There is a time for everything, and the time has come for me to pass on the leadership baton to a new dean.

In 2006, I was appointed to serve as founding dean of FIU Herbert Wertheim College of Medicine (HWCOM). We started with a blank slate and a sincere promise to change the future of medical education and health care in our community.

Early founders, including our great benefactor Dr. Herbert Wertheim, envisioned a medical school with a unique social mission that would be seamless with the community we serve. Writing on a napkin, aboard a flight to Washington D.C., I conceived a name for the program that would serve as the cornerstone of our curriculum and our agent for change: the Neighborhood Health Education Learning Program, which later came to be known as Green Family Foundation NeighborhoodHELP. We would embed multidisciplinary teams of FIU students in medically underserved communities. Students would learn to identify social determinants of health—like poverty, race and ethnicity, and geographic location—and would work with participating household members to facilitate their access to health education and available medical support services. Our students and patients would learn from and teach each other.

In addition to this novel approach to education, our medical students also benefit from a robust in-classroom curriculum and our strategic partnerships with more than 2,000 community-based physicians and clinical affiliates. The results are evident: HWCOM students consistently perform above the national mean on national licensing examinations and match into some of the most prestigious residency programs in the nation.

This has been a year of great challenges for our university community. True to who we are, we confronted them with professionalism, compassion, and resolve. In the aftermath of Hurricane Irma, when FIU’s medical disaster response team was called on to help local hospitals deal with the post-hurricane surge in emergency room patients, more than a dozen HWCOM faculty physicians and medical staff were among those who answered the call. Our NeighborhoodHELP staff delivered supplies to affected households.

And when the nearby southwest 8th street bridge collapsed, FIU Health physicians, staff, and several of our students were among the first responders who rushed to the scene to help.

This was a key year in an extremely important re-accreditation process that I personally wanted to preside over before handing the reins to a successor. The great work of our students, faculty, and staff paid off in February 2018 when the Liaison Committee on Medical Education awarded the college full accreditation for the next eight years, the maximum possible term.

It has been an honor to serve as dean of HWCOM and to guide our college from infancy, through many major milestones, and finally to maturity. Our college is now strong and thriving, and as we welcome a new leader I am confident in its continued success and look forward to witnessing many great accomplishments to come.

John A. Rock, M.D.
Founding Dean and Senior Vice President for Health Affairs
FIU Herbert Wertheim College of Medicine
492 GRADS

AND COUNTING...
HWCOM has been awarded full accreditation by the Liaison Committee on Medical Education (LCME) for the next eight years, the maximum possible term.

“This is an exciting and important milestone for our college of medicine. It recognizes that we have an established and successful program that is training outstanding physicians.”

—Mark B. Rosenberg
FIU President

The LCME is the accrediting body for medical schools in the United States and Canada. As a relatively new school, this was the first time HWCOM was eligible to be considered for the maximum accreditation term of eight years.

**EIGHT YEARS FULL ACCREDITATION**

**UNITED STATES MEDICAL LICENSING EXAMINATION**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CLASS OF 2018</th>
<th>NATIONAL</th>
<th>HWCOM</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>USLME STEP 1</td>
<td>228</td>
<td>239</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USLME STEP 2</td>
<td>241</td>
<td>245</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**99%**

first-time pass rate for

**STEP 1**

National 96%

**ALPHA OMEGA ALPHA**

In May 2018, twenty-seven students were inducted into the prestigious Alpha Omega Alpha (AOA) Honor Medical Society along with optometrist, inventor, philanthropist, and the college’s namesake, Dr. Herbert Wertheim, also known as the man in the red hat. AOA recognizes scholarship as well other values including honesty, ethics, dedication to serving others, and leadership. It is to medicine what Phi Beta Kappa is to letters and the humanities, and what Sigma Xi is to science. Nearly seventy-five percent of deans of U.S. medical schools are members of AOA.

**MATCH DAY AT HWCOM, A DAY WHEN DREAMS COME TRUE AND EMOTIONS RUN HIGH, DID NOT DISAPPOINT.**

**Alpha Omega Alpha**

This spring, 111 HWCOM Class of 2018 students participated in the Match, the annual rite that sets the future course for thousands of young physicians.

For Yves-Dany Accilien, this was the culmination of a journey that started in the poorest country in the Western Hemisphere. Against the odds, he had immigrated to America, learned the language, and was about to graduate from medical school.

Accilien took his sister, mother, and the Haitian flag with him up on the stage at the FIU Graham Center Ballrooms to open the envelope that contained his future in medicine. As he read his Match letter, he was overcome with emotion, words failed him, tears flowed; they hugged. Finally, he stepped up to the microphone. “I matched into emergency medicine, University of Chicago” he said. His classmates in the audience knew it was his first choice residency program. They roared!

There is a shortage of primary care physicians nationwide, and the college encourages students to consider pursuing residency training in family medicine, internal medicine, pediatrics, gynecology, and psychiatry. The fact that 46% of the class is continuing its medical training in Florida is also important because research shows that young doctors tend to set up practice close to where they complete residencies or fellowships. Twenty-seven of the Class of 2018 grads are doing residencies in South Florida.
In October 2017, the HWCOM Master in Physician Assistant Studies program was granted accreditation-provisional status by the Accreditation Review Commission on Education for the Physician Assistant.

