

UF's medical honor society honors inductees

By [Anne Geggis](#)
Staff writer

Published: Monday, February 27, 2012 at 10:56 p.m.

Last Modified: Monday, February 27, 2012 at 10:56 p.m.

The ability to wield God-like healing power with a human touch — and that skill's gift to the area's health care — was celebrated as a new crop of fourth-year medical students, residents and faculty were inducted into a medical honor society Monday night.

Community projects these inductees have bestowed on this area include a mobile health unit, a program for at-risk girls and all kinds of pediatric unit projects. But the ninth induction into UF's chapter of the national Gold Humanism Honor Society, the Chapman Society, also included an announcement that will stand for generations. A classroom in the medical education building now in the works will be named for neurologist Dr. Robert Watson, a now retired senior associate dean of the UF College of Medicine who was instrumental in starting the Chapman Society.

Dr. Michael Good, dean of the UF College of Medicine, saluted Watson as the epitome of “integrity, compassionate concern and respect.”

The society was started when Annie Lou Chapman, Watson's patient, came to him with the concern that the medical care her husband, Dr. Jules Chapman, had received before his 1991 death was not as caring as it could have been.

Watson recalled giving a speech to the UF College of Medicine's class of 2005 in 2001.

“I told them the key to being a great doctor was to be a caring doctor,” Watson said. “They listened and then everyone ran off to make an ‘A’ in anatomy.

“That's when I realized I was a hypocrite — there was nothing to back that up,” he said.

And so a chapter of the prestigious honor society was started in Dr. Chapman's name.

Each of the inductees — two faculty members, five residents and 25 fourth-year medical students — highlighted accomplishments of their fellow inductees.

“Matt was originally an EMT (emergency medical technician) from Starke but within a short amount of time, it was apparent he was too brilliant to stay in that role,” said Ricardy Rimpel, a fourth-year medical student, of one of the resident inductees, Dr. Matthew Odom.

Michelle Chaney saluted her fellow fourth-year student Paige Comstock as a “rock star.”

“She was one of the co-founders of the mobile clinic,” Chaney said. “This is an incredible accomplishment that will continue to serve the areas of Gainesville that need it the most.”

Good urged all the assembled to remember the lesson the honor society teaches in the face of advancing technology and more demands for efficiency.

“It’s the ability to partner with your patient ... that distinguishes the outstanding doctor from the competent one,” he said.