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Florida Hospital donates \$2M to support FSU College of Medicine

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Contributing Writer

Florida Hospital and Florida State announced a \$2 million donation to benefit the Florida State University College of Medicine's educational program in Orlando.

The sizable gift will help establish the Florida Hospital Endowed Fund for Medical Education. This fund helps support the College of Medicine's 550 plus faculty of physicians in the Orlando medical community.

"A medical school with our unique, community-based curricular design requires outstanding, dedicated clinical partners if excellence in educating the next generation of Florida's physicians is to be assured," said Dr. Michael Muszynski, dean of the medical school's Orlando regional campus.

The FSU College of Medicine's Orlando campus allows third- and fourth-year students to experience an apprenticeship-style system with local physicians. The program encourages a hands-on education where students are actively involved with patients and local physicians.

Lars Houmann, president and CEO of Florida Hospital, is a strong advocate for the program.

"The teaching model offered by Florida State University's College of Medicine is an excellent and highly effective approach to growing Florida's much needed future physician population," Houmann said.

The FSU College of Medicine's Orlando campus provides an alternative to working in a teaching hospital or academic medical center. The College of Medicine enables students to work directly with the most experienced physicians and become involved in patient care. Students also take electives taught by Orlando physicians, including family medicine, pediatrics, internal medicine, obstetrics-gynecology, surgery, emergency medicine, psychiatry or geriatrics.

The FSU College of Medicine's Orlando campus, which celebrates its 10th anniversary this year, has been affiliated with Florida Hospital since its beginning in 2002. Florida Hospital supported the College of Medicine during the legislative process and was a proponent for its creation.

"Now that we are celebrating the 10th anniversary of our Orlando campus, we appreciate this generous gift as an acknowledgment of that relationship and a great help to us to support and sustain the quality of leadership, faculty, and programs there in the future," says Dr. John P. Fogarty, dean of the FSU College of Medicine.

Rich Morrison, regional vice president of government and public affairs at Florida Hospital has hopes that the partnership will encourage students to focus on primary care.

"We find the mission of the College of Medicine, to produce physicians who would focus upon primary care and seek to increase access for citizens who live in undeserved areas, to be very compatible to our own history and mission," Morrison said.

The Orlando campus was established in 2003 with a small group of third-year students. It now regularly hosts 20 third-year, as well as 20 fourth-year students.

The main campus is located on East Colonial Drive, but students are usually out in the community gaining hands on experience with patients and learning from their physician-teachers.

The College of Medicine's Orlando campus now has 81 alumni practicing in Florida. 70 percent of this alumni are fulfilling Morrison's hopes for the partnership by providing primary care.