**THE MASTER IN PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT STUDIES PROGRAM GRADUATED ITS INAUGURAL CLASS IN DECEMBER 2017.**

Ngan Lam, a member of the inaugural class of the Master in Physician Assistant Studies (MPAS) program, didn’t yet have her diploma in hand when she received her first job offer. The day before graduation, she got the news that she’d been offered a position in the Department of Otolaryngology at the world-renowned University of Florida Health Shands Hospital.

“After spending the last decade as a professional student, I am beyond excited to finally begin my career as a physician assistant,” Lam said.

The HWCOM MPAS program welcomed its fourth cohort in July 2018.

Flores jokingly says that his Cuban mom and his abuela brainwashed him into becoming a doctor. He often thinks of them as he walks the hallowed halls of Johns Hopkins Hospital, where he is currently a neuroradiology fellow, past the portraits of physicians and scientists who have made medical history. He says it feels “surreal,” and yet meant to be.

As early as elementary school, Flores recalls the women’s daily mantra when he and his sister, Vanessa, would come home from school to their grandmother’s humble Little Havana apartment. “They’d always tell us: you have to study and work hard. You need to do something great. Become a doctor or a lawyer. A lawyer or a doctor,” he says. His sister, a year older, became a lawyer. Flores was one of 33 graduates of HWCOM’s inaugural class.

“One of the biggest advantages for me as part of that first class was the size of the class, and that we had a lot of people making sure we succeeded,” he says.

“We had an abundance of resources, help, guidance, and mentorship.”

Flores went on to train in diagnostic radiology at Florida Hospital Orlando. A self-described techie, he was instantly captivated by neuroradiology’s use of “cool technology to diagnose patients and hunt for the etiology of disease.” When he completes the neuroradiology fellowship, he wants to return to Florida, with his wife and son, to practice and teach.
When Tanya Bogle joined HWCOM’s inaugural class, she saw it as an opportunity to be a trailblazer. She also liked the school’s focus on patient-centered care. It seemed like a perfect fit. “I would make the same choice again,” she says. “It was a wonderful school, the education was top notch, and NeighborhoodHELP gave us a unique perspective that a lot of schools don’t have. I think it has really influenced my patient approach.”

Bogle says her interest in medicine was nurtured at home by her parents—her dad is a nurse and mom a pharmacy technician—and was inspired by the stories of physicians like neurosurgeon Dr. Ben Carson. “I read about how they impacted patients’ lives, and that drew me because I wanted to dedicate my life to something that would make a difference,” she says.

After earning her MD degree from FIU in 2013, Bogle completed the three-year University of South Florida-Morton Plant Mease Family Residency program. In May 2017, she joined the BayCare Medical Group in South Pasadena, Florida, as a Family Medicine physician. “The reason I chose primary care is that I’ve always felt focusing on prevention and keeping people healthy was the way I could help the most.” She also is helping to train future health care professionals by precepting HWCOM physician assistant students.

Despite his many accomplishments, Patricio Lau is modest, almost to a fault. He credits others for his success. “It’s about getting lucky and meeting the right people along the way.” This includes people like his high school chemistry teacher, who encouraged him to take advanced placement courses to raise his GPA, and the counselor who literally filled out and mailed his college application and got him a scholarship at FIU. Until then, there had been no plans for college. Lau was 15 when he and his family came from Nicaragua. “All I knew was that college was very expensive, and we didn’t have the money for it.”

College was a game changer. It opened Lau’s mind to new possibilities, including becoming a physician. “The beauty about FIU is that you have other people like you who came here, also didn’t speak English, but they made it, they’re in college, first generation people just like you,” he says. “And it changes your mentality. You say, maybe I can do this!”

With the help of Dr. Barbra Roller, then in charge of advising for premedical students, who set him on “the right track,” Lau applied and was accepted at several top schools, but chose to stay at FIU where they were starting a new medical school. He studied, took part in student government, and somehow found time to spend with his wife and two young boys.

Lau graduated in 2013 and is now in the sixth year of a 7-year general surgery and research residency program at Baylor College of Medicine. Next, he plans on pursuing a fellowship in pediatric surgery.

Afterward, Bogle received her white coat at the inaugural White Coat Ceremony in 2009.

Afterward, Bogle received her white coat at the inaugural White Coat Ceremony in 2009.

Lau at the inaugural class convocation in 2013.
When John A. Rock, MD, and his wife Martha, moved to Miami in 2006, he did what many new homeowners do. He walked down his driveway to retrieve the morning newspaper. A transplant from Louisiana and the recently appointed Founding Dean of the FIU College of Medicine, he was curious about South Florida. But he never expected the first headline he saw. "It said something like, Governor Says ‘Two New Medical Schools Not Needed.’ That was my welcome to Florida," he recalls, laughing. The Governor would later change his mind.
Undaunted by the less-than-friendly greeting, Rock forged ahead to establish a unique medical school that has been recognized by the American Medical Association, the Association for Medical Education in Europe, and others for its innovative curriculum that focuses on the community. Its first medical students enrolled in 2009 and by 2013 it was granted full accreditation by the Liaison Committee on Medical Education. Student scores on the U.S. Medical Licensing Examination Step 1 and Step 2 exceed national averages each year, and are among the highest in the state.

