

# Scholars Thank Donors for Scholarships and Opportunity

Ethan Adre always knew he wanted to be a physician, but he was not always sure he would have the financial means to make that dream a reality. His parents emigrated from the Philippines, and even though they built a life and a family in the United States, they were not in a position to help their son pay the high cost of a medical education.



UM and Miller School leadership with students at the 2019 Medical Education Donors and Scholars Luncheon.

But that all changed when Adre learned he had been chosen as a recipient of the Mrs. Betty Siegel Reader Scholarship at the University of Miami Miller School of Medicine. Adre, now finishing his first year of studies, knows his education might

not have been possible if not for the generosity of his donor.

“The scholarship gives me a chance to do something that is far greater than what my family had ever hoped for me,” said Adre, an M.D. candidate with the Class of 2022.

Adre was one of more than two dozen scholarship recipients who came to express their appreciation to donors at the 2019 Medical Education Donors and Scholars Luncheon.

Every year, the luncheon provides a way for scholarship recipients to say “thank you” to the alumni and major donors responsible for their Miller School scholarships and student support. It also helps the donors and their representatives get to know the scholars they support.

“Our family is honored to carry on Betty Reader’s legacy,” said Jerilynn Gidney, who along with husband, Marc Gidney, and daughter, Candice Macy, are co-directors of the Mrs. Betty Siegel Reader Scholarship Fund. “By providing full-tuition, four-year scholarships to qualifying students exemplifying ambition, community involvement and awareness, as well as stellar scholastics, the scholarship allows them the opportunity to study in an area they love without the worry of debt.”

Over lunch, the students updated their donors on how their studies were going and how their financial support has eased one of the many burdens of medical school.

“I had a few other options for medical school,” said Angelina Labib, M.D. candidate in the Class of 2022 and a recipient of

the Paul J. DiMare Medical Scholarship. “But receiving this scholarship made me feel that Miami was really the place for me where I would be supported and be able to concentrate on my course work.”

More than 80 guests attended the luncheon, which was held May 4 at the Coral Gables Country Club. Dean Henri R. Ford, M.D., M.H.A., thanked the donors for their ongoing philanthropy.



Jason Onugha, an M.D. /M.P.H. candidate in the Class of 2020, thanks his scholarship donor at the luncheon.

“Your support for our students is what makes the Miller School one of the best medical schools in the country,” said Dr. Ford,

who is also the chief academic officer of the medical school. “My goal is to continue strengthening our tradition of excellence, and become one of the top tier medical schools nationwide. Our drive for excellence could not happen without your generosity.”

The donors also heard from Jason Onugha, an M.D./M.P.H. candidate, who, along with his brother, Harris, is a member of the Class of 2020.

“The opportunities I have been awarded, and the family I have gained, would not have been possible without scholarship,” said Onugha, a recipient of the John K. Robinson Alumni scholarship. “Scholarships are a key component of ensuring that the Miller family continues to grow and thrive.”

It was a sentiment echoed by Alex J. Mechaber, M.D. '94, senior associate dean for undergraduate medical education and the Dr. Bernard J. Fogel Endowed Chair at the Miller School of Medicine. Dr. Mechaber was also a scholarship recipient as a student at UM and knows the difference philanthropy makes in a student's life.

“I hope that one day, you too will be inspired to continue the wonderful example set by our donors, so that, like you, future generations of students can have access to a University of Miami Miller School of Medicine education,” he said.

Vicky Egusquiza, M.D. '87, spoke on behalf of the Miller School of Medicine's Medical Alumni Association (MAA), which promotes the school's relationship with its alumni and students.

“This relationship is vital because scholarship support is one of our most important focus areas of interest,” said Dr. Egusquiza, who is the MAA’s immediate past president. “Over the years, many alumni have given generously to medical scholarships, particularly to the John K. Robinson Fund (JKR). Our success is also due to alumni who are actively working with the medical advancement staff to increase the annual pool of scholarship funds by creating class-endowed scholarships and increasing contributions to the JKR Fund.”

Donors who attended the luncheon included:

- Marc and Jerilynn Gidney and, their daughter, Candice Macy, who, as directors of the Mrs. Betty Siegel Reader Scholarship Fund, oversee a \$1 million commitment to medical scholarships.
- John Edward Smith, representative of the Dr. John T. MacDonald Foundation, which has supported the Miller School across many disciplines for decades, including scholarships and the School Health Initiative.
- Ronald J. Trapana, M.D., Class of 1977, and his wife, Maryrose, who have made a generous gift toward increasing the pool of scholarship funds.
- Bernie Stein, Esq., and his wife, Lyn Pont, Ph.D. As the attorney representing the estate of Jeannette Newton, Stein was able to secure a gift of more than \$1 million to support medical scholarships.
- Lois Weiss, president of the Aaron and Sylvia Rothenberg

Family Foundation, husband, Barry Weiss, and daughter, Janet Dwork. The Foundation created a scholarship in memory of Lois's brother, Dr. Kenneth Rothenberg, Class of 1967.

- Dr. Arthur Gilbert, Class of 1957, created the Arthur I. Gilbert, M.D. Family Endowed Medical Scholarship. His daughter, Carolyn Epstein, also attended the luncheon.
- Drs. Javier Flores and Elsy Carbot-Flores, alumni from the Class of 1995, who established the Javier Flores, M.D. and Elsy Carbot-Flores, M.D. Endowed Scholarship.
- Bob and Laura Nichols, who have generously contributed to the Miller School of Medicine General Scholarship Fund.
- The Rotary Club of Miami's Marcia Brod, Norman Kassoff, Arlene Terrinoni, and Bunny Uriarte. The Rotary Club of Miami provides tremendous support to students through the Thomas Brown McClelland Scholarship.
- Laurel Allen, who generously supported the new Miller Center for Medical Education.
- The contributors to the John K. Robinson Fund and class endowed scholarships.

To learn more about the Miller School of Medicine Medical Alumni Association, visit <http://alumni.med.miami.edu/>.