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**SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS EXPLORE FAMILY MEDICINE AT EXCELA HEALTH**

**LATROBE, PA, July 19, 2010** ...Three medical students are gaining experience in family medicine at Excelsa Health Latrobe Hospital this summer as recipients of the Andrew D. Bagby Family Medicine Scholarship. Andrew Trifan, Drexel University College of Medicine; Francoise Guigne, Memorial University of Newfoundland Medical School; and Matt Bludorn, Lake Erie College of Osteopathic Medicine, are participating in a month-long program, training alongside doctors completing Excelsa Health's Family Medicine Residency Program.

The Bagby Scholarship was established by family and friends in memory of first-year resident Dr. Andrew Bagby, who died tragically in November 2001. The scholarship fund has increased substantially in the eight years the scholarship has been awarded. It is supported by the Bagby family, as well as private donors, to give opportunities to aspiring family medicine physicians.

For the first time in the scholarship's history, a recipient hails from the same medical school the late Dr. Bagby attended. The 26-year-old Guigne recalled, "I know of Dr. Bagby's story. It is very sad, and we are all aware of it at Memorial University of Newfoundland. A photo of him hangs in the hallway of the hospital, and I pass it frequently on the way to my classes. I am honored to receive a scholarship in his name, and I am happy his dedication to the field of family medicine is being encouraged in upcoming students like myself."

Guigne cited numerous volunteer experiences as influencing her career decision. "The family physician visited Fort Smith, the community I volunteered in, every four weeks. Beyond these visits medical help was at least three hours away. I realized localized access to health care can greatly improve a person's quality of life and the breadth of knowledge family physicians offer plays a key role in keeping a community simply operating," said Guigne of the importance of community based health care. Guigne also was fortunate to have a cousin who is a respiratory specialist mentoring her while she was applying to medical school.

After receiving her master's in anthropology from Simon Fraser University, British Columbia, Canada, Guigne moved on to the Memorial University of Newfoundland and Labrador where she is currently a second-year medical student. There, she continues to volunteer through the Newfoundland AIDS Committee Needle Exchange Program and Street Reach, an outreach program that provides necessities to persons living on the street. Guigne has spent countless hours already helping others through her volunteer work. She only hopes to continue that. "Drawing insight and passion from the volunteer experiences...I am driven to work in family medicine not just to be able to help the people in my city who are currently lacking access to adequate health care but also to be a leader in my community and help create social change."

Trifan, 23, credits his hometown of Hollidaysburg, PA, with fueling his desire to pursue a career in family medicine. "In Hollidaysburg, it is very easy to build new friendships and relationships with others in the community since there is a good chance you would run into the same folks at church, school, or the grocery store. One of my greatest pleasures in life is not only meeting new people and hearing their unique experiences, but also developing relationships that will last many years with them. I know that a career in family medicine will allow me to do just that."

A 2008 University of Pittsburgh graduate, Trifan majored in biology and history with a minor in chemistry. During his time at Pitt, Trifan volunteered at Children's Hospital on the transplant floor where he planned activities for the children.

Trifan also acknowledged his father as a major influence on his career choice. "I want to not only be able to form friendships with my patients like my father did, but to take it one step further and form relationships with whole families. One day, I hope to tell my children stories of the patients I've come to know over the years, just as my father did." Trifan's father, Dr. Tudor Trifan, is an Internal Medicine specialist at the VA Hospital in Altoona where he has been practicing for nearly 20 years. Most importantly, Trifan noted, "I have always felt that medicine should be more guided toward a partnership rather than a simple 'student-teacher' relationship."

While filling out his applications for medical school, Bludorn, 29, already knew what his role would be upon graduation. He wrote, "Ten years from now I will be a new physician trained to take care of those who come my way. Whether my practice will be in a hospital or in private, I will spend time educating those who seek my help. I am now even more excited than ever to get out into medicine, into the clinics, into doctor's offices, and into peoples' lives."

The native of Sioux Falls, SD, graduated from the University of Utah where he obtained a bachelor's degree in Health Promotion and Education. During his time there, Bludorn worked as a volunteer for the American Red Cross as a First Aid and CPR Instructor. He also completed a 200-hour internship with the Salt Lake Valley Health Department Immunizations Clinic. Bludorn was also able to add to his resume a strong background in Emergency Medical Services. He worked as an EMT with the ambulance service in Salt Lake City and at the University of Utah Hospital Emergency Department - a level one trauma center - while applying to medical schools. Unyielding in his determination, Bludorn was accepted into the Lake Erie College of Osteopathic Medicine at Seton Hill's first class. He then moved to Greensburg, where he resides with his wife and four children.

"I think that the calling of a family physician is one of the most rewarding in our profession," Bludorn said. "It is a chance to get to see peoples' lives change through the use of medical skills from a highly diversified, well rounded physician. It yields a reward not only for the patients but the physician as well."