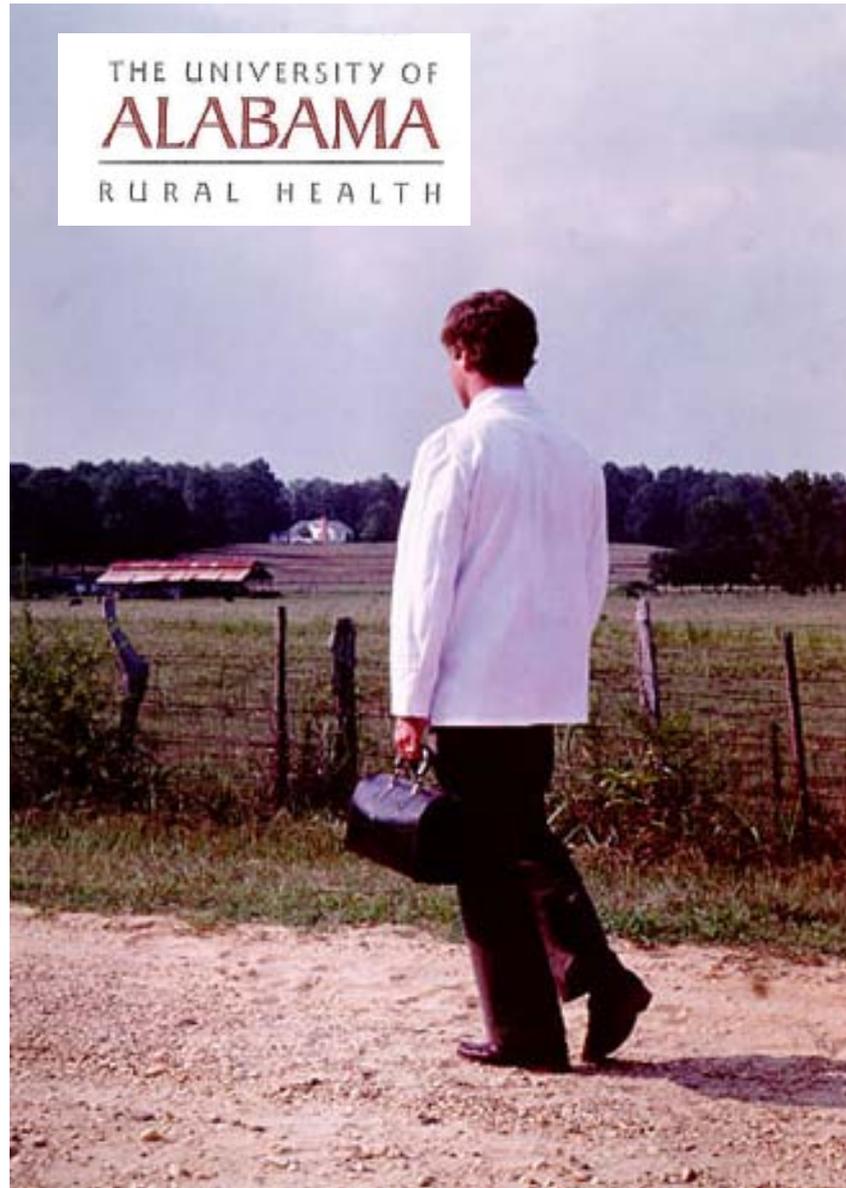


Recruiting and Educating Physicians for Rural Practice: Alabama's Pipeline and the Rural Medical Scholars Program



**Economic Development in
Underserved Communities
Where Research and Practice
Meet
September 9, 2010
Kansas City, Kansas**

