

RIDING HIGH: In its 30th year, the Prouty—a biking, walking, and rowing event that raises funds for Dartmouth's Norris Cotton Cancer Center—set a new record by taking in \$2.48 million, thanks to 5,000 participants and 1,000 volunteers.



Making dreams come true By Kate Villars

"I was so anxious about the cost of medical school," says DMS student Jessica Swienckowski. "I know I'm not the only person who has lost sleep over that. You work so hard for your dream—to think that you're not going to be able to realize it because of money is distressing."

That Swienckowski and many of her DMS peers are able to realize their dreams is thanks to the generosity of

on a scholarship. "Although my parents have always done everything in their power to help me realize my dreams, they are just not in a position to help me with medical school."

With the cost of four years at DMS nearing \$300,000, scholarship endowments and current-use gifts for scholarships have allowed the Medical School to keep the average debt for its M.D. graduates

"The scholarship aid that Dartmouth offered allowed me to choose what my heart wanted."

donors—many of them alumni—who have given to scholarships at DMS. In an average year, 88% of DMS students receive some form of financial aid, and more than 52% receive aid from DMS scholarship funds.

"Scholarship gifts are an incredible investment," says Gordon "Dino" Koff, DMS's director of financial aid. "Every dollar we're able to give in scholarship aid lowers a student's loans. Our financial aid is completely need based. This allows us to attract students with tremendous socioeconomic diversity."

"My family has never been wealthy," says Swienckowski, who grew up in Los Angeles and attended Vassar College

under \$125,000. This is well below many of its peer institutions, whose graduates leave with a debt averaging more than \$155,000.

"I fell in love with DMS when I came to interview," says Swienckowski. "During the application process, I worried that I would have to choose the school that offered me the best financial aid package, but the scholarship aid that Dartmouth offered allowed me to choose what my heart wanted. This is absolutely where I wanted to be, and I'm really loving my experience here."

Swienckowski, who had always gravitated towards the humanities, stumbled into science and medicine at Vassar purely by chance. "I took a Psychology 101 class to fill a hole in my schedule," she ex-



MARK WASHBURN

Jessica Swienckowski '14: "I'm so grateful to the donors who have made it possible for me to be here. . . . This is a place that doesn't just allow your dreams to come true—it teaches you to dream in new ways."

plains. "The teacher was a visiting professor who happened to be a neurobiologist, and the class was more like Neuroscience 101. I just fell in love with it." Swienckowski went on to major in neuroscience and minor in molecular biology, and she spent several summers during college working for researchers at UCLA and UCSF. Shadowing one of these mentors as he worked with Parkinson's patients in the

clinic, she discovered the gratification of "being able to use your clinical and scientific knowledge immediately to help patients." The experience sealed her decision to go into medicine rather than a research career.

Now a second-year student at DMS, Swienckowski serves as the School's student representative to the Association of American Medical Colleges. She is also a member of the

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Dreams pass into the reality of action. From the actions stems the dream again; and this interdependence produces the highest form of living. —Anais Nin (1903–1977)



DieuThi Nguyen '11: "I see the donors who give for scholarships as role models because they see the importance of investing in future physicians. I hope one day, when I'm financially secure, to be able to continue that by giving back."

Editorial Board of DARTMOUTH MEDICINE magazine; the editor of DMS's literary and art magazine, *Lifelines*; and the cochair of the obstetrics and gynecology student interest group. She spent the summer of 2011 doing research with Dartmouth neurosurgeon Scott Lollis, M.D., under an American Association of Neurological Surgeons Summer Research Fellowship.

Although DMS has a strong financial aid program, providing a total of \$4 million in scholarship support annually, Koff sees challenges ahead. "Distributions from scholarship endowments have fallen or at best been flat in recent years, while the cost of attendance—tuition and expenses—continues to rise at a rate of about six percent a year," he explains.

"That's resulting in a growing gap between student need and our capacity to meet it, which in turn leads to an increase in the debt load our graduates carry."

For some students, that added debt burden may influence their choice of career. "The less debt students have, the freer they are to choose lower-paid fields, such as primary care," says Koff. "Even a fairly small scholarship award can make a real difference when you consider the interest that accrues on a student loan over 10 or 15 years."

While current-use gifts play an important role in allowing the School to maintain a consistent level of scholarship support during times of weaker endowment performance, endowment gifts benefit genera-



Molly Taylor '12: "Helping people become part of this really special profession is such an incredible gift that I've been so grateful for. And it trickles down to benefit the much larger group of people who will be our future patients."



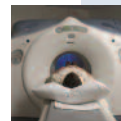
Nick Ellis '11: "I feel the gifts I've been given in life are something I need to share with less advantaged people. It's my intention to work in developing countries, so that minimizing my medical school debt was a big concern for me."

tions of students. For example the Surdna Foundation Endowed Scholarship Fund—one of the funds that supported Swienckowski last year—has increased more than fivefold since it was established with a gift of \$700,000 almost 40 years ago. Over that time, the fund has provided almost \$185,000 in scholarship support to DMS students.

"I'm so grateful to the donors who have made it possible for me to be here," says Swienckowski. "DMS supports me in growing as a person and finding a path in life that I probably wouldn't have imagined for myself a few years ago. This is a place that doesn't just allow your dreams to come true—it teaches you to dream in new ways. That's a really special gift."

Support for young physicians

DMS alumnus Barry D. Pressman, M.D., has established the Samuel D. Pressman Fellow and Resident Fund in Radiology to support young physicians doing outcomes research in radiology. J. Derek Stensby, M.D., is the inaugural recipient of the post, which honors Pressman's father. Barry Pressman, DMS '65, is a neuroradiologist and chair of the S. Mark Taper Foundation Imaging Center at Cedars-Sinai Medical Center in Los Angeles.



Annual funds excel

At a time when unrestricted giving is critically important to both Dartmouth Medical School and Dartmouth-Hitchcock, the Fund for DMS and the Dartmouth-Hitchcock Annual Fund (DHAF) closed out a banner year on June 30. The Fund for DMS raised a record-breaking \$642,267, while over 1,000 first-time donors helped the DHAF close the fiscal year with \$747,622.