“As the founding Dean, Dr. Rock has established a first-rate medical school that is improving the health of our community,” said FIU President Mark B. Rosenberg. “His work began with hiring the faculty, building the curriculum and creating and outfitting the facilities, then building affiliations with hospitals, establishing clerkships for medical school students, and ensuring our students obtained top residencies throughout the country: I’m deeply grateful to Dr. Rock.”

“It was very clear from day one that my job was to create an outstanding medical school with very high standards and a local faculty that has its pulse on the community,” Rock said. “The energy and enthusiasm to build a program committed to community was incredible.”

Rock, born in 1946 in Corpus Christi, Texas, moved to Mexico, and then to Louisiana during his childhood, due to his father’s job in the petroleum industry. A graduate of Louisiana State University (LSU) Medical Center, he completed a residency in obstetrics and gynecology at Duke University Medical Center and a fellowship in reproductive endocrinology at Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine. After practicing medicine and holding numerous leadership positions there and at Emory University School of Medicine, Rock, a firm believer in lifelong learning, became a student again in 2003, earning a master’s degree in health care administration from Harvard University’s School of Public Health. He then returned to his roots and served as the LSU Health Sciences Center chancellor in New Orleans. It was there, during Hurricane Katrina, that he was disappointed by the disconnect between the community and academic medicine.

He saw FIU “as an opportunity to embark on a mission. We had to reach patients who could not come to us. If you don’t have transportation, you can’t get to a doctor or get a prescription filled. If there are no parks in your neighborhood, you have difficulty exercising. If you lack access to nutritious foods, your diet may be poor. We had to address social determinants. Other medical schools teach primarily at the bedside. Our differentiator is teaching in the household.”

“Thanks to Dr. Rock’s leadership... as we head into the future with his firmly established foundation, there’s no doubt our impact on the health and wellness of our community will be significant,” Wertheim said.

“At the unveiling of the Four Founding Deans Portrait
Co-hosting the College’s For Your Health Television show with Ileana Varela
Inaugural class Match Day
At the unveiling of the Four Founding Deans Portrait
Receiving the FIU University Service Medallion
Inaugural class Convocation
Co-hosting the College’s For Your Health Television show with Ileana Varela
Dr. Rock speaking at inaugural class graduation
Dr. Rock with HWCOM Founders
Dr. Rock at inaugural class convocation.
Watching Victoria Casares walk up and down the stairs of her Hialeah apartment, her dog Fluffy at her heels, you probably wouldn’t notice anything out of the ordinary. Although she’s still a tad self-conscious about it, there are no glaring signs of the stroke that changed her life two years ago.

She woke up with a migraine, went to work, but came home early. “I went to sleep and I don’t remember anything else after,” says Casares.

Her right side was paralyzed. Her speech and memory were impaired. Overweight, and with a history of a previous heart attack, Casares desperately needed follow-up care, but did not have health insurance.

“My life changed completely after the stroke. I was a person who was always on the go from morning to night because of my job, the kids, my husband, girls scouts, boy scouts, church; and then to see myself sitting in a chair all day because I couldn’t move, couldn’t talk, couldn’t do anything,” she says.

Homebound, the 47-year-old wife and mother of three became depressed. But then, she says her life changed again when her mother read a newspaper article about the HWCOM Green Family Foundation NeighborhoodHELP and called to sign her up. “I say all the time, thank goodness for FIU.”

Casares began weekly visits to one of the NeighborhoodHELP mobile health centers, quickly establishing a great rapport with her doctor. “Dr. [Maryse] Pedoussant, she really cares,” Casares says. She also appreciates that Shahodat Voreis, the medical student assigned to her household as part of the program, often calls or texts to find out how she’s doing, and that outreach specialist Vanessa Rodriguez is attentive to her needs for services and guidance. After Hurricane Irma, Rodriguez brought the family food.

The program also has provided resources for speech, physical, and behavioral health therapy, and tutoring for the kids. “With them it’s not just about medicine,” she says. Casares credits NeighborhoodHELP with helping her lose weight, manage her diabetes, deal with her depression—getting her out of the chair.

NeighborhoodHELP is a service-learning program that assigns HWCOM medical students to provide care to households in medically underserved communities. Students must visit these households over the course of their medical education as part of interprofessional teams that include FIU nursing, social work, and physician assistant students (and education and law students as household needs are identified) supervised by a faculty member. The program has integrated health care services through mobile health centers, and a professional outreach team that connects patients to community services.

Baptist Health South Florida, in partnership with Florida International University (FIU), expanded the reach of Green Family Foundation NeighborhoodHELP into West Kendall. This program is a community-based, strategic approach to improve health care access and health outcomes by addressing the social determinants of health, including socioeconomic barriers to care. NeighborhoodHELP will enroll up to 40 West Kendall families that will be visited by an interdisciplinary health care team and outreach workers from FIU. If needed, the families will have access to a mobile health center that provides a full range of primary care services.

“IF I THINK THAT IF I DIDN’T HAVE NEIGHBORHOODHELP MY LIFE WOULD HAVE BEEN TOTALLY DIFFERENT, AND NOT FOR THE BETTER.”
—Victoria Casares
NeighborhoodHELP Patient
This painting was commissioned and donated to HWCOM by Dr. Pedro Jose Greer, Jr., Founding Chair of the Department of Humanities, Health, and Society, and Associate Dean for Community Engagement. The artist is Sophia Lacroix, a program manager and outreach team member for Green Family Foundation NeighborhoodHELP. It is based on Greer’s concept of demonstrating respect, tolerance, and collaboration within NeighborhoodHELP.