Presented by

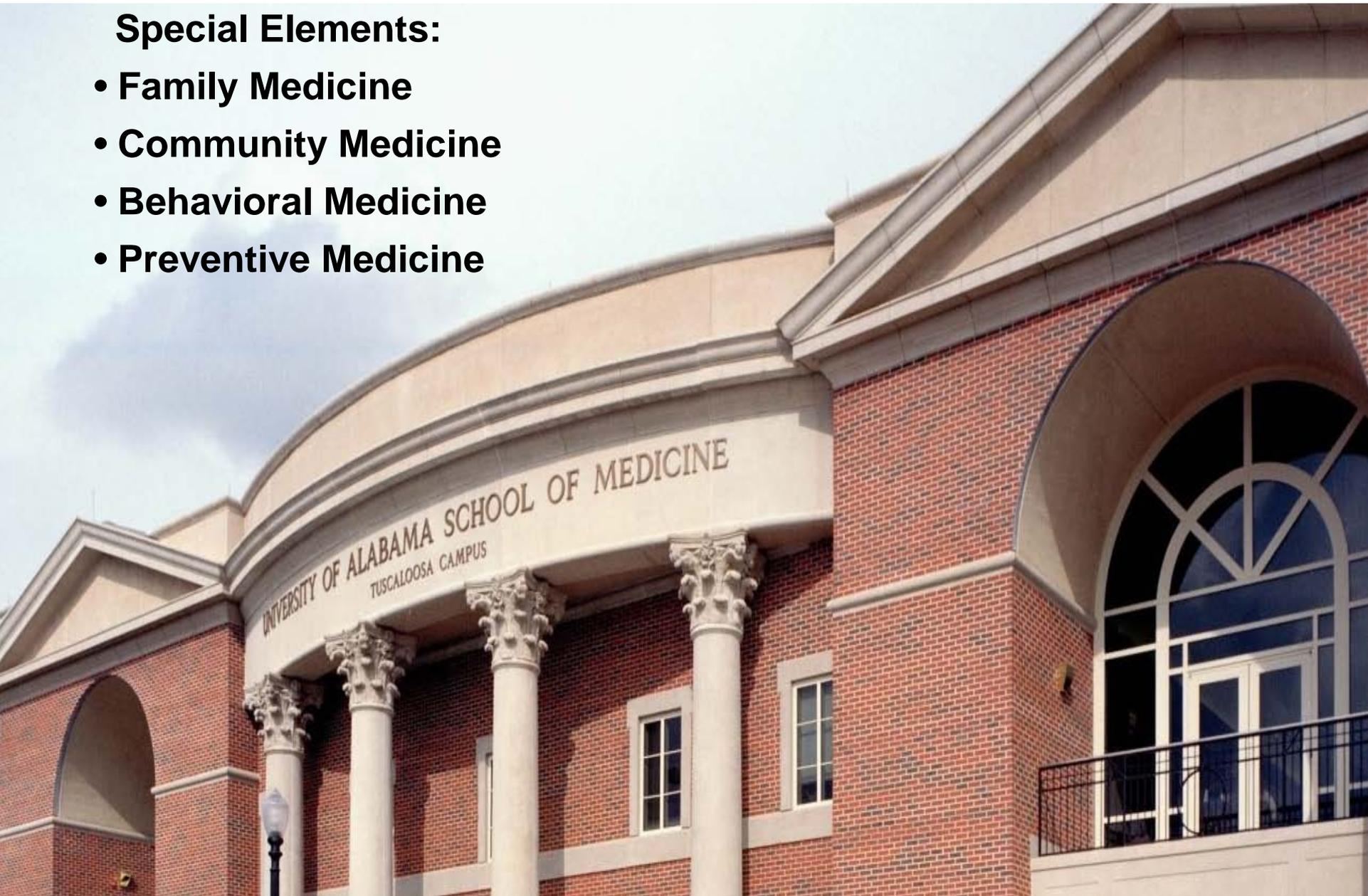
James D. Leeper, PhD
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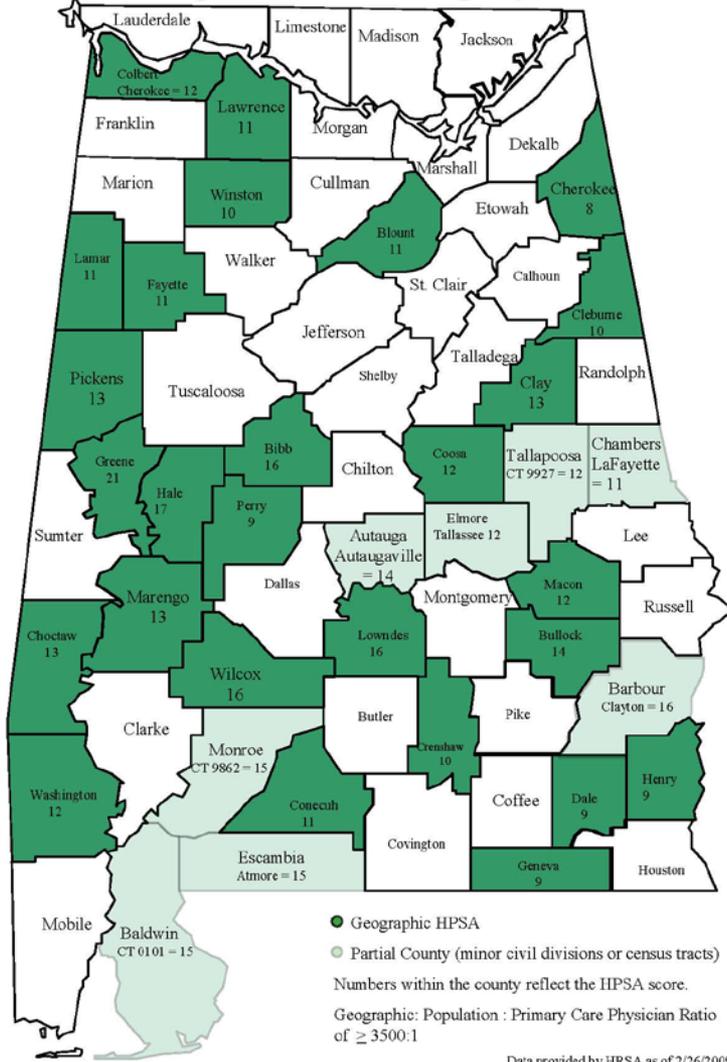
College of Community Health Sciences

