From the Dean

On Friday, March 17th—St. Patrick’s Day, and also Match Day—the five members of the KU School of Medicine-Salina Class of 2017 learned where they had matched for residency. Each student sported a Kelly green T-shirt with the words “Luck Had Nothing To Do With It, #Fab 5″ on the back. Four years of hard work, rather than luck, contributed to each student successfully securing a residency position in the discipline of his or her choice. Eric Easey will be starting a family medicine residency at Anderson Medical Health in Anderson, South Carolina. Josh Gaede matched with the family medicine residency program at Cox Medical Center in Springfield, Missouri. Trinity Graff will start an internal medicine residency at Ohio State University in Columbus, Ohio.

Students gain experience through volunteer work

The Ashby House is a full-time family shelter in Salina, offering temporary housing for homeless families and single women, helping them re-enter the community with their dignity intact. Through a collaboration with Salina Family Healthcare (SFHC) and Central Kansas Mental Health, Salina medical students have been given the opportunity to gain educational experience in a clinical setting, assisting SFHC faculty and residents with the evaluation of Ashby House clients.

Funded through a United Way grant, the Ashby House Clinic (it began in September 2016) is able to provide physical, mental, and dental assistance to their clients, including providing funds for prescription assistance.

“This is a nice way to give back to the community. It’s a great way to practice creating differential diagnoses and obtaining thorough medical histories from patients that are unknown to us,” said Catie Adams, third year student.

Jennifer Prentiss, Clinic Manager for the program, is especially grateful for the students.

“We have been blessed with the assistance of your incredible
Message from the Dean

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Miranda McKellar and Theresia Neill will join the Smoky Hill Family Medicine Residency program in Salina. I am extremely proud of the hard work and consummate professionalism of the third class of graduates from the Salina campus.

With all five members of the KUSM-Salina Class of 2017 entering primary care residencies, and eleven of the sixteen previous Salina grads engaged in primary care residencies (family medicine, internal medicine, or pediatrics), 76% of Salina graduates have chosen primary care disciplines! Five members of our first three graduating classes have already made commitments to practice in rural Kansas upon completion of their residencies, and several others will return to rural and/or underserved communities in Kansas to practice in order to have their Kansas Medical Student Loans forgiven. When the Salina campus opened its doors in 2011 our stated goal was to have 75% of our graduates stay in Kansas and 50% practice primary care in rural Kansas. I am confident that we can meet that goal.

The Blueprint for Rural Health capital campaign to raise funds for a new medical education building for our campus reached its goal of $7,563,000 earlier this year. I am extremely grateful to all of you who contributed to this project. Work is well underway on converting the old downtown bank building to a state-of-the-art medical school facility. Asbestos abatement and demolition work has been completed and construction should start soon.

Congratulations to Dr. Scott Owings, KUSM-Salina’s Associate Dean for Clinical Experiences, who has been recommended for promotion to Associate Professor. Also, kudos to Salina faculty and staff authors of recently published papers: From Infancy to Adolescence: The Kansas University School of Medicine-Salina: A Rural Medical Campus Story (Academic Medicine) and Preparing Students for the Medical Interview (Kansas Journal of Medicine). In addition to administrative, teaching, and clinical duties, Salina faculty, staff and students remain committed to scholarly pursuits.

Match Day 2017

Kim Gaede, Theresia Neill, and Miranda McKellar stop for a photo as they celebrate Match Day with their families and the KU School of Medicine faculty and staff. Photo credit: Mary Vernon

Dr. Scott Owings

Trinity Vallejo along with her husband, Travis, happily announce their match to The Ohio State University. Photo credit: Ruth Cathcart-Rake
students. They may only see a client once, but to see them smiling because a student was able to help diagnose a problem or find the right medications is so rewarding,” Prentiss said. “It’s also so helpful for our clients with children not to have to take their kids to a doctor’s office.”

Not only is the experience at the Ashby House great formative practice, but it gives Salina medical students the opportunity to work alongside their classmates and SFHC residents and faculty.

“Second year students discuss patients with third year students, who in turn present to residents. It is great for opening the lines of communication, progression of medical knowledge and continuity of patient care,” said Levi Kindel, third year student.

For Ashby House staff, the opportunity to offer a free monthly clinic for medical care is invaluable.

“The clients that use the clinic love that they are seen by such caring, knowledgeable staff. They feel that someone is listening, which they may not have felt before,” Prentiss said. “The KU students listen and give them advice that helps keep them out of the emergency room, which lowers the debt they have to pay back.”

Mariah Jones, second year medical student, is also grateful for the opportunity to practice the skills she has learned, and to take a break from classroom time.

“I greatly appreciate the chance to learn the art of interacting with and caring for a patient,” Jones said. “The population the Ashby House clinic serves gives us the experience necessary to be able to navigate a unique set of challenges that are involved with medicine.”

Classmate Kaitlin Tennyson agreed.

“I felt like this was a great opportunity for me to really start utilizing the clinical skills I’ve learned throughout these first two years of medical school,” she said. “It’s also so rewarding to be able to work with an underserved population and to know that you’re really making a difference.”

According to Prentiss, the students have been proficient and polished.

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“I wish I could adequately describe the impact they’ve had on our organization. Our clients are often unable to tell the difference between the students and the residents.”

So far, the collaboration has been successful and the Salina students continue to embrace the opportunity to connect with the community.
The five graduates proudly display their #Fab5 shirts to the crowd at Match Day. L to R: Eric Easey, Theresia Neill, Miranda McKellar, Trinity Vallejo, Josh Gaede

Photo credit: Ruth Cathcart-Rake