RESPECT takes center stage in the piece—a scene that depicts a household visit to long-time NeighborhoodHELP household member Manolina Sosa, by a team of FIU students (medical, nursing, and social work) under the supervision of Dr. Ebony Whisenant, a faculty physician. The program’s household-centered care approach to health care highlights the importance of showing respect to patients.

COLLABORATION is on display in the left panel, which shows Greer at a roundtable with a culturally and racially diverse group of community stakeholders and partners. The artist, Lacroix, is seated on his left, wearing a headband. A NeighborhoodHELP mobile health center is seen in the background, parked in front of actual South Florida houses of worship: a synagogue and a mosque.

TOLERANCE: In the scene to the right, an HWCOM attending physician wears a pride bracelet while tending to an elderly patient, surrounded by a multi-cultural, multi-racial group of medical students.

“NeighborhoodHELP: Respect, Collaboration, Tolerance”
TO THE CHALLENGE
In its continued growth and evolution, HWCOM has established a new department — Radiation Oncology. The move ensures that as cancer treatments and technologies become more sophisticated, there are outstanding, young radiation oncologists prepared to provide the highest-quality care to patients.

“The program is extremely important because the treatment of cancer is changing rapidly,” said Dr. Sergio Gonzalez-Arias, Executive Associate Dean for Clinical Affairs and Chair of the Department of Neuroscience. “This is a significant milestone that will place us in the forefront of advances in cancer care.”

Dr. Minesh Mehta has been named professor and founding chair of the department. A renowned expert in radiation oncology, proton therapy and cancer research, he is deputy director and chief of radiation oncology at Baptist Health South Florida’s Miami Cancer Institute. Department vice chairs are Dr. Michael Chuong, the Cancer Institute’s lead physician for proton therapy; and Dr. Alonso Gutierrez, its chief physicist.

“By creating a Department of Radiation Oncology, the college of medicine has greatly expanded opportunities for medical students interested in radiation therapy,” Mehta said. “As students proceed through their clinical rotations, they will have the chance to work with top leaders in the field and the newest technologies, as well as take part in research. When they begin to apply to residency programs, they will be among those at the most competitive level because of their experience.”

Miami Cancer Institute, which opened in 2017, is a member of the Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Alliance and the only center in North America that offers all of the latest radiation devices and technologies under one roof, including proton and photon therapy, MRI-guided radiation therapy (MRIgRT), Tomotherapy, Gamma Knife, CyberKnife, intraoperative radiation therapy, HDR brachytherapy, and more.

The start of HWCOM’s Radiation Oncology Department comes amidst a shortage of radiation oncologists and medical physicists and a rise in demand as life expectancy increases and patients live longer with cancer. A study published in the Journal of Clinical Oncology determined that by 2020, the demand for radiation therapy will have grown 10 times faster than the supply.

“Our academic affiliation with Miami Cancer Institute is an example of public-private collaboration at its best,” Gonzalez-Arias said. “We are offering greater opportunities for our medical students and for all students within our health sciences programs, and we are expanding services and improving access to the most sophisticated cancer care for our community.”
There is no screening test for ovarian cancer

According to the American Cancer Society, every year more than 22,000 new ovarian cancer cases are diagnosed and more than 14,000 women die from ovarian cancer. Although this cancer accounts for just 2.5% of all female cancer cases, it results in 5% of cancer deaths because early ovarian cancer has no obvious symptoms. Even in its late stage, symptoms like back pain, bloating, and abdominal pain are common and can be confused with other diseases, delaying detection.

One of the biggest obstacles to early detection is that unlike breast cancer and cervical cancer, there is no simple, reliable screening test for ovarian cancer.

“Zero, there’s no way to detect early ovarian cancer unless it’s identified incidentally, but it’s very rarely detected except after it has spread from the ovary, in which case it’s almost uniformly fatal,” says Dr. Jeff Boyd, Chair of the Department of Human and Molecular Genetics in whose lab the tampon study is being conducted. Boyd is an expert in the genetics and molecular genetics of gynecologic and breast cancers.

The idea began to germinate when Jessica Seigel, Leah Cohen, and Lauren Dittman, who are in their fourth year of study at HWCOM, were awarded scholarships by Hearing the Ovarian Cancer Whisper, an organization that supports victims of ovarian cancer, and funds education and research about the deadliest of gynecologic cancers. The award allowed them to shadow a gynecologic oncologist.

“During the experience I was shocked to learn how late ovarian cancer patients presented, and most with inurable disease,” says Cohen who, with her classmates Seigel and Dittman, is conducting a pilot study they hope will lead to development of a screening test. The research is funded by the HERA Foundation.

“Our study is trying to determine whether DNA collected from tampons can be used in the detection of ovarian cancer,” says Dittman.

For most women, the average lifetime risk of developing ovarian cancer is 1.3%, but for women who have inherited the breast cancer gene one (BRCA1) mutation, the odds are much higher: 40% to 60%. BRCA1 is a gene that produces tumor suppressor proteins. When the gene is mutated, or altered, it does not function properly and can lead to cancer.

The Tampon Pilot Study

The students collected tampons from 30 women who have tested positive for the BRCA1 mutation. The idea is that cells shed by the fallopian tubes, where ovarian cancer originates, travel down the reproductive tract to the vagina and may be collected in the tampons. DNA extracted from the tampon samples can then be sequenced and analyzed for mutations in the tumor suppressor gene known as TP53, which is a commonly mutated gene in people with cancer.