Special Elements:

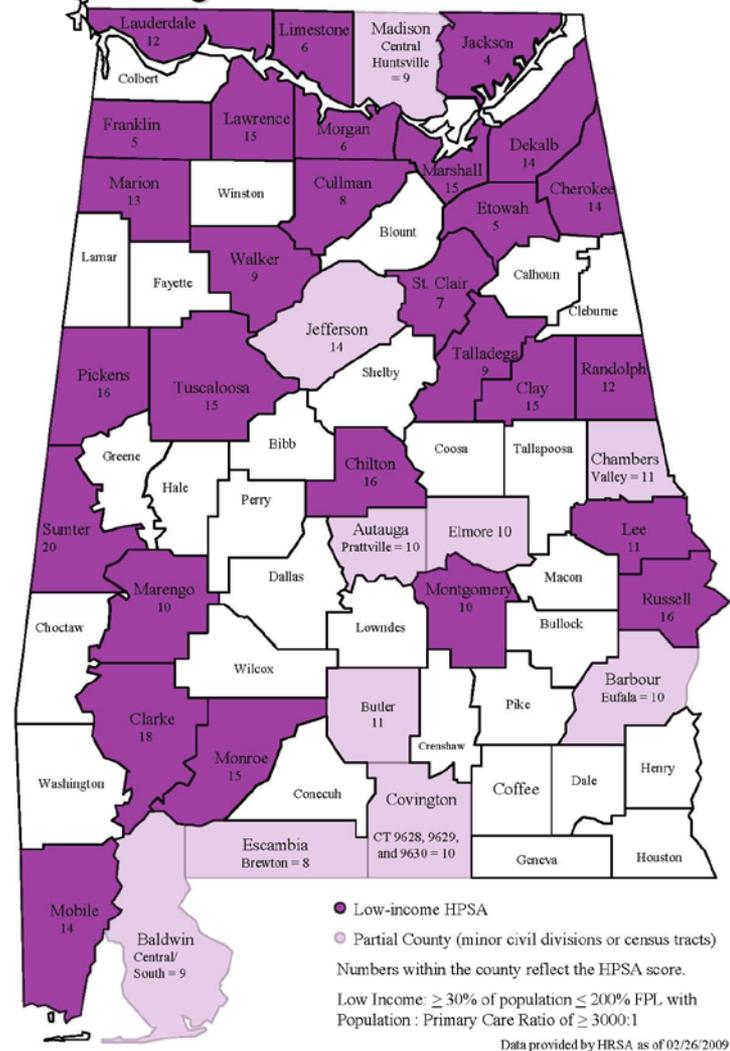
- Family Medicine
- Community Medicine
- Behavioral Medicine
- Preventive Medicine



