

2018 ROMP Career Fair Showcases Mississippi's Rural and Small Town Medical Practice Options

It was a day filled with networking, handshaking, and learning as medical students and residents met with healthcare employers, agencies, and representatives at this year's Rural Opportunities for Mississippi Physician's Career Fair (ROMP) on April 21st at the Jackson Marriott.

ROMP is specifically designed for primary care students and physicians who may be interested in relocating to rural or small town Mississippi communities. The Office of Mississippi Physician Workforce and the Mississippi Academy of Family Physicians (MAFP) co-host the annual event which is now in its third year.

ROMP, held in conjunction with MAFP's Spring Fling, provides students, residents, and physicians with the opportunity to network, meet potential employers, and investigate special incentives such as loan repayment and forgiveness.

Nearly half of Mississippians live in rural areas where they experience many of the same health challenges as city dwellers. Although still in last place at 186 physicians per 100,000 residents (compared to the national median of 258 per 100,000), the state fares better at retaining its graduates. Mississippi ranks fourth in keeping medical school graduates and 13th in retaining residents.

Dr. John Mitchell, Director of the Office of Mississippi Workforce (OMPW) and founder of ROMP, was pleased with the enthusiastic turnout. "I'm glad to see this level of interest and involvement," he said. "Improving Mississippi's physician workforce is central to improving Mississippi's healthcare. ROMP provides great opportunities to make new contacts that will, in turn, help students and residents launch new careers in their future home communities."

The demand for primary care physicians, especially those practicing in rural areas, is expected to sharply increase in the coming years. The rural population of those ages 55 to 75 is estimated to grow 30 percent between 2010 and 2020 due, in part, to retiring baby boomers migrating from urban areas.

Exhibitors who networked with participants at the daylong event include: Allegis, Delta Health Center, Inc., EC-Healthnet Family Medicine Residency, Forrest General Family Medicine Residency, GlaxoSmithKline, Magnolia Health Plan, Medical Management Services, Mississippi Academy of Family Physicians Foundation, Mississippi National Guard, Mississippi Osteopathic Medical Association, Mississippi Primary Health Care Association, Mississippi Office of Rural Health and Primary Care, Mississippi Rural Physicians Scholarship Program, North Mississippi Medical Center Family Medicine Residency Program, Office of Mississippi Physician Workforce, Prescription Monitoring Program - Mississippi Board of Pharmacy, Teva, The MIND Center of UMMC, and William Carey University College of Osteopathic Medicine.

Sponsors included Blue Cross/Blue Shield of Mississippi, California Academy of Family Physicians, Med-IQ, Inc., Medical Management Services, Mississippi Osteopathic Medical Association, North Carolina Academy of Family Physicians, Novartis, Office of Mississippi Physician Workforce, Sanofi US Services, Inc., and Spire Learning.

Click [here](#) to see photos of this year's event.

For more information about next year's ROMP Career Fair, contact the Office of Mississippi Physician Workforce at 601-815-0736 or via email at info@ompw.org.