Dr. Sheldon Cherry, professor of obstetrics and gynecology, and a mentor to the young women since their first year in medical school, suggested the study based on an earlier tampon study of women who had already developed ovarian cancer and presented a TP53 mutation. “I thought, why don’t we try to see if we can find this same mutation in seemingly healthy at-risk women before they show clinical signs of cancer,” says Cherry.

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In the first half of 2018, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reported only 34 symptomatic Zika virus disease cases, down from more than 5,000 in 2016. But, as the CDC notes, that does not mean that the virus is no longer of concern; where you live, where you travel, and where your sex partner(s) travel can affect your chances of getting Zika. And the state of Florida is still vulnerable to outbreaks because many of its neighbors and visitors come from actively affected areas.

In the summer of 2018, researchers in the Department of Immunology and Nano-medicine at HWCOM patented a new way of detecting the Zika virus in patients significantly faster and earlier than methods currently being used. With nano-enabled biosensors, "the electrochemical system we have developed can detect the virus in 40 minutes or less, using a smaller sample and at a lower level of disease," says Dr. Madhavan Nair, distinguished professor and Chair of the Department of Immunology and Nano-medicine.

The Zika virus, a mosquito-borne pathogen, often causes mild symptoms, which makes it difficult to diagnose in early stages. And every minute counts in the first half of 2018, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reported only 34 symptomatic Zika virus disease cases, down from more than 5,000 in 2016. But, as the CDC notes, that does not mean that the virus is no longer of concern; where you live, where you travel, and where your sex partner(s) travel can affect your chances of getting Zika. And the state of Florida is still vulnerable to outbreaks because many of its neighbors and visitors come from actively affected areas.

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Now that the technology is patented, there are several more steps that need to be taken before the device is built and ready to use. "The platform is ready," Kaushik says, "but we need samples so that we can validate the data. Data is everything." As they look for laboratories and/or hospitals that provide the virus samples, Kaushik and Nair are also working with FIU’s Office of Technology Management & Commercialization (OTMC) to find a manufacturer who can develop the actual device.

**OTHER PATENTS**

- **9,616,022**
  - April 11, 2017
  - Nanodiamond Compositions and Their Use for Drug Delivery
  - Roy U, Drozd V, Nair M, Saxena S, Durygin A

- **9,669,232**
  - June 6, 2017
  - Method for Non-Invasive Brain Stimulation
  - Khargone S, Nair M

- **9,724,503**
  - August 8, 2017
  - On-demand drug release using magneto-electric nanoparticles
  - Khargone S, Gadu R, Liang P

- **9,759,709**
  - September 12, 2017
  - Devices and methods to monitor HIV-infection in presence of substance of abuse and/or therapeutic agent
  - Kaushik A, Nair M

- **9,872,059**
  - January 23, 2018
  - Materials and methods for targeting therapeutic compositions to gut-associated lymphoid tissue (GALT)
  - Roy U, Ding H, Nair M

- **9,893,549**
  - February 20, 2018
  - On-demand drug release using magneto-electric nanoparticles
  - Khargone S, Nair M, Liang P, Runowicz C, Gadu R

- **9,951,007**
  - April 24, 2018
  - 2-methylpyrroldiones and their use for modulating bacterial quorum sensing
  - Malladi VL, Subczak AJ, Schneper L, Mathee K, Winuk SF

- **9,976,169**
  - May 22, 2018
  - Biosensors for organic and inorganic arsenic
  - Rosen B

**AWARDS AND EXPENDITURES**

**Awards**

- Funding Authorized: **$8,472,285**
  - 18 Different Researchers
  - 33 Different Grants

**Expenditures**

- **$8,764,211**
The Florida Science Training and Research Fellowship (FSTAR) program at HWCOM has been recognized by *Insight into Diversity*, the oldest and largest diversity publication in higher education, as an Inspiring Program in STEM. Magazine editors bestow the annual award on “colleges, universities, and organizations for programs that are improving access to STEM fields for students from underrepresented groups.”

“Many of the FSTAR students want to make medical professionals—or medical school—more diverse,” says Cheryl Brewster, Associate Dean, Office of Diversity and Inclusion. “That’s our mission: create a more diverse healthcare system. Each student is a potential model to others to create a change.”

“From the beginning, we launched the FSTAR program in 2011 to offer guidance, encouragement, and support to students considered underrepresented in medicine who aspire to a career in health care,” says Cheryl Brewster, Associate Dean, Office of Diversity and Inclusion.

Twenty college sophomores, from underrepresented minorities (i.e., first generation, black/African American, Hispanic, Native American) are selected each year. The program includes an eight-week, on-campus summer experience during which they participate in webinars and workshops that range from financial aid to test-taking, which culminates in a research project in basic science bench research or public health/social determinants of health research. Staff engage fellows on a bi-weekly basis offering continuous academic enrichment, advising, and mentoring services to students through their first year of medical or graduate school.

FSTAR fellows are selected from FIU, and three historically black colleges and universities—Florida Memorial University in Miami, Bethune-Cookman College in Daytona Beach, and Xavier University of Louisiana.

