

anything in return. In a letter written by my father to be read after his passing, he wrote:


*"Dear children. ...if possible and whenever you have a little to spare try to help the poor people, maybe some poor Seminary, Convent, or your church in Thanksgiving to God for all the help we received towards your tuitions and many other graces. Be of good heart and God will reward you a hundred-fold. Thanks a million for your love and whatever you have done for me. God love you all! —Dad"*

believe if my dad were alive today and knew of the financial burden of a medical education, he would group most medical students as "poor people!"

**What inspired you to increase your giving commitment from a named scholarship to an endowed scholarship?**

• Honoring my parents in perpetuity with an endowed scholarship was one of the most rewarding acts of giving that I could have done. My main motivation was to celebrate their memory; however, many physicians and teachers at Loyola touched my life and I did not always have a way to thank them. For example, Patrick Fahey, MD, took care of my mother and demonstrated the "human spirit" even after her passing. Edward Gurza, MD, challenged me on my internal medicine rotation at St. Francis Hospital, and wisdom and encouragement shared at a nursing station during my surgical rotation at the same hospital from Phillip Sheridan, Sr., MD, gave me the faith and determination to pursue a dermatology residency.

**What words of wisdom would you impart to the first medical student who will benefit from your endowed scholarship?**

• Being a physician is a great honor and carries great responsibilities, including our ability to help those in pain or physical suffering. However, it is equally important, some may say more important, to offer hope and faith to our patients. 

# A gift that endures

By TRACY MLAKAR

Ian Fields, MD '13, BS '05, didn't always know that he wanted to be a physician. "My grandfather once asked me if I would be happy in a career where I didn't learn something new every day," he recalls. "As a physician, you do. It may not be medical knowledge, but I try to pass that knowledge to our medical students and pay it forward."

Today, there's no doubt in Dr. Fields' mind that he made the right career choice. He originally found this validation when he was awarded the Leischner Memorial Scholarship during his final year of study. The scholarship is named after the late Ralph P. Leischner, Jr., MD '68, senior associate dean, Stritch School of Medicine, and awarded annually to a fourth-year medical student who demonstrates compassion, integrity, enthusiasm, and a commitment to life-long learning.

Now a first-year Obstetrics and Gynecology resident at Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine, Dr. Fields says the scholarship still inspires and impacts his life. "This has been one of the toughest years of my life, but the award is a daily reminder to me to stay

true to the values it represents."

Dr. Fields lives those four defining characteristics daily. He says his compassion came from losing his mom at a young age, which allowed him to see people and their situations differently. This compassion is evident when Dr. Fields describes why he enjoys being a physician, "When you interact with pa-



Ian Fields, MD '13

tients, you become a part of their life story. You have a privilege, you almost become another family member."

He also credits his family for instilling a strong sense of integrity into his life.

And Dr. Fields' enthusiasm can often be seen at 3 a.m. when he's cracking a joke in the Labor and Delivery Unit. As for his quest for life-long learning, it might lead him to become a program director or a faculty member some day.

To the next Leischner Memorial Scholarship recipient, Dr. Fields says:

*"People believe in you. Believe that you have the skills to be a competent, caring, and great physician."*

## SUPPORTING SCHOLARSHIPS AT STRITCH

Scholarships help students focus on their passion for medicine, alleviate the financial burden of a medical education, and attract the most gifted and diverse students. Loyola recently launched a campaign for student scholarships in which eligible gifts of \$500 or more to qualifying endowed scholarships at Stritch will be matched dollar-for-dollar by Loyola.

### SCHOLARSHIP FUNDRAISER

#### Leischner Memorial Golf Tournament

Saturday, Sept 13  
Willow Crest Golf Club  
Oak Brook Hills Resort  
[LUC.edu/Stritch/lmgf](http://LUC.edu/Stritch/lmgf)

To contribute to endowed scholarship funds at Stritch, please contact Keenan Cutsforth at 708.216.5076 or [kcutsforth@LUC.edu](mailto:kcutsforth@LUC.edu).