

PRESS RELEASE

Two FSU Medical Students Receive Scholarships in Exchange for Service

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October 2009



Tanya E Anim



Komal R D'Souza

TALLAHASSEE, Fla.-- One way to address the nation's increasing shortage of primary care doctors is to give medical students a financial incentive to practice medicine where the need is greatest. Two Florida State University College of Medicine students just got the strongest incentive of all: a scholarship that covers the entire cost of their remaining time in medical school. Fourth-year student Tanya Anim and third-year student Komal D'Souza received National Health Service Corps Scholarships for one and two years respectively. The scholarship covers all tuition and fees and includes a monthly stipend of almost \$1,300. In exchange, both students must serve at least two years in an area designated by the U.S. Health Resources and Services Administration as "medically underserved." Florida is among the states with the most such areas. In fact, 251 areas in the state have a high need for primary care doctors. "Serving the underserved was the reason I decided to become a physician and the reason I chose the Florida State University College of Medicine," said Anim, who earlier this year was named National Family Medicine Interest Group coordinator by the American Academy of Family Physicians. D'Souza is still deciding the primary care field she will pursue. She is completing her family medicine rotation in Immokalee, Fla., where she has learned "so much about providing compassionate, high-quality health care in a community with limited resources." In 2000, the Florida Legislature established the medical school with a specific mission: to produce patient-focused primary care physicians who would respond to their community's needs, especially the needs of the underserved. "Since the scholarships are designed to attract students to serve in underserved physician-shortage areas, they are entirely consistent with our mission," said John Fogarty, M.D., dean of the College of Medicine. "We know that medical student debt is one of the barriers to students choosing primary care fields or serving in rural areas, so these scholarships will help in both regards." The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services estimates the nation needs 16,585 more medical practitioners to fill its current need — a deficit that will only continue to grow, according to the American Academy of Family Physicians. Anim and D'Souza both said they felt honored and grateful to be among the latest recipients of the competitive scholarship. A National Health Service Corps representative said that, on average, one out of every 40 medical students who apply receives an NHSC scholarship. "It speaks highly of our College of Medicine in attracting these types of dedicated students," said Daniel Van Durme, M.D., chair of the medical school's Department of Family Medicine and Rural Health. "They

will be the ones who are instrumental in helping us fulfill our mission.” For more information, visit <http://nhsc.hrsa.gov/about/facts.htm>