FSTAR students profile

Chabeli Cardenas is a Cuban-born, first-generation FIU student on a pre-med track, pursuing a bachelor’s in biology. She took part in the 2018 FSTAR summer fellowship at HWCOM, which was established to encourage and increase the number of highly qualified medical school applicants from minority groups underrepresented in medicine. The fellowship included an unforgettable visit to the anatomy lab. The students were given gloves and aluminum trays with human organs to identify.

“It was a disturbing realization to have—scary, surreal (all the synonyms). Within a few minutes, though, we became more comfortable and warmed up to the cold room.”

“My table was assigned what to me looked a lot like a clementine… Upon closer inspection, however, what to me should have been obvious all along became crystal clear—we were looking at the thyroid gland.”

“Other body parts encountered: a spleen (which we confused for the liver), a femur (which we then correctly identified).”

“The detective experience was so valuable—it required critical thinking, teamwork, problem-solving. And there was nothing more exhilarating than correctly identifying the structure: reaching a resolution where at first, there was only a question.”

“I am thankful and humbled for that one hour in the anatomy lab: to FIU for providing underrepresented students with the opportunity of a summer fellowship where we can further develop our skills and love for medicine.”

Chabeli Cardenas

2018-2022 Diversity by the Numbers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Underrepresented in Medicine (URiM)</th>
<th>Fee Waiver*</th>
<th>First Generation</th>
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<tr>
<td>2022</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>23%</td>
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In the wake of Hurricane Irma, FIU’s medical disaster response team was called on by the Florida Department of Health to help local hospitals deal with the post-storm surge in emergency room patients. More than a dozen HWCOM faculty physicians and medical staff were among those who volunteered at a moment’s notice.

“I really am proud of our medical volunteers who make a difference. Their passion for helping, their concern for the community, and their willingness to sacrifice their own personal interests in order to help others, that’s who we are and that’s what we do at FIU.”

— FIU President Mark B. Rosenberg

“They do it because they feel passionately about helping the community,” said Ruben Almaguer, FIU’s emergency management and disaster operations chief.

Between September 11 and 15, HWCOM medical personnel worked 12-hour shifts lending a hand at West Kendall Baptist Hospital and Jackson South Medical Center emergency departments.

“We are extremely grateful for the support Florida International University gave us while West Kendall Baptist Hospital was dealing with the crisis of our hospital’s and emergency department’s volume far exceeding our capacity,” said Javier Hernandez-Lichtl, chief executive officer of West Kendall Baptist Hospital.

One of the Green Family Foundation NeighborhoodHELP mobile health centers also helped out at West Kendall Baptist Hospital; a second unit was deployed to Marathon Key to serve as a mental health facility for the Middle Keys community while Fisherman’s Community Hospital closed due to storm damage.

HWCOM administrators and essential staff also immediately reported to work to assess the damage to college buildings and huddled for days to implement a back-up plan that would assure students could return to class as soon as possible.

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— FIU President Mark B. Rosenberg

“Fortunately, we didn’t have to go to plan B, but we were ready,” said Liane Martinez, Executive Associate Dean for Finance and Administration.

As days passed and many South Florida neighborhoods endured without electricity and streets remained blocked by fallen trees, food and water became scarce in some NeighborhoodHELP households. The HWCOM Department of Humanities, Health, and Society held a drive for these items among students and staff; the NeighborhoodHELP Outreach team distributed the goods to households in need across Miami-Dade County.

Twelve days after the storm, NeighborhoodHELP Outreach workers Talina Almonor and Samuel Hyppolite were still reaching out to household members like Bereatha Howard. The Miami Gardens resident who had recently lost her job, lost power in the storm, and then lost everything in her refrigerator. She was thankful for the bottled water, protein bars, and shakes they brought her. “It was a delight when they called to check on me,” she said. “I thought, oh, somebody cares.”
Faculty
and Staff
Recognition

Cristina Arabatlis, MBA
Promoted from Senior Admissions and Recruitment Officer to Director of Admissions and Recruitment

Irina Agoulnik, PhD
Promoted from Assistant to Associate Professor Department of Human and Molecular Genetics

Diana Barratt, MD
Associate Professor and Clerkship Director
Department of Neuroscience
Named an American Academy of Neurology Fellow
Florida International University 2017 FIU Top Scholar

Jeffy Biabler, MD
Chair, Department of Pediatrics
Appointed by Governor Rick Scott to the Medicaid Pharmaceutical and Therapeutics Committee

Karín Esposito, MD, PhD
Professor, and former Associate Dean for Curriculum and Medical Education
Appointed Executive Associate Dean for Student Affairs

Jenny Fortun, PhD
Associate Professor, Department of Cellular Biology and Pharmacology
HWCOM Excellence in Teaching Award: Small Group Teaching

Ferdinand Gomez, MS
Director of the Human Anatomy Teaching Laboratory
Instructor, Department of Cellular Biology and Pharmacology
HWCOM Excellence in Teaching Award: E-Learning Instruction

Mario González, MD
Promoted from Instructor to Assistant Professor
Department of Humanities, Health, and Society

David Graham, MD
Professor and Chair, Department of Radiology
Associate Dean for Clinical Medical Education
Faculty Advisor or Mentor

Pedro José Greer, Jr., MD
Professor and Chair, Department of Humanities, Health, and Society
Associate Dean for Community Engagement
2017 Educator of the Year Award from the National Association of Cuban American Educators

