Alumni Leader William Ward Establishes New Scholarship for Emory Medical Students

With the generous help of alumni, Emory University School of Medicine is working to make a career in medicine more accessible and affordable for some of the most talented students in the nation.

In fact, “reducing the financial burden on medical students and residents” is a high priority in the school’s medical education strategic plan. Toward this goal, the first William Q. Ward, MD, Endowed Scholarship will be awarded to an Emory medical student in the fall of 2016. This type of scholarship uses investment income to provide much-needed tuition relief while allowing the endowment to grow in perpetuity.

Originally from East Albany, Georgia, William Q. Ward 45C 47M is proud of his medical education at Emory and has continued to serve the school in many ways, including his leadership with the Class of 1947. As an undergraduate in the 1940s, Dr. Ward financed his education by mopping floors and working shifts in the school cafeteria. He later joined the Army Specialized Training Program (ASTP), a World War II-era initiative to recruit and train soldiers with expert technical skills. The ASTP covered the cost of his tuition and books for two years, but Dr. Ward worked hard to make up the rest of his expenses.

After serving in the Korean War, Dr. Ward returned to the United States where he led successful practices in internal medicine in Van Nuys, California, and Russellville, Alabama. At the age of 45, he decided it was time to move his family to a bigger city and explore his nascent interest in dermatology. “I was told I was too old and couldn’t pass the boards,” Dr. Ward joked. But after that minor hurdle, he went on to a residency in dermatology at Johns Hopkins University. Dr. Ward was appointed to the faculty at Johns Hopkins soon after completing his training due in part to his nearly unparalleled skills as a diagnostician.

Dr. Ward credits his training at Emory as a major part of his success and wants to help the next generation of physicians down the same path. “I worked hard for my tuition,” said Dr. Ward. “I wanted a young man or woman to benefit and not work as hard.”

Jessica Valentine 15M of Franklin, Georgia, received a similar scholarship during her time at Emory and knows just how important that can be. “I thought there was no way I could afford my dream school,” she said. Scholarship support also helped enable her plans to return to rural Georgia to care for a vulnerable and underserved community.

To learn more about creating an endowed scholarship or other giving opportunities, contact Director of Development Andrew P. Christopherson at 404.727.8253 or andrew.christopherson@emory.edu.
In the early 1950s, Elma Mera Steves 59MR landed in the United States for the first time as part of a student exchange program in Boston, Massachusetts. A native Peruvian fluent in Spanish and French, Dr. Steves began her American adventure armed with only a few words of English.

After graduating from medical school at the Universidad Nacional San Marcos in Lima, she decided to move to the United States for good. In 1957, she settled in Atlanta and began a residency in pediatrics at Saint Joseph’s Infirmary, rotating through Grady Memorial Hospital and Emory.

In the early 1970s, Dr. Steves helped found the Peruvian American Medical Society (PAMS). “I went to medical school in Peru, and I didn’t pay one nickel,” said Dr. Steves. “It was time for me to give back my knowledge to the country that gave me my education.”

PAMS began with a handful of physicians who wanted to help facilitate the exchange of medical and cultural knowledge. The Society quickly grew in scope to include medical mission trips to care for children back in Peru. Today, it boasts a membership of more than 500 physicians.

As a medical missionary, Dr. Steves focuses primarily on treating chronic and infectious respiratory illnesses in Contamana and Iquitos, Peru. For more than half a century, she has headed a successful private pediatric practice in Chamblee, Georgia, which serves a primarily Hispanic population.

The healing arts are a common calling for the Steves family—both her husband and eldest son trained as physicians. One of her six grandchildren, Daniel Perry, assists her in the office and plans to begin medical school at Emory in the fall.

Although she celebrated her 90th birthday earlier this year, Dr. Steves still heads to the office every morning. “I wake up in the morning feeling good and ready to work. It keeps me alive. But maybe I’ll retire next year,” she joked.

“My youngest son started in practice on Monday—and I retired that Thursday at age 74!”

After helping his three children, two of whom are now surgeons, through school, Robert K. Shuler, Sr., 60M 61MR (far left) had more than earned the right to slow down. But after founding a thriving seven-physician practice and spending more than 25 years doing teaching rounds at Grady Memorial Hospital, “slow” is a relative term for Shuler.

(Continued on the bottom of page 3)
Putting a Stop to Shallow Water Blackout Accidents

The most common cause of swimming-related death may be unexpected but it’s completely preventable.

Shallow water blackout occurs when a swimmer holds his or her breath repeatedly or for an extended period. The body becomes hypoxic, and the swimmer loses consciousness and drowns without immediate rescue. Experience and physical stamina are no protection. Competitive swimmers, Navy SEALs, and free divers are frequent victims, although anyone who engages in prolonged breath holding can be affected.

In the summer of 2011, Rhonda Milner 80M 84MR lost her 25-year-old son Whitner to shallow water blackout in their backyard pool. A strong and experienced athlete, Whitner passed out and drowned while swimming laps with friends and seeing who could hold his or her breath longer. Determined to prevent more senseless deaths, Dr. Milner founded Shallow Water Blackout Prevention (SWBP) to educate and increase awareness of the dangers of underwater breath holding.

