



TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY  
HEALTH SCIENCES CENTER

# News Release

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **A Cultural Affair Raises More than \$97,000 for TTUHSC Scholarships** *Student National Medical Association Hosted 13th Annual Scholarship Gala*

The Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center (TTUHSC) Student National Medical Association (SNMA) celebrated diversity and raised more than \$97,000 with the Night Under the Stars 13th Annual Scholarship Gala on Dec. 3.

The funds raised go directly toward scholarships for [TTUHSC School of Medicine](#) minority students. Steven L. Berk, M.D., TTUHSC executive vice president and School of Medicine dean, said this is the most the event has raised.

“The SNMA Gala has successfully expanded our scholarship program for students of color and students from underserved communities but it is also a night to celebrate the incredible diversity of our students,” Berk said. “Students learn so much from each other, making a diverse student body a prerequisite for optimal medical education.”

According to the AAMC, the average out-of-state tuition at a private school in 2019-2020 was \$56,946 per year. A typical physician graduating can have a debt of about \$200,000 in education loans just for medical school.

“The high cost of a medical education is an investment for students, but it can be an enormous burden,” Yaw Adu, SNMA co-president and second-year medical student, said. “SNMA is proud to host this event each year to benefit our students. We were excited to see the outcome of the community’s support.”

This year the Student National Medical Association Endowed Scholarship was renamed the Dr. Fahmi Farah and Dr. Steven Berk SNMA Endowed Scholarship. The original endowed scholarship fund was established in 2009 by the TTUHSC SNMA through the advocacy of Berk and Fahmi Farah, M.D., who was then a student in the School of Medicine and SNMA president.

The Texas Tech University System Board of Regents recently approved the name.

Elwin Rutayomba, SNMA co-president and second-year medical student, said the TTUHSC SNMA has raised approximately \$400,000 since the first gala was created in 2009.

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“The support from the School of Medicine, university and community make each SNMA event a great success,” Rutayomba said. “SNMA is dedicated to community service and promoting cultural awareness within the medical school and our community, and the support we receive back will have a tremendous impact on us and those we will serve as physicians one day.”

This year’s gala included performances by the African Student Organization Dancers; Tech Kahaani Bollywood; Cultural Fashion Show; and the Lubbock High School Mariachi De Oro.

SNMA is one of the nation’s oldest and largest independent, student-run organizations focused on the needs and concerns of culturally diverse medical students. The TTUHSC School of Medicine SNMA chapter participates in various projects including mentoring undergraduate students, promoting health care fields with elementary students, organizing community health fairs, working with the undergraduate community and helping improve medical school curriculum and admissions.