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**Dr. Alfred Gitu Named Family Medicine Residency Program Director**

(Fort Myers, Fla. – May 8, 2018) --- Alfred Gitu, M.D., has been named the next program director of The Florida State University College of Medicine Family Medicine Residency Program at Lee Health. Dr. Gitu has been a faculty member since the program launched in 2012 and has served as associate program director for the past year.

“Through a national search we were able to attract a number of outstanding candidates—a strong indication of the reputation our family medicine residency program has established in a relatively short time,” says Joan Meek, M.D., associate dean for graduate medical education at The Florida State University College of Medicine. “Ultimately, the top candidate was our own Dr. Gitu. He has earned the high respect of administration, faculty, staff and residents, and we look forward to his leadership and efforts in building on the firm foundation of the program that Dr. [Gary] Goforth established.”

Dr. Gitu is board certified in family medicine. He earned his medical degree from the University of Nairobi in Nairobi, Kenya, and completed a family medicine residency at the Self Regional Healthcare Family Medicine Residency Program in Greenwood, S.C.

“Dr. Gitu is an experienced faculty member, a strong leader, and a kind and capable family medicine physician who is dedicated to caring for the underserved,” Dr. Goforth says. “He has been integral to the success of our program, and I am proud that FSU and Lee Health chose to promote from within the program. I am pleased that Dr. Gitu accepted the position and I have all the confidence that he will prosper in this leadership role.”

Dr. Goforth, who will retire in July, helped establish the residency program and was its first director. Under his leadership and two years after its inception, the program was approved for expansion to 24 residents and received continued accreditation with commendation from the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME) for the following 10 years without a single citation for improvement.

Based at Lee Memorial Hospital with The Florida State University College of Medicine as its institutional sponsor, the residency program was created to abate the shortage of primary care physicians anticipated nationally, an issue that is compounded locally by rapid population growth in Southwest Florida. Medical school graduates are required to complete residency training in their chosen specialty to become independently practicing physicians. Statistically, about 60% of residents will practice medicine in the same area in which they are trained. Since the program started, 13 of the 18 graduates (or 68%) have stayed in Southwest Florida following graduation from the program. Two graduates were accepted into fellowship programs with one planning to return to the area to practice medicine following his fellowship.

**About Lee Health**

*Since the opening of the first hospital in 1916, Lee Health has been a health care leader in Southwest Florida, constantly evolving to meet the needs of the community. A non-profit, integrated health care services organization, Lee Health is committed to the well-being of every individual served, focused on healthy living and maintaining good health. Staffed by caring people, inspiring health, services are conveniently located throughout the community in four acute care hospitals, two specialty hospitals, outpatient centers, walk-in medical centers, primary care and*

*specialty physician practices and other services across the continuum of care. Formerly known as Lee Memorial Health System, the organization began its second century of service with a new name in 2016. Learn more at [www.LeeHealth.org](http://www.LeeHealth.org).*