Health Professional Shortage Areas: Geographic



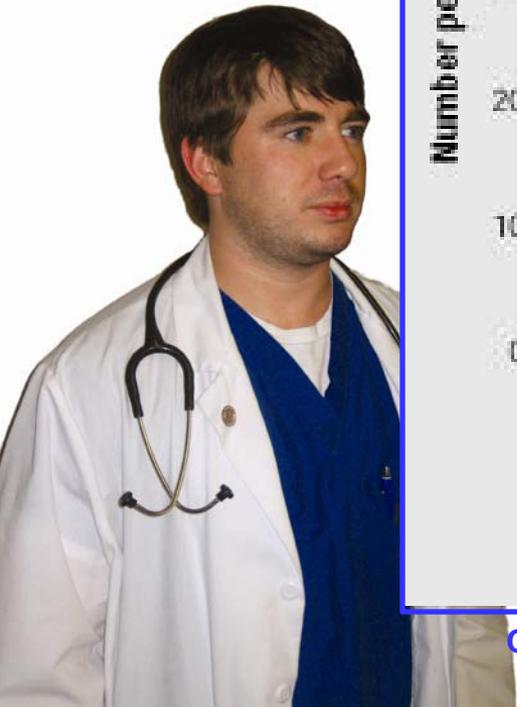
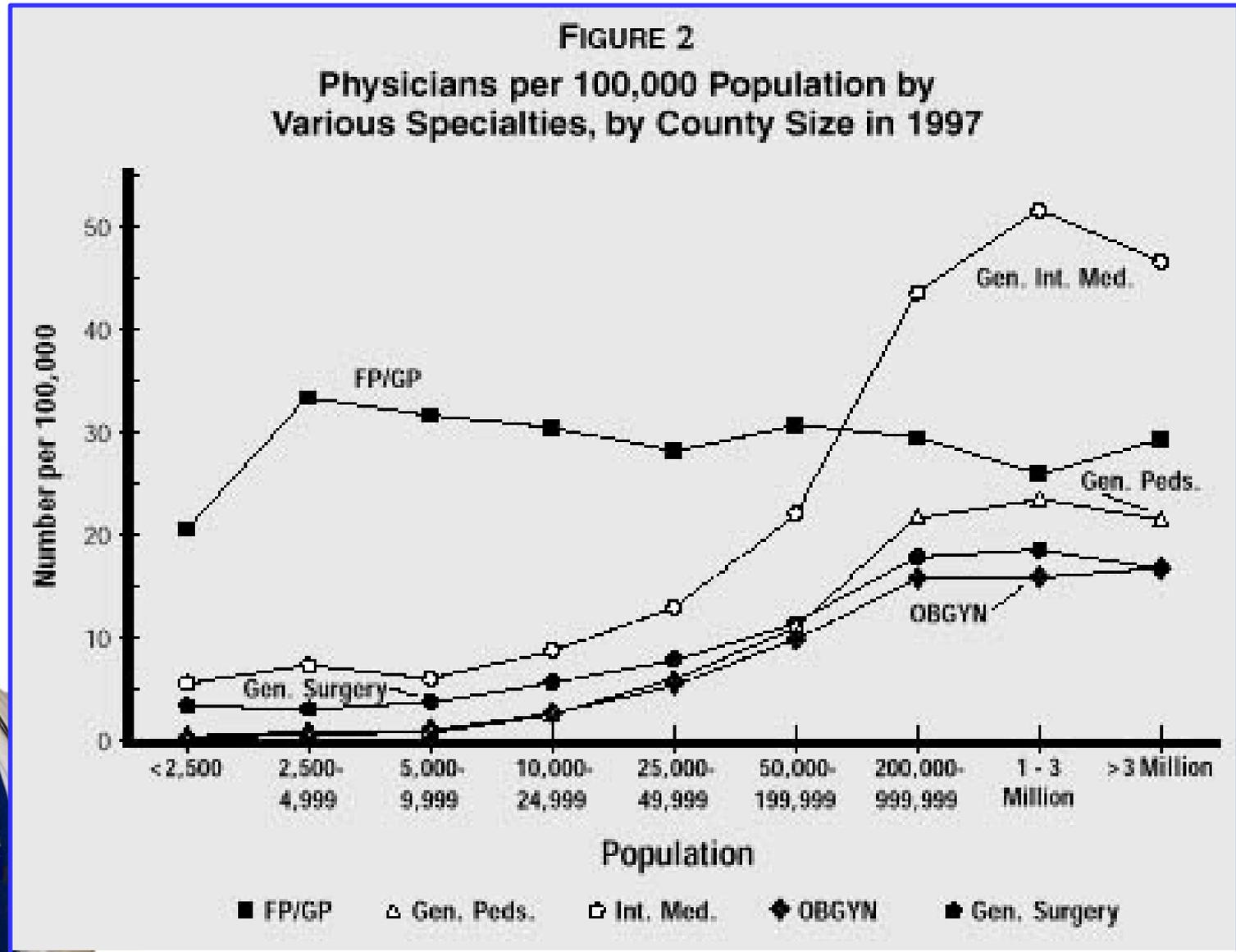
Health Professional Shortage Areas: Low Income



