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News Release

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December 2017

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Local Medical Student Receives Montgomery County Medical Society (MCMS) Scholarship

HARRISBURG, Pa. — The Montgomery County Medical Society (MCMS) scholarship of \$2,000 was awarded to Sitara Soundararajan by The Foundation of the Pennsylvania Medical Society in December. Sitara currently resides in Penn Valley and is a first-year medical student at Drexel University College of Medicine. She is the daughter of Suganthi Soundararajan of Penn Valley, Pa.

Although the medical field has made many advancements, particularly in stem cell research, the Human Genome Project, and the introduction of biomaterials and 3D printing, Sitara highlights that more has to be done. “The future of medicine lies not only in scientific and technological progress, but also in health care distribution. Despite medical advancements, there are still at least 400 million people on our planet who do not have access to basic health services. Medical professionals cannot disregard these facts and have a duty to take steps toward a solution.”

While working in the triage station of the brigade clinics, Sitara noticed the lack of health care distribution, particularly in Honduran communities. As a result of her college experience, her curiosity sparked numerous questions. “Why was there such a scarcity of healthcare facilities and women's clinics? How many other communities had to survive with such scarcity? Why did socioeconomic status so heavily determine the distribution of medical resources? Questions like these reflected the unfortunate truth that basic health care access is denied to too many communities around the world.”

Following this early clinical opportunity, Sitara has continued to work with organizations, like Global Medical Brigades, to serve underserved communities where poverty and lack of health insurance are prevalent. In the short term, she believes that these experiences will make a difference in forming her career in medicine. “The rigorous workload, invaluable opportunities, and experiential learning of medical school will gradually equip me with more and more tools that will enable me to truly contribute to such initiatives.”

Long term, Sitara hopes to capitalize on every opportunity so that she is able to make a larger impact in the world. “As I gain more and more medical expertise, I hope to be a catalyst for positive change by initiating projects myself. With an aim to practice medicine in low-income communities, I envision myself developing new ways to increase access to quality health services. Ultimately, I aim to dive headfirst into my medical education, starting as part of the Drexel University College of Medicine's Class of 2021, as a way to become a valuable vessel of knowledge, an effective physician, and eventually a pioneer who can make a meaningful impact on the communities who need it the most.”

Through the Foundation, Montgomery County Medical Society will award two \$2,000 scholarships to qualified medical students. The Foundation of the Pennsylvania Medical Society is pleased to administer this scholarship for medical students who are residents of Montgomery County. This scholarship is made possible by contributions from Montgomery County Medical Society and physicians.

The Foundation, a nonprofit affiliate of the Pennsylvania Medical Society, sustains the future of medicine in Pennsylvania by providing programs that support medical education, physician health and excellence in practice. It has helped finance medical education for more than 63 years.

For more information about this scholarship, or other scholarship opportunities, please visit www.foundationpamedsoc.org. For questions, contact the Foundation's Student Financial Services Director, Deborah Monko at (717) 558-7854.



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