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Lakeside Medical Center's Family Medicine Residency Program Celebrates 6th Annual Graduating Class

Belle Glade, FL – At a time when the nation is experiencing a growing physician shortage, Lakeside Medical Center, Palm Beach County's only rural teaching hospital, celebrated the graduation of five residents from its Family Medicine Residency Program. Stephanie Dardanella, Hospital Administrator, welcomed the more than 130 attendees June 22nd at the Wanderers Club in Wellington, Florida. This is the sixth class of residents to graduate from the program, which was established at the acute-care

facility in Belle Glade in 2011 and is one of the few of its kind to focus on the health care needs of rural, underserved areas.

“Through your training, you’ve learned to identify the importance of improving health disparities and expanding access to care for all, including the most vulnerable,” said Darcy J. Davis, Chief Executive Officer of the Health Care District of Palm Beach County, in a video address played at the event. “You’ve embraced the Health Care District’s commitment to delivering high-quality care.”

The five graduates, Bralin Bean, DO, Roberteen H. McCray, DO, Stephen Perez, DO, Tyler Provost, DO and Elena Herschdorfer-Rodriguez, DO, completed a rigorous three-year curriculum that included rotations in emergency medicine, women’s health care, pediatrics, psychiatry, general surgery, internal medicine, community and sports medicine, cardiology, dermatology, women’s health, radiology, orthopedics, ENT, urology, ophthalmology and critical care. Lakeside Medical Center, which is accredited by The Joint Commission and owned and operated by the Health Care District, is the program’s primary clinical training site.

“It is my hope you will always practice the art of compassion as physicians and that you be the very best you can be despite any challenges you may face along the way,” said Nikerson Geneve, DO, Lakeside Medical Center’s Family Medicine Residency Program Director and Director of Medical Education.

The graduation comes at a time when physicians are in great demand. Just this past April, the Association of American Medical Colleges published a report that shows by 2030 the U.S. could see a shortage of ^{TOP} 120-thousand physicians and of that number, as many as 49-thousand

are primary care doctors.

“The community in the Glades is so unique,” said Roberteen H. McCray, DO who plans to practice primary care in Orlando. “There were things I saw that we only saw in textbooks. And what I learned about being compassionate and caring is to take the time to treat the medical issues and also the social issues.”

“If I had to do it all over again, I’d do it at Lakeside Medical Center,” said Bralin Bean, DO, who plans to pursue sports medicine in Miami. “Always listen to your patients. I don’t think anyone will teach you more than them.”

“Please know that our bonds as residents will stay with us forever, no matter where our journeys take us,” said Stephen Perez, DO, Chief Resident who plans to join a primary care practice in Ft. Lauderdale.

“I commuted four hours round-trip every day to Lakeside Medical Center,” said Elena Herschdorfer-Rodriguez,

DO, who plans to practice primary care in Port Charlotte. “I would not trade this experience for the world.”

Daniel B. Kairys, MD, Lakeside Medical Center’s Chief of Surgery delivered the keynote speech about preceptors like himself and their impact on the residents.

“I hope what you have learned from the physicians who have trained you will stay with you, carry with you and be the voice in your head as you’re taking care of patients in the future,” said Dr. Kairys.

Following the ceremony, the five graduates, along with Dr. Geneve, took part in coating the program’s five incoming residents: J. D. Adame, DO,

Quanecia Beasley, DO, Sonya Dusseault, DO, Kerlan St. Prix, DO and Christal Santos-Landeros.

“For the new interns, I remember this moment three years ago,” said Tyler Provost, DO, who plans to practice sports medicine in Boynton Beach. “It’s a little scary, but lean into it. That’s how you’re going to get the most out of this experience.”

Among the event attendees was Dan Liftman, Staff Assistant to U.S. Congressman Alcee L. Hastings. Rev. Robert Rease, Chair of the Lakeside Health Advisory Board, which governs Lakeside Medical Center, delivered the invocation and Donia Roberts, Esq., Lakeside Health Advisory Board member and former Chair presented the graduates with their certificates. Also attending the graduation were numerous preceptors and prior graduates.

James T. Howell, MD, MPH, Assistant Dean of Professional Relations and Professor Public Health at Nova Southeastern University’s College of Osteopathic Medicine, helped establish the residency program at the hospital and delivered the closing remarks: “Be proud of your residency. You were very, very well-trained.”

The Family Medicine Residency Program is funded by a grant from the State of Florida’s Agency for Health Care Administration. The program’s academic and community partners include Nova Southeastern University’s College of Osteopathic Medicine and the Florida Department of Health for Palm Beach County.

For more information about Lakeside Medical Center, visit www.lakesidemedical.org or call 561-996-6571.

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From left: Daniel Padron, DO, CPE, Chief Medical Officer, Lakeside Medical Center; Stephanie Dardanella, Hospital Administrator; Tyler Provost, DO, Graduate; Stephen Perez, DO, Graduate; Roberteen H. McCray, DO, Graduate; Bralin Bean, DO, Graduate; Elena Herschdorfer-Rodriguez, DO, Graduate; Nikerson Geneve, DO, Family Medicine Residency Program Director; and Luis M. Perezalonso, MD, FACEP, Medical Director of the Emergency Department.

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