

Meet Emme Chapman, MD . . .

Emme Chapman knows a thing or two about life in a small town: as a native of Webster County, West Virginia, Emme grew up in a community with a population of nearly 10,000 people. Though she dreamt of becoming a doctor, the challenges along the way could seem overwhelming at times – until she found the West Virginia University Health Careers Opportunity Program (HCOP). From chemistry tutoring to help preparing for the MCAT and her medical school applications, HCOP helped Emme navigate her way to success. In May of 2006, she graduated from West Virginia University School of Medicine; today, she is in residency training at West Virginia University Hospitals; and one day, Dr. Chapman plans to practice medicine in her hometown. But without the academic and emotional support HCOP offered her, Emme believes she may not have fulfilled her dream.



*“I didn’t have a clue how to do it, but they said, ‘We want you to get there too, and we’re going to help you.’ It’s a program that finds people who have the desire and who love medicine, and it helps those people. **They make good doctors** ... I think it’s sad that no one may go through this program again, because it was so good for me.”*

About the HCOP Program

- HCOP is authorized under Title VII of the Public Health Service Act. Together with the Centers of Excellence (COE), HCOPs function to increase the representation of minority and disadvantaged students in the health professions.
- The mission of the WVU HCOP is to assist underserved, disadvantaged, and minority students to become more competitive for college and health care careers, increase diversity in the health care professions, and improve the distribution of health care professionals in underserved areas.
- More information on the program activities, such as coursework, mock interviews, and shadowing activities, is available on the program website:

<http://www.cahcon.org/index.html>

According to WVU’s HCOP Coordinator...

If we don’t have these programs, we won’t have kids returning to underserved areas, and we won’t have high enough numbers of health care providers to even think about filling the need for health care in these communities. We’ve already got a horrible situation with disparities in health, and the best way to help is to end the disparities in health care providers.

These students come from families who have never been to college, and have been through generations of poverty. They go right back to their home and practice where others don’t. People you would never have thought would make it through – and they wouldn’t have done it without these programs. The barriers are fierce without help. These kids have the potential. They just don’t have the path. It’s still not easy, but at least, through these programs, the path is there.

- Ann Chester, Ph.D., WVUSOM Assistant Vice President of Health Sciences for Social Justice, and HCOP Project Coordinator

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