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FNP/PA Program welcomes newest students in White Coat Ceremony

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The FNP/PA Program class of 2013.

The Family Nurse Practitioner and Physician Assistant Program (FNP/PA) on Wednesday held a White Coat Ceremony to welcome its newest class of incoming students.

Similar to the tradition among medical students, the ceremony included second-year FNP/PA students "passing" white coats on to their first-year classmates as a rite of passage into formal clinical training and interactions with patients.

The FNP/PA's class of 2013 consists of 31 students, 68 percent of whom are female, and 32 percent who are male. They have an average of 4.6 years of clinical experience. The students range in age from 24 to 57, with the average age being 36.

Incoming student Abigail Mark-Ekpendu, right, accepts her coat from second-year student Dustin Jacot.

One-third of the incoming students are from ethnic minority groups, while 29 percent of them are from foreign countries who speak 18 languages other than English.

The mission of the FNP/PA Program is to educate healthcare professionals to

deliver care as a member of a healthcare team and to improve the availability of culturally relevant primary healthcare in underserved populations throughout California. Graduates possess the ability to evaluate the health status of an individual, diagnose and treat acute illness, manage chronic diseases, deliver preventive care, and counsel individuals on psychosocial problems in collaboration with a supervising physician.