet and Dr. Van Durme closed their addresses with the same quote from Albert Schweitzer: "I don't know what your destiny will be, but one thing I do know: the only ones among you who will be really happy are those who have sought and found how to serve."