

# 2017 MCMS Medical Scholarship Recipients

BY MICHAEL CARAFOS, MD



**Tianna Maria Negrón**  
*2017 MCMS Scholarship*



**John Mariano, MD**  
*Edward T. Mulligan MD  
Memorial Scholarship*



**Leah Conant, MD**  
*Morton Scholarship*

This year continues to be a busy and exciting one for the MCMS Scholarship Fund Committee! As a reminder, the Scholarship Committee has worked over 50 years helping financially deserving medical students from the Rochester area. Each year the Fund helps support 4 or more active medical students – usually one from each academic year. Those students are awarded the scholarship in their first year and usually continue to receive help all four years. Most, but not all of those students attend the University of Rochester (UR) School of Medicine.

In addition to the regular annual scholarships for medical students, the Committee also oversees two additional awards. The Edward T. Mulligan, MD Memorial Award is named for Dr. Mulligan who was a revered Rochester surgeon whose career was shortened by his untimely death in 1975. The award is endowed by the Mulligan Family. The award is granted to one graduating UR medical student who will be staying in Rochester for residency. The John J. Morton, MD and John H. Morton, MD Memorial Scholarship is an additional award overseen by the Scholarship Committee. John J. Morton was the first Chairman of Surgery at the UR in 1925, and his son John H. Morton was a respected surgeon and teacher at the UR Medical Center until his death in 2005. The award is endowed by the Morton family. This scholarship is given to one or more deserving and

financially needy UR fourth year medical student who will be doing a residency in a surgical field and is committed to community service.

The highly competitive 2017 MCMS Scholarship has been awarded to **Tianna Maria Negrón**. Ms. Negrón, a native of South Carolina and child of a career military mom, frequently moved from city to city. She was brought up solely by her mom and eventually they settled in Rochester where Tianna spent a majority of her childhood years. She graduated with honors in 2015 from The Johns Hopkins University with a BA in Public Health Studies. She continued at Johns Hopkins and received a Masters of Health Science in Mental Health the following year. Her early interest in medicine stemmed from medical issues in herself and her family. In college, she chose to major in Public Health to see what factors other than science and genetics have on an individual's health. In Baltimore, she had many opportunities to work in the community. Primarily, she volunteered at the Baltimore Rescue Mission. There she first handedly saw the impact of poverty on health. She spent numerous hours a week tutoring underprivileged students around the Hopkins campus. She also was an intern for the International Rescue Committee which helped refugees settle in the United States. Tianna has been commended for her abilities to juggle academics, work, and several volunteer commitments. The Chair of the Health

Professions Committee stated “when meeting Tianna for the first time, it is impossible not to recognize the kind, compassionate, and energetic woman that she is.” The Committee is quite confident that Tianna will live up to their expectations.

The Edward T. Mulligan, MD Memorial Award for 2017 has been awarded to **Dr. John Mariano**, a 2017 graduate of the UR. Dr. Mariano is a native of Rochester. He graduated magna cum laude from Cornell University in 2010. Following graduation, he was awarded the prestigious Oak Ridge Institute for Science and Education research fellowship at the FDA in Bethesda, Maryland. He spent two years doing cancer research there. Throughout his academic career in medical school, Dr. Mariano was avidly involved in cancer research with Dr. Jessica Shand at the Golisano Children’s Hospital. This included a year devoted to research after being selected for an American Society of Hematology Physician Scientist Career Development Award. Dr. Shand stated that John was “the best student I have ever worked with” and that he “is that exceedingly rare student that combines passion, humility, maturity, clinical acumen, scientific insight and commitment to improving the lives of children and young adults.” He was selected by his peers to be inducted into the Gold Humanism Honor Society based on his outstanding humanistic qualities. He was also elected to Alpha Omega Alpha and was ranked in the highest category of graduating medical students. Dr. Mariano also exemplified leadership by making major contributions to the Annual Free High School Physical Program and the student run UR Well free clinic, both integral parts of the UR School of Medicine. He is currently in the Medicine-

Pediatrics residency at the UR. The Committee feels that Dr. Mariano will far exceed their expectations and eventually succeed in his professional career.

The Committee chose **Dr. Leah Conant** for this year’s Morton Scholarship. Leah is a recent graduate of the UR School of Medicine. She recently began a General Surgery residency at Washington University in St. Louis Missouri. A native of St. Louis, she was selected into the competitive Rochester Early Medical Scholars (REMS) program for talented high school students interested in a medical career. Consequently, she attended the UR for undergraduate and medical school studies. Her undergraduate degree was in Spanish. She graduated cum laude and was elected into the Phi Beta Kappa Society. In 2012 and 2013, she worked as a summer research fellow at Washington University where she did research on breast cancer. At the UR she also worked on uterine cancer research. These research experiences were instrumental in her decision to pursue surgery, particularly oncologic surgery. During medical school, she was very active in leadership positions as a member of her Class Council and as Interclass Senate President. She was also instrumental in leading the student portion of the Liaison Committee on Medical Education for reaccreditation of the medical school. Her mentor in a surgical sub-internship stated that “Leah is without question one of the best medical students I have ever had the pleasure of working with during my time at the UR.” It is without doubt that both Dr. Mortons, dedicated surgeons themselves, would have been honored to choose Dr. Conant for the scholarship bearing their name. The Committee would concur.

**The Scholarship Fund Committee commends all of this year’s recipients and is confident that they will all succeed in their endeavors.**