

PERSPECTIVES...

of a Medical Resident

Cedric Palmer, MD

So much of my journey to becoming a physician has been an exercise in faith and perseverance. I grew up in New Orleans, where I had the duties of an eldest child—raising a young brother and sister while my mother worked two and three jobs, and of parent-substitute, filling the void my father left when he abandoned the family.



I did not have time for the distractions of the sometimes mean streets of New Orleans. My free time was spent pursuing my fascination with literature and science, and at the age of 16, my aspiration became to serve families in the capacity of family physician.

A graduate of Xavier University and Meharry Medical College, Dr. Cedric Palmer is a UT Graduate School of Medicine Department of Family Medicine resident. As of this writing, twenty-one of his family members displaced from their New Orleans Ninth Ward homes are living in Knoxville and he shares his apartment with brother, Poree, whom he is helping complete a degree in fine arts. Dr. Palmer enjoys fishing, creative writing, and collecting limited first edition books.

I wanted to be a glimmer of hope to families affected by circumstances of health.

As an undergraduate student, I worked to gain entrance into medical school and to continue aiding my family

financially and spiritually. At Meharry Medical College, I plunged into the rigors of medical training.

Fueled by determination and God's grace, I have found myself in East Tennessee at UT Graduate School of Medicine. My residency here is filled with the things that define me as the eldest child and as the country doctor I hope to become. I have persevered through long-hour

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weeks balancing a host of responsibilities. I have tended to the medical and psychiatric needs of my clinic patients. I have delivered the newborn and pronounced the dead, cared for the emergently ill patient, and been a collaborator with my attending physician. I have cared for the mothers and fathers of generations.

About my residency, I feel gratification, knowing that I have had a tangible role to play in some of the most important moments in the lives of my fellow human beings.

My goal—to practice family medicine in a rural or inner-city setting—is providing the enviable opportunity to move beyond being a “glimmer of hope” and become a real force for the betterment of the lives of families and communities. I want to make a difference.

I am ready.

Cedric Palmer, MD

Additional Training Period Required After Completion of Medical School

| Specialty | Years following MD degree | Specialty | Years following MD degree |
|------------------|---------------------------|--------------|---------------------------|
| Anesthesiology | 4 | Oral Surgery | 4 |
| Dentistry | 1 | Pathology | 4 |
| Family Medicine | 3 | Radiology | 5 |
| Medicine | 3 | Surgery | 5 |
| Nuclear Medicine | 2 | Transitional | 1 |
| OB/GYN | 4 | Urology | 5 |

If you missed “BECOMING A DOCTOR: PART I—MEDICAL SCHOOL” in the last issue of *Frontiers*, you can read the article at <http://gsm.utmck.edu/about/frontiers.cfm> or call the UT Graduate School of Medicine at 865-544-9190 for your copy of the November 2005 issue. IN THE NEXT ISSUE, FOCUS ON FELLOWSHIPS.