



# News Release

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **And the Envelope Please – Medical Students Match with a Virtual Envelope**

One by one, public gatherings and events have been canceled due to social distancing in order to avoid spreading illness and Match Day was no different. Fourth-year medical students from the Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center (TTUHSC) School of Medicine participated in Match Day March 20 via email.

Match Day is a nerve-wracking event that has played out on medical school campuses across the country since 1952. More than 170 School of Medicine students from all TTUHSC campuses participated in Match Day from their own homes and learned where they will be for the next three to seven years for their residencies. The results are normally sealed in an envelope and are opened simultaneously at all of the nation's medical schools followed by a celebration.

But this year, the anticipation came in the form of an email with students opening their notification with friends and families. Steven L. Berk, M.D., TTUHSC executive vice president and dean of the School of Medicine, said although the students were not able to be together in one location, the excitement and anticipation was not diminished.

“This is a very special time where, we're celebrating the success of our students and at the same time, we're recognizing the tremendous sacrifice and professional commitment that medical students make to this profession, which actually can be very challenging and dangerous to them. This pandemic really has made that so clear to our graduating students.”

Months before Match Day, students begin applying to residency programs in their preferred specialties. Students visit sites to evaluate and ultimately rank their preferred residency programs. At the same time, administrators at each site interview applicants and rank them. The National Resident Matching Program (NRMP) coordinates this process and makes the final match algorithm, which is designed to produce results for students to fill the thousands of training positions available at U.S. teaching hospitals.

“I think it's important for the community to know that we're graduating 175 new physicians and that most of those physicians will practice in West Texas,” Berk said.

“Having a medical school in this community is reassuring especially during this pandemic.”

Berk said although Match Day is celebrated for one day, the event is actually a week-long process. The process of Match Day is celebrated at the 141 U.S. medical schools accredited by the Liaison Committee on Medical Education. Starting on the Monday of Match Week applicants are informed whether they have been matched to a residency program of their choice, but the student is not told the name of that program.

“We graduate 175 physicians a year and that's actually in the top 25 percentile of medical schools just based on the size of the student population,” Berk said. “More than 20% of our students will stay here to do a residency at the Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center. We are proud of our students’ accomplishments and share their excitement as they pursue their careers at outstanding teaching programs around the country.”

This year the TTUHSC medical students from campuses at Amarillo, Odessa, Midland, Lubbock Covenant Branch and Lubbock University Medical Center matched at residency programs throughout the country including TTUHSC, Vanderbilt University, Mayo Clinic, Duke University, Johns Hopkins, Baylor College of Medicine, UT Southwestern and others.

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**Editor’s Note:**

Media can visit <https://www.ttuhsc.edu/communications-marketing/media/video-stories/video/2020/march/match-day-2020.aspx> for on-camera interviews with Berk. A Facebook post also is available where students may post their Match Day outcomes at the TTUHSC School of Medicine page <https://www.facebook.com/ttuhsom/>.