

Local family medicine residents graduate

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Class of 2019 of The Florida State University College of Medicine Family Medicine Residency Program and Global Fellowship graduates (from left to right): Dr. Kenneth O'Dell, Dr. Clay Duval, Dr. Elizabeth Duval, Dr. Charles Fleischer, Dr. Heidi Lee, Dr. Kristen Dimas, Dr. Christie Caceres and Dr. Amanda Danley. COURTESY PHOTO

Lee Health recently celebrated the graduation of the Class of 2019 of the Florida State University College of Medicine Family Medicine Residency Program. The residency program, based at Lee Memorial Hospital, was created to address an expected national shortage of primary care physicians — an issue compounded locally by a rapidly growing aging population.

“Southwest Florida is one of the fastest growing regions in the state, but we are underserved when it comes to the number of primary care physicians,” said Dr. Alfred Gitu, program director of the residency program at Lee Health. “We are proud to report that two of the six graduates from the class of 2019 are staying to practice medicine locally.”

This year’s graduates include:

Dr. Amanda Danley, who will practice in Cape Coral.

Dr. Kristen Dimas, who will join the Lee Physician Group Residency Faculty in Fort Myers.

Dr. Clay Duval, who will practice in Colorado Springs, Colorado.

Dr. Elizabeth Duval, who will practice in Colorado Springs, Colorado.

Dr. Charles Fleischer, who will join the Florida State University College of Medicine faculty as an assistant professor.

Dr. Kenneth O'Dell, who will practice in Sebring.

Dr. Heidi Lee and Dr. Christie Caceres also completed their one-year Global Health Fellowship. Fellows spend 40-50% of their experience overseas at mission hospitals and international family medicine residencies in three-month cycles.

The Florida State University College of Medicine Family Medicine Residency Program at Lee Health provides 36 months of training, which is divided into four-week blocks. These rotations are completed at Lee Memorial Hospital, HealthPark Medical Center and Golisano Children's Hospital of Southwest Florida. The program began with its inaugural class in July 2014.

In December 2016, the residency program was approved for expansion from 18 residents to 24, and received continued accreditation from the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education for the next 10 years. This year's graduating class brings the total number of graduates to 24, with 12 physicians choosing to continue practice in Southwest Florida.
