

## PRESS RELEASE

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### Lakeside Medical Center Graduates 11<sup>th</sup> Class of Family Medicine Residents

**Belle Glade, FL** – The Health Care District of Palm Beach County’s teaching hospital, Lakeside Medical Center, recently graduated five new physicians. The hospital’s 11<sup>th</sup> class of family medicine residents completed three years of rigorous training, the first of which was during the height of the pandemic in the underserved, rural Glades communities that were considered a hot spot.

“This resident class was thrust onto the front lines of the COVID-19 pandemic, facing some of the toughest challenges that our hospital in Belle Glade has ever encountered,” Darcy J. Davis, Health Care District CEO stated in her remarks to residents, family, friends and faculty attending the graduation ceremony on June 22<sup>nd</sup>. “Not only did they embrace the responsibilities of patient care, they also rose to the occasion by rapidly acquiring knowledge about a deadly pandemic and helped save lives.”

Giselle Falconi, MD; Jennifer Hua, DO; Nzingha Saunders, DO; Heden Presendieu, MD; and Anthony Hernandez, MD completed rotations in emergency medicine, critical care, women’s health, psychiatry, general surgery, inpatient, outpatient and community medicine, sports medicine, cardiology, geriatrics, and pediatrics. As part of the residency program, the residents treated patients at the Health Care District’s C.L. Brumback Primary Care Clinics’ Belle Glade Clinic, which shares space with the hospital. One of the program’s goals is to cultivate physicians to practice locally. To that end, Dr. Hua and Dr. Hernandez plan to continue their careers in Palm Beach County.

“It is truly a privilege to be graduating with such a talented and dedicated group of colleagues,” said co-chief resident Dr. Hua, who plans to practice at HCA Florida JFK North Hospital. “This class of residents has shown up every day to care for their patients. They have worked long hours, made difficult decisions, and faced unimaginable challenges. But we never gave up.”

“The pandemic has tested us in ways we could never have imagined, and yet, here we are, celebrating the end of our training and the beginning of our careers as family medicine physicians,” said co-chief resident Dr. Hernandez in his remarks, who plans to practice at HCA Florida JFK Hospital. “The pandemic has shown us the value of family medicine, the importance of primary care and the need for strong, empathetic relationships between doctors and patients.”

Family medicine is a medical specialty devoted to comprehensive health care for people of all ages. Over the course of their residency training, the physicians provide access to a range of quality services for their patients, many of whom have complex medical conditions and limited resources.

“This resident class has not only been a beacon of hope and healing within our hospital and clinic walls, but also shined a light on their true advocacy of the Health Care District and the Glades community,”

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said keynote speaker Luis Perezalonso, MD, FACEP, who as Chief of Staff and Emergency Department Medical Director at Lakeside Medical Center as trained the residents as a member of the faculty. “Their compassionate care has undoubtedly left a mark on the lives of those they have served.”

The Family Medicine Residency Program has a total of 15 residents and is funded by a grant from the Florida Agency for Health Care Administration. The program’s academic and community partners include Nova Southeastern University and the Florida Department of Health for Palm Beach County. One of the event’s highlights was when the graduates “coated” five incoming residents who now begin their three years of training.

“I extend a heartfelt congratulations to our five graduates,” said Jennifer Dorcé-Medard, DO, Family Medicine Program Director, Designated Institutional Official and Lakeside Medical Center’s Associate Chief Medical Officer. “These physicians are well-prepared to provide exceptional and compassionate care to their patients. I thank all of those who trained and supported them along with the people of the Glades for continuing to entrust us with their care.”

In 2020, the residency program was accredited by the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME), a distinction that assures the program meets the quality standards of the specialty or subspecialty practices for which it prepares its graduates.

For more information about the residency program and Lakeside Medical Center, which was ranked as the number one most racially inclusive hospital in the country last year by the [Lown Institute](#), visit [www.lakesidemedical.org](http://www.lakesidemedical.org).

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### **About the Health Care District**

The Health Care District of Palm Beach County is a special taxpayer-funded district that has served as a health care safety net for over 30 years to fill in gaps in access to health care services. This unique health care system covers the entire county and provides diverse services such as 13 outpatient clinics (Federally Qualified Health Centers) which serve everyone regardless of ability to pay; school health clinicians staffed in nearly 170 public schools; two Trauma Hawk aeromedical helicopters; a rural, public teaching hospital, Lakeside Medical Center; a skilled nursing facility, the Edward J. Healey Rehabilitation and Nursing Center; a specialty benefits program for eligible, uninsured residents; and quality performance oversight of the county’s lifesaving trauma system.

### **About the C. L. Brumback Primary Care Clinics**

The Health Care District’s Federally Qualified Health Centers across the county serve adults and children with or without insurance and regardless of ability to pay. This project is supported by the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) under grant number H80CS25684 for Health Center Cluster in the award amount of \$7,278,563. Of the total project, 84.5% is financed with nongovernmental sources. This information or content and conclusions are those of the author and should not be construed as the official position or policy of, nor should any endorsements be inferred by HRSA, HHS or the U.S. Government. The C. L. Brumback Primary Care Clinics were granted Federal Tort Claims Act (FTCA) deeming status effective January 1, 2023.