

The Campaign.

transfor_ming medicine

One student not only expressed gratitude to the Mertens-Huber family but said he's been inspired by their generosity, noting that it "makes me want to give something back."

1 *Shahrzad Ehdaivand, one of the students who spoke at the Mertens-Huber Dinner.*

2 *Mertens-Huber family members Trudy Goff and Peter and Jennifer Brock (middle row, center), with Mertens-Huber Scholars.*

3 *Sisters Trudy Goff, left, and Jennifer Brock, longtime supporters of scholarships at Dartmouth Medical School.*

4 *From the left, Jennifer Brock, DMS Dean Stephen Spielberg, and Mertens-Huber Scholar Kate Shea.*

5 *From the left, Dean Emeritus (and Mertens-Huber family friend) Robert McCollum, with the Brocks.*

Barbra Alan is assistant director of development communications for the Medical School and Medical Center.

A legacy of support By Barbra Alan

"I love being a part of people's lives," declares Jennifer Brock, a member of the Mertens-Huber family—one of Dartmouth Medical School's most generous philanthropic dynasties.

For over four decades, the Mertens-Huber family has been an invaluable partner in DMS's mission to educate the next generation of physicians and scientists. The family's legacy of giving began in the late 1960s with Gertrude and Robert Mertens of Woodstock, Vt. Inspired by the care and attention Robert Mertens received from Dr. Sven Gundersen at Mary Hitchcock Memorial Hospital, the Mertenses established an endowed scholarship fund at DMS to ensure that future medical students would learn to treat their patients with the same care. In the decades following, Gertrude Mertens and her sister, Marion Huber of Colts Neck, N.J., continued to support medical education at DMS, patient care and the arts at DHMC, and cancer care at Dartmouth's Norris Cotton Cancer Center.

Today, the legacy continues through Gertrude Mertens's daughters, Jennifer Brock and Trudy Goff, as well as other family members. Brock, a champion of scholarships at DMS as well as of the DMS Department of Genetics, notes that philanthropy has always been important to her family and has been a value handed down from generation to generation. "My parents cared

about people, and I feel exactly the same way," she says.

The family's longtime generosity to DMS was celebrated at the Mertens-Huber Scholars Dinner, held on May 1. The dinner, a biennial tradition since the 1970s, brings together members of the Mertens-Huber family and the many recipients of Mertens-Huber scholarships. "This event is enormously special because it gives us an opportunity to celebrate a family that has given so much to Dartmouth over the years," said DMS's dean, Dr. Stephen Spielberg, at this year's dinner.

For Goff, a committed supporter of the M.D.-Ph.D. program at DMS, the dinner provides a wonderful opportunity to meet the students with whom she's exchanged written correspondence. "Some of the letters I receive are long and detailed," Goff says, noting that they've given her insight into the busy life of a medical student. The students, she says, "are



working hard studying medicine and volunteering in the community. They are incredibly altruistic, well-rounded people."

During the 2006 dinner, three Mertens-Huber Scholars—Shahrzad Ehdaivand, a second-year medical student; Benjamin Whittam, a fourth-year student; and Gregory Sawyer, a third-year student—shared with guests how crucial scholarships are to realizing their dreams of becoming physicians and how grateful they are to the Mertens-Huber family for their support.

"The Mertens-Huber scholarship allows me the freedom to volunteer my time to the community, without worrying about how I'm going to pay for



*There are two ways of spreading light: to be
the candle or the mirror that reflects it.*
—Edith Wharton

textbooks or about taking a job on the side,” said Ehdaivand, who before starting the M.D. program earned an M.P.H. at Dartmouth’s Center for the Evaluative Clinical Sciences.

In his remarks, Sawyer not only expressed gratitude to the Mertens-Huber family but said he’s been inspired by their generosity. “Having this opportunity really makes me want to give something back,” he noted.

For Robert Lampman, a second-year student, scholarship support has meant having the freedom to choose a specialty that he feels passionate about rather than one based on its income potential. “It means that when you pick your specialty,” he said, “you’re not thinking, ‘Can I afford [to practice] this specialty? Can I afford to be in family practice?’ That’s pretty incredible, to know you have options.”

By the end of the evening, it was hard to tell who was more appreciative of whom: the students, who are grateful to the family that is helping to make their dreams of a life in medicine a reality, or the members of the Mertens-Huber family, who truly admire the students’ hard work and sacrifices on their journey to becoming physicians.

“I’m amazed at their persistence and dedication to medicine,” Jennifer Brock says of the many DMS students whom she’s come to know over the years. “These people will make a terrific impact on the world.”



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transformingmedicine

Raising the bar

The financial goal of the Transforming Medicine Campaign for Dartmouth Medical School and Dartmouth-Hitchcock Medical Center is to raise \$250 million by 2009. Even more far-reaching is its goal of “raising the bar” in medicine. Of questioning assumptions—respecting tradition but not following it blindly. Of erasing boundaries—translating science from the lab bench to the bedside by connecting researchers with clinicians. Of creating solutions to the nation’s most critical health-care issues. Of transforming medicine.

Funding scholarships

With the average U.S. medical school debt well over \$100,000, there is a growing national consensus that debt is affecting students’ decisions of which medical schools to attend and even which fields to enter. As a result, fewer students are choosing careers in research, or in certain specialties, in favor of clinical subspecialties that offer greater income potential. Some students are forfeiting their dream of medical school altogether, discouraged by massive debt.

Easing the financial burden on bright, promising students has long been a priority for DMS and is one of the goals of the Transforming Medicine Campaign. Within the Campaign is a \$10-million scholarship target, so DMS can continue to accept students from diverse backgrounds on a need-blind basis.

Learning more

For more about the Transforming Medicine Campaign, visit <http://transmed.dartmouth.edu>.