

An Indelible Mark: TCMC Mourns the Loss of Charter Class Graduate, Dr. Jennifer Sidari



Just weeks after The Commonwealth Medical College (TCMC) celebrated the first ever MD graduation ceremony, one of the promising new doctors, Jennifer Sidari, passed away unexpectedly on May 29 leaving a tremendous void where her extraordinary talent, passion, and ambition should have been. A member of TCMC's charter class and a graduate of The University of Scranton, Jennifer was a compassionate and joyful friend, classmate, and doctor who deeply cared for the welfare of others and worked tirelessly for their benefit.

Locally, Jennifer volunteered at the Care and Concern Clinic in Pittston, Pennsylvania. She operated a pediatric clinic in Haiti this past spring and had also taken trips to South Africa and Oakland, California to work with HIV-infected children.

"Jennifer's character demonstrated depth of compassion, humility, and commitment to justice," said Janet Townsend, MD, chair, Department of Family, Community, and Rural Health at TCMC. "She was able to form partnerships and friendships wherever she went. To be in her presence as she learned and reflected on her experiences was a great joy."

Set to begin her residency training in pediatrics at the Janet Weis Children's Hospital in Danville, Pennsylvania in early June, Jennifer always loved children and was anxious to make a difference as a pediatrician.

Valerie D. Weber, MD, MS, chair, Department of Clinical Sciences, and associate dean for Clinical Affairs at TCMC, witnessed Jennifer's extraordinary compassion. "Jennifer radiated joy when working with children," Dr. Weber said. "Some people live their whole lives without finding their calling—but it was clear Jennifer had found hers and she would have

become an outstanding pediatrician. Although she will be greatly missed, she left an indelible mark on TCMC and on those she touched during her time caring for patients as a medical student."

Despite her shortened life, Jennifer was already recognized for her accomplishments. She was nominated by the American Medical Association for its Physicians of Tomorrow Award, and TCMC honored her with its Global Pride Award, established in

memory of Jennifer's mentor, Dr. Raymond Smego. While she received many accolades, Jennifer will most be remembered for her selflessness, her smile, and her loving spirit.

"Jennifer was a remarkable student and a remarkable individual and was going to be a wonderful doctor," stated Steven J. Scheinman, MD, TCMC president and dean. "Her class, the charter class of TCMC, included many stars; but among them, she stood out. There was an exuberant joy about everything she did. She was passionate about helping people and about children and was tremendously excited

to be heading to a career in pediatrics. Her patients would have been fortunate to have such a wonderful doctor. In her commitment to TCMC, to her classmates, to her family, and to her community, she exemplified the best hopes of the founders of the College."

Jennifer is survived by her parents, two siblings, her fiancé, and many extended family members, all of whom hope Jennifer's life's work will be continued by her TCMC classmates. The Jennifer Sidari, M.D., Scholarship Fund was established at TCMC in her memory. Donations may be sent to the Development Office, The Commonwealth Medical College, 525 Pine St., Scranton, PA 18509.