Alabama HPSA designation maps 2/26/2009

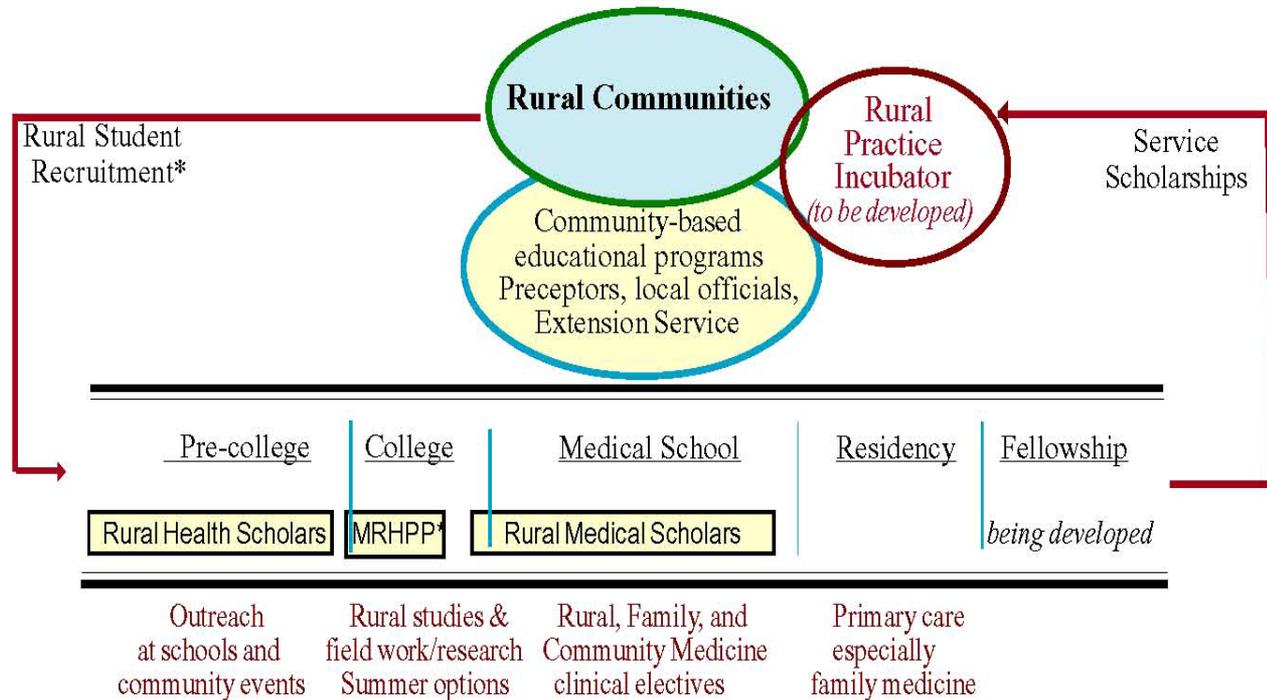
Why the Emphasis on Family Medicine?