Peter Khamvongsa, MD
Assistant Professor, Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology
HWCOM Clinical Affiliate Preceptor Award

Dietrich Lorké, MD, PhD
Professor, Department of Cellular Biology and Pharmacology
HWCOM Excellence in Teaching Award: Lecture

Allison Marty, MD
Professor, Department of Humanities, Health, and Society
Appointments:
Member of the Board of the International Federation for Tropical Medicine
Permanent member, WHO informal Health Security Interface Technical Working Group
Chair of the Presidential Advisory Council on Combating Antibiotic-Resistant Bacteria’s Workforce, Education and Leadership Group

Madhavan Nair, PhD
Distinguished Professor and Chair, Department of Immunology and Nano-medicine
Associate Dean of Biomedical Research

Theodore O’Leary, MD
Designated as Professor Emeritus and Emeritus Executive Associate Dean for Clinical Affairs

Juan Orzes, MPH
Community Service Learning Coordinator
Partner Learning Communities
SAVE Luminary Award for leadership and contributions in the LGBT community

Jessica Ramella-Roman, PhD
Associate Professor, Department of Cellular Biology and Pharmacology
Elected as a Senior Member of the International Society for Optics and Photonics

Andrea Raymond, PhD
Department of Immunology and Nano-medicine
Promoted from Assistant to Associate Professor
Department of Immunology and Nano-medicine

Barbara Rollie, PhD
Assistant Dean for Student Affairs
Administrative Director, Graduate Certificate in Molecular and Biomedical Sciences

Enidil Roldán, MD, MPH, MBA
CEO, FIU HealthCare Network
Associate Dean for International Affairs
Completed the General Management Program for senior executives at the Areyte Institute of Executive Education at the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania and attained Wharton alumnus status.

Carolyn Runnels, MD
Executive Associate Dean for Academic Affairs
2018 Distinguished Service Award from the Society of Gynecologic Oncology

Maryam Shahir, MPH
Coordinator, Academic Support Services
American Academy of Neurology Clerkship Coordinator Recognition Award

Margaret Sibbey, PhD
Associate Professor, Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Health

Sarah Stumbor, MD
Assistant Professor, Department of Humanities, Health, and Society
HWCOM Excellence in Teaching Award: Course/Clerkship Direction
Leonard Tow Humanism Award

Helen Tempest, PhD
Associate Professor, Department of Human and Molecular Genetics

2017 Ira and Estor Roseman New Investigator Award from the American Society of Reproductive Medicine

Tracey Weiser, PhD
Academic Director, Graduate Certificate in Molecular and Biomedical Sciences

HWCOM Excellence in Teaching Award: Large Group Interactive Teaching

Promoted from Assistant to Associate Professor, Department of Human and Molecular Genetics

Allan Wells, PhD
Promoted from Assistant to Associate Professor, Department of Humanities, Health and Society

Natan Zundel, MD
Professor and Vice Chair, Department of Surgery
American Society for Metallic & Biologic Surgery (ASMBLS) 2017 Master Educator Award
Named ASMBLS council/person of the year.

Congratulations to the following HWCOM employees recognized for their outstanding efforts.

TEAMWORK CATEGORY

Carlos Correa Algarin
Director Ops & Revenue Cycle
HealthCare Network

Alejandro Amaya
Coordinator Student Affairs
Office of Student Affairs

Brittany Cooke
Senior Program Coordinator
Office of Student Affairs

Jaylyn Enríquez
Coordinator Student Affairs
Office of Student Affairs

Patricia Gunn
Director of Finance and Accounting
HealthCare Network

Fernando Martinez
Director Ops & Revenue Cycle
HealthCare Network

SERVICE EXCELLENCE CATEGORY

Amit Carbonell
Av Engineer I
Information Technology

Chantal Clement
College Recruiter
Master in Physician Assistant Studies program

Emily Gonzalez
Chair, Community Engagement
HealthCare Network

Yuri Malitsav
Panemic, HealthCare Network

Maria Santacruz
Manager Academic Support Services
Office of Academic Affairs

Jessica Vallejo
Coordinator Admis. Services, HealthCare Network

EXTRA MILE CATEGORY

Brittany Cooke
Senior Program Coordinator
Office of Student Affairs

Sheyla Pierre
Program Manager
HealthCare Network

Maryam Shahir
Chair, Community Engagement
HealthCare Network
SOMETIMES LAUGHTER IS THE BEST MEDICINE
John and Mary Lou Dasburg, whose daughter Kathryn Dasburg, MD, graduated from HWCOM in April 2018, made a $1.5 million gift to create an endowed chair at HWCOM. The gift was announced at the biennial Sapphire Gala, an event which they co-chaired and have generously supported for several years.

Dr. John A. Rock, Founding Dean and Senior Vice President for Health Affairs, will become the first recipient of the John and Mary Lou Dasburg Chair in Medicine. The gift will allow the college to attract top faculty and support the very important work of educating our medical students and serving the community, in perpetuity.

Dr. Carmel J. Barrau and his wife Josee have generously established the Carmel J. Barrau, MD, Scholarship Endowment. This $100,000 endowment will support scholarships for underrepresented students in medicine in perpetuity. A college Founder, Dr. Barrau has been a longtime supporter of the HWCOM. He also is the incoming Chair of the Dean’s Advisory Council, and father of Sidney Barrau, Class of 2021 MD candidate.