Recently, Dr. Milner’s organization teamed up with Olympic Swimmer Michael Phelps and his coach Bob Bowman to create a public service announcement about the dangers of breath holding games and repeated underwater laps.

="Shallow water blackout is a silent killer that can suddenly put even accomplished swimmers at risk,” warned Bowman in the video. However, “under proper supervision and guidance, swimming is a safe and rewarding sport.” SWBP works with swim coaches to help them understand how to train more safely for underwater swimming. “The main thing is to tell your swimmers when they need to breathe,” he said. “People should never ignore their urge to breathe.”

SWBP is also working with operators of pools for the general public to educate parents and children about the danger.

Dr. Milner would like to see shallow water blackout appear in the medical curriculum as doctors routinely discuss issues of safety with their patients. The topic would be a natural fit in physiology or pulmonary medicine. “All physicians, especially pediatricians need to be aware,” she advised.

WHAT IS SHALLOW WATER BLACKOUT?

It’s when a swimmer faints caused by a lack of oxygen to the brain triggered by holding breath repeatedly for too long without immediate rescue.

To learn more about Dr. Milner’s work to educate parents and physicians, visit shallowwaterblackoutprevention.org.

Retired for little more than half a decade, Dr. Shuler regularly joins medical mission trips with Flying Doctors of America and the Peachtree Road United Methodist Church. In his travels, he’s worked with patients in Haiti, India, Kenya, Madagascar, Panama, Peru, and the Republic of Georgia. He hasn’t planned his next trip yet, but he’s currently considering a visit to Cuba or a Syrian refugee camp. “I want to go until I fall over,” he laughed.

Throughout his travels, Dr. Shuler has noticed a common thread. In the developing world “they just don’t have doctors,” he said. The sick often receive treatment from people who have only had a bit of official medical training from the government or perhaps missionaries like himself. Due to the lack of skilled treatment, he often comes across patients with diseases and syndromes that are rare or nonexistent in the United States.

As an active member of the School of Medicine Alumni Board, Dr. Shuler is empowering other physicians who want to bring their expertise to underserved countries. He serves on the nominating committee of the Emory GO-TRAVEL (Global Outreach Traveling Resident Award to Visit, Experience and Learn) program, which supports resident education in unique international training experiences.

Timothy Love 13PH was the inaugural participant and spent six weeks in Ethiopia on a surgical rotation.

For Dr. Shuler, the motivation is simple. “I’ve had a wonderful life, and as long as I am physically and mentally able, I plan to continue to help others—many in less fortunate places.”
126 medical students took part in Match Day at Emory

38 will spend part of their residency training in Georgia

36 will start internships in Georgia

35 will start internships at Emory

28 will remain at Emory for their entire residency training

What Will Our 2016 Graduates Be Studying?

- Anesthesiology
- Neurological Surgery
- Otolaryngology
- Neurology
- Radiology
- Pediatrics
- Emergency Medicine
- Psychiatry
- Ophthalmology
- Internal Medicine
- Orthopedic Surgery
- General Surgery
- Dermatology
- Family Medicine
- Thoracic Surgery
- Pediatric Neurology
- Obstetrics/Gynecology
- Pathology

Font size indicates training program frequency.
Each year the Emory School of Medicine Alumni Association recognizes outstanding alumni and the generosity of those who are making an impact on current medical students with their gifts to scholarship.

The Arnall Patz Lifetime Achievement Award honors distinguished alumni and faculty who display extraordinary leadership and accomplishments in the field of medicine at the national or international level. 

Recipients: Armand Hendee 45C 48M 56MR and Luella Klein, Faculty

The Distinguished Medical Achievement Award is granted to individuals who have achieved distinction in research, teaching, medical practice, or administration in an academic or public institution. 


The Award of Honor is conferred upon medical alumni who have demonstrated distinguished service to the School of Medicine Alumni Association, to Emory University, or to the profession of medicine. 

Recipients: Wendy Book 98FM and W. Shain Schley, Sr., 62C 66M

The Distinction In Community Service Award honors those who have made a lasting impact by serving the needs of the less fortunate in their community. 

Recipients: James A. Butts, Sr., 57C 60M 63MR 66MR 66FM and W. Robert Dunn, Sr., 47M

All medical alumni are encouraged to submit nominations for next year’s awards by February 1, 2017.

For more information or to submit a nomination, contact Ruthy Cunningham at 404.727.5913 or ruth.cunningham@emory.edu.
Welcome Reception for New Medical Students and Stethoscope Presentation by Alumni Association
Wednesday, July 27, 2016
4:00pm
Woodruff Health Sciences Administration Building Plaza

Emory Medical Alumni Weekend in conjunction with Emory Homecoming
Friday–Sunday, September 23–25, 2016

Learn, Serve, Lead 2016—AAMC Annual Meeting
Emory Medical Alumni & Friends Reception
Sunday, November 13, 2016
Seattle, Washington

Emory Medical Alumni & Special Friends Reception & Awards Presentation
Spring 2017
Watch for details!

Emory Commencement
Monday, May 8, 2017

Comments...
Questions...
Suggestions...
Please contact the SOM Alumni Office at 404.727.0462 or medicalalumni@emory.edu