Family Physicians and Rural Practice



Rural Health Leaders Pipeline initiated at University of Alabama

Rural Health Leaders Pipeline Model



*Students in the Rural Health Leaders Pipeline are recruited from rural communities. Scholarships help them complete training in order to return to those communities.

-developed by John Wheat, MD, MPH, Professor
UA College of Community Health Sciences
University of Alabama School of Medicine, Tuscaloosa

*MRHPP-Minority Rural Health Pipeline Program



Pipeline Began with Rural Health Scholars Program for 11th Graders



1993 Rural Health Scholars

Minority Rural Health Scholars college-bound high school graduates



UA's Rural Pipeline Seeks Alabama Students Who Want to Go Home as Rural Doctors and Health Professionals

Alabama desperately needs primary care physicians in rural areas. Rural students are more likely to choose to live and work in rural areas. Each year approximately 25 Rural Health Scholars, 10 Minority Rural Health Scholars, and 10 Rural Medical Scholars are added to the pipeline, which includes students from every county in the state. Students growing up in any rural area of Alabama are eligible to apply.

The **Rural Health Scholars Program**, a 5-week summer program for 11th graders, encourages rural students to consider careers in medicine and other health professions and lets them experience college first-hand by taking college courses for credit and living in dorms.

- 471 Rural Health Scholars from 65 counties have been in RHSP
- 32 have entered medical school or have already become physicians.
- Rural Health Scholars have also entered nursing, pharmacy, physical therapy, dentistry, x-ray technology, public health, optometry, podiatry, speech-language pathology, health care management, and veterinary medicine.

The **Rural Minority Health Scholars Program**, initiated in 2000, is an annual 5-week summer session which helps students address responsibilities of college life, improve academic skills, accrue college science credits, and work on test-taking skills to become more competitive for admission to medical school.

- 98 Minority Rural Health Scholars have participated to date.
- Nine have been admitted to medical school, and one is now in family medicine residency.
- 6 are in nursing, one is in Pharmacy, and one is in dental school.



At-A-Glance

The Rural Medical Scholars Program

- Admitted first class in 1996
- To date, 154 rural students from across Alabama have become Rural Medical Scholars.