The Saul and Theresa Esman Foundation donated $90,000 in support of the simulation center and standardized patient program, led by Vivian Ollano, MD. HWCOM’s state-of-the-art Albert and Debbie Taño Medical Simulation Center provides programmable patient simulators and a standardized patient program to train medical and physician assistant students. Since 2002, the Esman Foundation and its President and Chairman of the Board, Murray Levin, have generously supported the HWCOM with gifts totaling nearly half a million dollars.

We are grateful for the continued support of the Alpha Rho Boué Foundation. The third Alpha Rho Boué Sigma Phi Phi Scholarship was awarded to Jean Paul Lamour, MD’22. The $40,000 scholarship is designed to reduce the burden of medical education debt on outstanding students.

THE 2018 SAPPHIRE GALA, held May 12 at the InterContinental Miami, drew more than 500 philanthropic, academic, medical, and business leaders for an exclusive black-tie evening featuring a silent auction, dinner, music, and dancing. The event, co-chaired by Mary Lou and John Dasburg, and Susan and Larry Kahn, raised over $2.2 million to support medical student scholarships, and medical education and training.

Major supporters of the fête included the Meredith Anne Dasburg Foundation, Dr. Albert and Debbie Taño, Dr. Carmel and Josee Barrau, Dan and Trish Bell, Susan and Larry Kahn, Patrick and Marisa Dwyer, and Baptist Health South Florida. Other noteworthy sponsors included, Leon Medical Centers, AvMed, Noreen Gordon Sablotsky Family Supporting Foundation Inc., Dr. Sheldon H. Cherry and Dr. Carolyn D. Runowicz, Aviva and Aaron Staubuer, Bacardi USA, Southern Glazer’s Wine & Spirits, and The Collection.

Dr. John McAdory, Alpha Rho Boué Foundation president, with scholarship recipient Jean Paul Lamour.

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Leaderhip Society
Baptist Health South Florida
The Batchelor Foundation
Green Family Foundation, Inc.
Leon Medical Centers, Inc.
North Dade Medical Foundation, Inc.
Herbert A. Wertheim, OD, and Nicole Wertheim

Executive Circle
Bratan Family Foundation
The HEFA Foundation, Inc.
Seldon H. Cherry, MD, and the HERA Foundation, Inc.
South Florida American Medical Association
Michael M. Adler and Judith S. Adler

Champion’s Circle
Arts Foundation, Inc.
Jackson Memorial Foundation
Rinker Family Foundation, Inc.
John A. Rock, MD, and Martha Rock
Mitchell Myrmar and Geraldine Sternfeld
The Saul and Theresa Eisman Foundation, Inc.
University of Connecticut Health Center
VITAS Innovative Hospice Care

Scholar’s Circle
Alpha Rho Bouél Foundation, Inc.
Ruben Alvarez

Anonymous donor
Jose I. Armas, MD, and Ada Armas
Unihospital of South Florida, Inc., and Carmel J. Barrau, MD, and Josee Barrau
Joseph L. Caruncho, Jr., and Samara Khafra
Dr. John T. Macdonald Foundation, Inc.
East Florida Physician Alliance, Inc.
Dr. John T. Macdonald Foundation, Inc.

Donor-

The Guerra Family Foundation, Inc.
South Florida American Medical Association

President & CEO
Francesca G. Gorke, Esq., and Irene T. Korge R. Kirk Landort
Larkin Community Hospital
Donald E. Leuton and Judith D. Leuton
Orlando Lopez-Fernandez, Jr., MD, and Maria T. Miranda
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Nancy E. Madique
Mercy Hospital Medical Staff Fund
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J. Patrick O’Leary, MD
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Phycare Medical Group
Justo L. Pozo, CPA, and Sylvia E. Pozo
Preferred Medical Plan
Claudia Puig and Richard G. Amundson
Alfredo Sesana and Gloria Sesana
Joe L. Simpson, MD, and Sandi C. Simpson
Jorge L. Sosa, MD
South Florida Medical Imaging, PA
Theodore A. Spak, Esq.*
Perla Tabares-Hantman, MD, and Arnold Hantman
Roberto F. Tuchman, MD, and Laurie Tuchman
Felipe A. Varela, Jr., and Lourdes Valls
Fernando J. Valverde, MD
Vijay Kumar Zaveri, MD, and Bakula V. Zaveri
Greg Steinberg
TotalBank
Universal Marine Medical Supply International LLC
Vector Magnetics Inc.
Vineyard Foundation
The Wagner Fund Trust
West Kendall OB/GYN

A special thank you to the Rotary Club for the


Operating Budget

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<tr>
<td>Tuition</td>
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<tr>
<td>Clinical Revenue</td>
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<td>Research</td>
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<td>Endowment Earnings and Gifts</td>
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<td>Auxiliaries</td>
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<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
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5-Year Strategic Plan Update 2015 - 2020

**Year Three Accomplishments**

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<th>Goal</th>
<th>Completion Rate</th>
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<td>Goal 1: Education + Training Excellence</td>
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<td>Goal 2: Health Care Innovation + Community Health</td>
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<td>Goal 3: Research + Evaluation</td>
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<td>Goal 4: Faculty + Staff Success</td>
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<tr>
<td>Goal 5: Strategic Partnership</td>
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*Based on assigned year 3 measures completed. Completion rate = completed measures/total measures*