

## Falmouth Physician Honored as “Preceptor of the Year” by UK



*NC AHEC Center Director Karkie Tackett congratulates Dr. Kalfas after the UK award ceremony.*

After a morning spent making rounds seeing his patients at St. Luke Hospital in Ft. Thomas, Dr. Mike Kalfas breezes into the Patient First Group clinic in Falmouth. A smiling man with twinkling eyes, dark curly hair and a neat beard, he greets patients and staff members as he begins work. He is accompanied by a UK medical student who has just started her month-long clinical experience with him. Teaching medical students is a role that Dr. Kalfas relishes, and one that recently gained him the title of “Preceptor of the Year” for the UK College of Medicine. He has been teaching both UK and University of Louisville medical students since 1999, and usually averages six students a year.

Dr. Kalfas, accompanied by his wife Laura, was honored by UK in a September 25, 2003 ceremony in Lexington. In presenting Dr. Kalfas with the award, Dr. James C. Norton, Associate Dean for Extramural and Graduate Medical Education for UK, recognized the time and effort that it takes to teach medical students, and thanked Dr. Kalfas for his commitment to medical education.

Dr. Kalfas is a native of northern Kentucky, and grew up in Highland Heights. He graduated from Campbell County High School and went to UK for both undergraduate and medical school. He completed a family practice residency at Bethesda North Hospital in Cincinnati. He jokingly says that he hasn’t ever gone far from northern Kentucky, either during medical school or residency. He credits an AHEC rotation during UK medical school with pointing him toward family medicine in a rural area. He did an AHEC rotation with Dr. Ardy Wright, a family practitioner in Cynthiana, and says “that made me start thinking about rural family practice. Before that, I was sure I was going to practice pediatrics in the suburbs.”

Dr. Kalfas says that he enjoys teaching medical students because “they keep me on my toes. I really have to know my stuff in order to explain it to the students.” He likes to show medical students how practicing medicine in a rural area is different than what they see in the large teaching medical center. “The rural perspective is different and I can share that with the students,” he says. In addition to teaching medical students in his clinic, he travels to the Bethesda residency every Thursday to teach the family practice residents there.

In addition to his practice and teaching responsibilities, Dr. Kalfas serves as the medical director for the St. Luke Alcohol and Drug Treatment Center in Falmouth and the adolescent intensive outpatient treatment program at St. Luke Hospital West in Florence. He is a frequent visitor to area high schools talking with students about the realities of alcohol and drug abuse.

He and his wife Laura live in Grants Lick in nearby Campbell county with their three young children. Laura teaches at Grant’s Lick School. It is obvious that Dr. Kalfas enjoys his varied roles as physician, community member, family man and teacher. NC AHEC Center Director Karkie Tackett said of Dr. Kalfas, “He is an outstanding role model for medical students to emulate, as well as being an exemplary teacher. We salute him for his work and his fine example.”



*Rose Mueller (left), NC AHEC Student Coordinator, talks with Dr. Kalfas (right) and UK Medical student, Emily Wolff (center).*

## Grant County is Home to Newest Promotores

Nine Hispanic women who live and work in rural Grant county are the latest to graduate from the *Promotores* program. *Promotores* (health promoter in Spanish) are community volunteers who complete a 12 week health education program designed to increase their knowledge of basic health topics, such as common health problems, chronic disease, children's health, domestic violence, cancer, AIDS, heart disease, CPR, and first aid. The Grant county program was a collaborative effort between the NC AHEC, the Grant County Migrant Education Program, and HealthPoint Family Care. Pamela Mann, advocate and recruiter for the Grant County Migrant Education Program, recruited the class members and made logistical arrangements for the class.

The class participants attended three-hour classes every Thursday morning for twelve weeks in September, October and November, 2003. Because most of the participants spoke very little English, the class was held in Spanish. Instructor Cora Garcia, Hispanic health educator for HealthPoint Family Care, conducted the classes using an extensive curriculum developed by the Midwest Migrant Health Information Office, and updated by the staff of the NC AHEC. The material was adapted for Kentucky, with special emphasis on Kentucky health resources. Classes were held at the Dry Ridge Baptist Church, and transportation and child care were provided by the Grant County Migrant Education/Even Start staff.

Most of the class participants are in their twenties and thirties. They are home-makers, or they hold down full time jobs in local businesses or factories, often working the second or third shift. All are married, with husbands who work in agriculture. Many have one or two young children. The majority of participants are from Mexico, and they shared stories with each other of their families and growing up in Mexico. They all indicated that they took the class to become better informed about health and to help their neighbors and friends.

The graduation ceremony on November 20<sup>th</sup> was a festive affair. Karkie Tackett, NC AHEC Center Director, presented each graduate with her own blood pressure cuff, stethoscope, thermometer and basic first aid kit. She encouraged them to use their new knowledge to promote good health practices within their homes and communities, and to continue learning about health. The new *Promotores* plan to meet periodically to update their knowledge and to share ideas about improving the communities' health.



*The New Grant County promotores pose with instructor Cora Garcia (4th from left) and Pamela Mann (6th from left).*