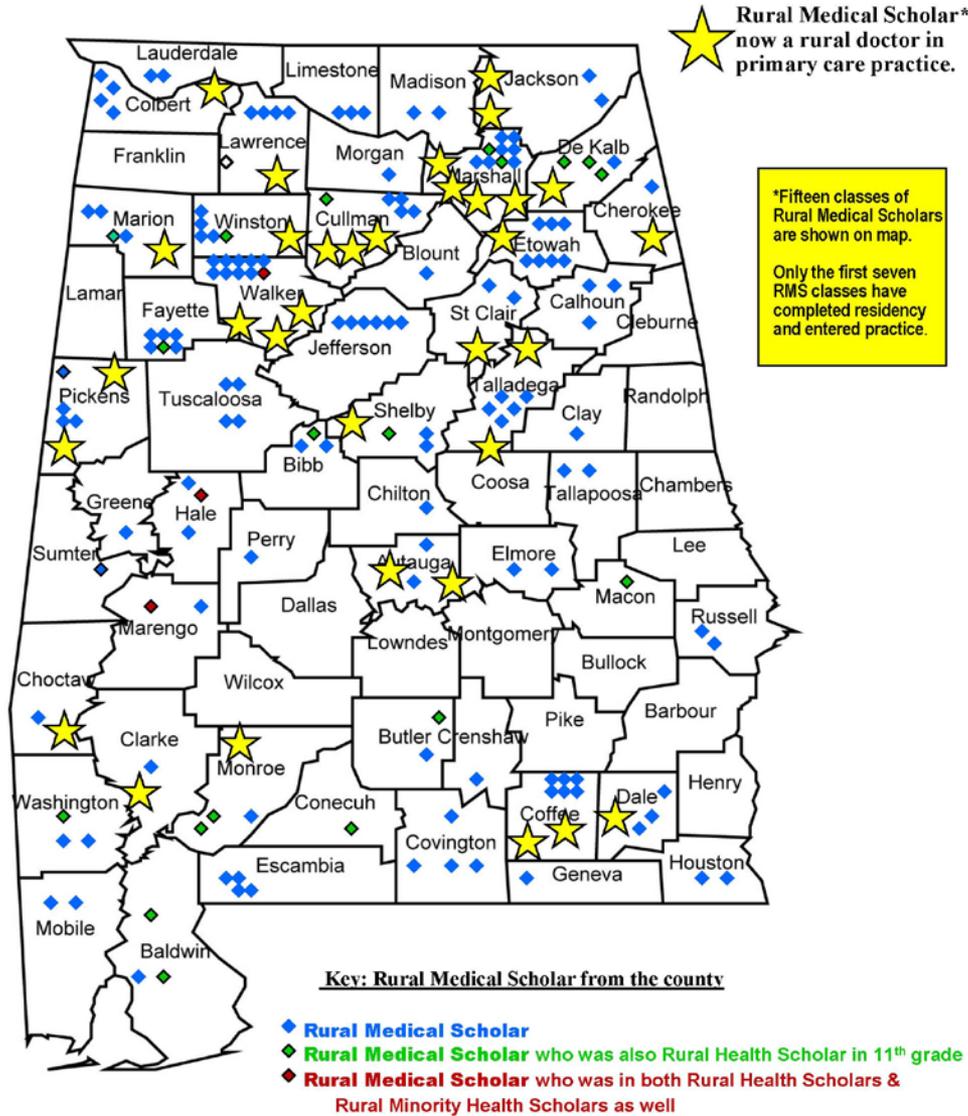
While fewer medical students nationally are choosing primary care practices, especially in rural areas, **the numbers are different for Rural Medical Scholars:**

- Half are family medicine physicians
- 60 percent are in practice in small, rural Alabama communities
- 70 percent are in the primary care fields of family medicine, pediatrics and internal medicine
- More than 90 percent entered practice in Alabama after residency training



THE UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA

Rural Medical Scholars 1996-2010



ECONOMIC IMPACT (since 2004)

34 Rural Physicians: \$141 mil. Economic contribution

6 mil. Grants from state

4 mil. Scholarships from state

\$131 million (Net contribution)

**AAFP, Economic impact of family physicians in Mississippi;
Economic impact of family physicians in Alabama, 2007.**

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**Eilrich FC, Doeksen GA, St. Clair CF. The economic impact of
a rural primary care physician and the potential health dollars
lost to out-migrating health services, 2007.**

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www.ruralhealthworks.org/dl_economic.html





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RURAL HEALTH

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<http://cchs.ua.edu/crm/rural-health-leaders-pipeline>

