Dr. Francisco Chacon trained at the KU School of Medicine-Wichita and is now a physician in Liberal.

Addressing a crucial shortage

KU prepares doctors for careers in underserved, rural communities

AFTER EARNING HIS MEDICAL DEGREE from the University of Kansas, Dr. Francisco Chacon could have lived almost anywhere. But he chose to return to where he felt most needed — to Liberal, his hometown.

“When you’re a primary care doctor in your community, you get to know your patients,” said Chacon, who trained at the medical school’s Wichita campus and now has a busy practice not far from where he grew up. “I knew I could make a difference here.”

Chacon’s story isn’t unusual among KU medical school graduates. KU-trained physicians practice in 87 percent of Kansas counties and make up half of all doctors in Kansas.

Despite KU’s efforts, Kansas still does not have enough physicians, and KU’s medical education facilities in Kansas City have reached capacity. To train additional doctors for Kansas, in 2011 KU opened a new Salina campus and expanded its Wichita campus to a four-year program. This year, KU is seeking support for its Health Education Initiative, which would expand KU’s Kansas City facilities to train 50 additional medical students each year.

“Kansas needs doctors,” Chacon said. “KU recognizes this and is uniquely positioned to address this crucial shortage.”

KANSAS PHYSICIAN SHORTAGE

- Kansas ranks 39th nationally in doctors per capita.
- 89 Kansas counties have a shortage of primary care providers.
- Kansas needs 285 new physicians each year to rise to the national average of physicians per capita by 2030.
- Nearly 30 percent of current physicians will be lost to retirement and attrition over the next 10 years.

KU’S HEALTH EDUCATION INITIATIVE

- KU seeks support for new Kansas City facilities to increase class size across all campuses by 50 students – from the current 211 to the proposed 261 students – by fall 2017.
- Half of all doctors in Kansas trained at KU.
- Join this conversation on Twitter at #Doctors4KS.

MORE INFORMATION — DOCTORS4KS.KU.EDU
Taking the reins
KU alumnus returns to hometown to run independent pharmacy

GROWING UP IN CIMARRON, Matt Monical spent afternoons at the soda fountain in Clark Pharmacy.

Two decades later, Monical can still be found at Clark Pharmacy, but in a very different capacity: He’s now the owner and pharmacist. “When I left for school, I thought I might come back, but I wasn’t sure,” said Monical, who graduated from the KU School of Pharmacy in 2009. “But I eventually realized this was where I wanted to be.”

Key to his decision was a rotation he did at Clark Pharmacy while a student at KU. That’s when then-owner Jim Coast — himself a KU pharmacy alumnus — asked Monical if he’d consider returning to Cimarron to work alongside Coast and eventually take over the business. Monical agreed and returned to Cimarron after graduation. Earlier this year, he officially began running the business.

“This is a great place to be a pharmacist and raise a family,” said Monical, referring to his wife, Kimberly, and 4-year-old daughter, Aubrie. “I feel fortunate to have attended the KU pharmacy school because they actively encourage students to explore careers in rural Kansas communities.”

Helping children across Kansas
KU provides training, technology to mental health practitioners

MA T T E N Y A R T AND KRIS MATTHEWS recently spent 18 months traveling the state to train mental health professionals in Positive Behavior Support (PBS). Now, the two University of Kansas researchers are delivering a “PBS-to-Go Box” to 21 community mental health centers so practitioners can help children across Kansas.

PBS is an evidence-based practice that changes behavior and the environment where it happens — in this case, the challenging behavior of high-risk, high-needs kids who often end up in psychiatric residential treatment facilities.

“These kids bounce between systems,” Enyart said. “How these systems respond to the children’s behavior differs widely. This project establishes a common intervention and language.”

The PBS-to-Go Box includes reference materials, iPads, laptops, printers and projectors — critical technology for practices such as videotaping a child’s behavior for online collaboration with a PBS professional.

“Our objective is building positive healthy communities,” Matthews said, “and we’ve begun connecting the dots between systems and identifying practitioners who will advance this vision with the resources and practice we’ve provided.”

More information: KMHPBS.ORG

ENCOURAGING CAREERS IN RURAL COMMUNITIES

• The KU School of Pharmacy has a student chapter of the National Community Pharmacists Association, a national organization that advocates for independent pharmacies.

• Each winter break and spring break, the chapter organizes overnight visits to 10-15 independent pharmacies across Kansas to introduce students to independent pharmacy practice.

• In January, KU students visited pharmacies in Topeka, Manhattan, Clay Center, Concordia, Beloit, Minneapolis, Salina, Hillsboro and Emporia.

• More than 60 percent of KU pharmacy alumni live and work in Kansas.

• KU-trained pharmacists practice in 95 of Kansas’ 105 counties.

POSITIVE BEHAVIOR SUPPORT

• Kansas Mental Health Positive Behavior Support (KMHPBS) is a project of the Kansas Institute for Positive Behavior Support at the KU Life Span Institute.

• The project has trained 750 mental health professionals in 94 counties.

• KMHPBS has trained staff at 21 mental health agencies, as well as other psychiatric residential treatment facilities in Kansas.

• Matt Enyart is the KMHPBS project coordinator and assistant director of project development and oversight for KIPBS. Kris Matthews is a research assistant for both.

• The project was funded by the Kansas Department for Aging and Disability Services.
OIL PRODUCTION, ALREADY A SIGNIFICANT PART OF THE KANSAS ECONOMY, could expand and flourish with an improved understanding of the state’s oil reservoirs. That’s why a University of Kansas research consortium is working with energy companies to find and access new oil reserves in Kansas and elsewhere.

The Kansas Interdisciplinary Carbonates Consortium (KICC) brings together KU researchers to better understand carbonate reservoir rocks—a class of porous sedimentary rock that includes limestone and dolomite. Nearly 75 percent of oil and gas reserves in Kansas are found in the pores in carbonate reservoir rocks.

The KU consortium also includes 13 energy companies that pay membership fees to access KU research, datasets and training, and for consultations with university experts on industry-driven projects.

“Our 18 investigators and our students are making crucial discoveries and helping energy companies address their most pressing challenges,” said Bob Goldstein, a professor of geology who co-directs the KICC with professors Evan Franseen and Gene Rankey. “We want Kansas to continue being an important energy supplier in a way that leads to economic growth, especially in rural communities.”

University of Kansas researchers are developing total magnetic maps (top) and advanced cross-sections of subsurface formations (bottom) to aid energy exploration in Kansas.
Our mission: A healthier Kansas.

Half of Kansas doctors trained at the University of Kansas. Our medical school campuses in Kansas City, Salina, and Wichita are educating physicians to meet the health needs of Kansans across the state.

KU is the only university that can address the state’s doctor shortage and ensure every Kansan can receive quality care closer to home.

Learn how at doctors4ks.ku.edu