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Pre-med students get a taste of real medicine at IRMC

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VERO BEACH — Organized by Indian River Medical Center rheumatologist Dr. Alistair Kennedy, 20 pre-med students from the Florida Institute of Technology toured IRMC's Critical Care Unit and Vero Radiology Associates recently.

Guest speakers included president/CEO Jeff Susi; Kennedy; and Dr. Randall Bertolette, Florida State University regional campus dean, Fort Pierce, who gave a short overview of Florida State University's medical program, one of the medical schools where they might eventually apply.

Once up in CCU, the FIT students accompanied Dr. George Mitchell, medical director, Critical Care, on multidisciplinary rounds, something usually only found at leading academic medical centers. During their visit to VRA, Dr. Peter Joyce led them through the advanced imaging technology of MRI, CT and PET that can reveal in an instant the cause of illness.

Due to their intense interest, the two-hour tour extended to three hours, giving the students the opportunity to ask questions and meet with several Florida State University medical students who are currently rotating through IRMC as part of their medical training. We hope by possibly making this an annual event, medical students will consider our local area as an ideal area to practice medicine in the future.

"It was not only helpful, but it was very inspiring," said FIT senior Alejandro Chavarriaga. "This motivates us to keep going in our studies and lets us see that there is light at the end of the tunnel."

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