

**Media Release                               Contact: Koko Mackin**

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**VCOM Medical Students Selected to Receive Medical School Scholarships from**

**Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Alabama**

**BIRMINGHAM, AL** – Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Alabama has selected eight Edward Via College of Medicine (VCOM) medical students to receive scholarships. As a condition of these scholarships, the recipients agree to practice as primary care or behavioral health physicians in underserved areas of Alabama after graduation.

Congratulations to the following recipients:

* Major Hargrove Northport, Alabama
* Riley King Demopolis, Alabama
* Kaitlyn Phillips Rogersville, Alabama
* Rachel Butler Eva, Alabama
* Janson Blackwell Higdon, Alabama
* Zola Wilkerson Valentine, NE
* Hayley Goodson Ozark, AL
* Benjamin Harman Opelika, AL

“Congratulations to each of these exceptional medical students for being selected for this scholarship,” said Tim Vines, President and CEO of Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Alabama. “I commend them for recognizing the importance of this program and wanting to provide quality healthcare to those in many of the underserved areas of our state.”

The majority of Alabama’s counties do not have enough primary care and behavioral health physicians. To address this statewide need, Blue Cross is investing in the future of its Primary Care Physician Network by making available $3.2 million in scholarships, over a six-year period, to the Edward Via College of Osteopathic Medicine.

“One of my passions has been to get into medicine so that I may serve others and meet the healthcare needs of those in underserved areas of Alabama,” said Benjamin Harman, VCOM medical student and scholarship recipient. “I am grateful to Blue Cross for allowing me this opportunity to help Alabamians and those in my community where I plan to return to practice.”

***About Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Alabama***

Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Alabama has insured Alabamians for 84 years. Blue Cross offers coverage plans to corporations, individuals and the senior market. For more information about Blue Cross, visit [AlabamaBlue.com](http://www.AlabamaBlue.com). Connect with us on [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/BCBSAL/?fref=ts), check out our videos on [YouTube](https://www.youtube.com/user/BCBSofAlabama) and follow us on [Twitter](https://twitter.com/BCBSofAlabama) for more up-to-date information.

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