



## The Health Plan to Award Full Medical School Scholarship to Matewan Native

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Matewan, W.Va. — A Matewan native is attending medical school at the West Virginia School of Osteopathic Medicine (WVSOM) without the burden of tuition and fees thanks to a medical scholarship program offered by The Health Plan (THP).

WVSOM first-year student Lenzie Stiltner has been awarded The Health Plan Scholarship, which covers tuition and fees and is renewable for four years, allowing Lenzie to graduate medical school without worrying about those costs.

"I am truly grateful to The Health Plan for awarding me this scholarship, which allows me to pursue my lifelong dream of becoming a physician," Stiltner said. "Growing up in Matewan I was shaped by a community that instilled in me the values of resilience, compassion, and service. My goal is to return home after my training to practice rural medicine, giving back to the community that raised me and working to improve access to quality healthcare within our region."

Since 2009, The Health Plan has provided more than \$3 million in full scholarships to more than 50 medical and nursing students who attend West Virginia institutions and intend to practice healthcare in West Virginia. Stiltner is one of four students awarded a full medical scholarship this year.

"Our team was really taken with Lenzie's pride in her hometown of Matewan and her passion for improving healthcare access in rural West Virginia," said Jeff Knight, President and CEO of The Health Plan. "We anticipate great things from Lenzie and know her hard work, compassion and love for Mingo County will serve our state well."

Knight was joined by James W. Nemitz, Ph.D., president of WVSOM, Lenzie's family, several members of the faculty at Mingo Central High School and other local leaders to announce the award.

Nemitz thanked Knight and The Health Plan for offering the scholarship program at WVSOM, which educates an average of 800 medical students each year. According to a report by the West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission, the school is No. 1 in producing both primary care physicians who practice in West Virginia and who practice in rural areas of the state.

"With this program, The Health Plan is directly impacting the physician shortage in West Virginia. WVSOM is appreciative that The Health Plan includes osteopathic medical students in its scholarship program. Medical school is not inexpensive. This scholarship, by financially assisting recipients who want to stay in West Virginia, benefits not only our students but the state," Nemitz said.

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- **The Health Plan to award a full medical school scholarship to Matewan Native.**
- **Since 2009, The Health Plan has provided more than \$3 million in full scholarships to more than 50 medical and nursing students who attend West Virginia institutions and intend to practice in West Virginia.**
- The Health Plan hopes to make an impact in the shortage of physicians and nurses in the state of West Virginia.
- **The Health Plan emphasized its commitment to the community, both financially and hands-on involvement in improving our state.**

