

## **2008 JSI/NRHA Student Leadership Award**

### **Deanah Maxwell**

Dr. Deanah Maxwell has made the service of rural areas her priority. Her dedication, enthusiasm and leadership have earned her attention from her teachers, her peers, and the National Rural Health Association.

Dr. Maxwell first became involved in rural health as an 11th grader at Booker T. Washington High School in Tuskegee, Alabama when she participated in the Rural Health Scholars Program at the University of Alabama College of Community Health Sciences. She graduated from the University of Alabama at Birmingham with a B.S. in Medical Technology. At the University of Alabama at Birmingham, Dr. Maxwell was Minority Presidential Scholar, Toyota Community Scholar and class president. She earned the Scholastic Medical Technology Student award for highest GPA in the program and was named to the President's list, Dean's list and the National Dean's List. Dr. Maxwell returned to the University of Alabama College of Community Health Sciences to graduate from the Rural Medical Scholars Program.

Dr. Maxwell's passion for rural health has also shown through her extensive volunteerism. She was community service chair for Seta Phi Beta Sorority and a volunteer for Birmingham AIDS Outreach, Whatley Elementary School, Alternative Spring Break and the Children's Hospital. Dr. Maxwell's professional goals include returning to her community as a family practitioner and serving as a role model for area youth. She has already succeeded in the latter, serving as a counselor for the Minority Rural Pipeline program. According to the director of the program, Dr. Maxwell "was focused and determined to make sure that the students had the best experience possible. Dr. Maxwell served as a great mentor and inspiration for the students, having achieved the goal they had set for themselves."

Dr. Maxwell's dedication to improving rural health in Alabama shines in her decisions about her education and her future as a family physician in underserved Macon County. She chose the Rural Medical Scholars Program as part of her education, saying "The RMSP is about creating more than a clinician. It's about developing leaders who happen to be physicians." Dr. Maxwell is currently a family practice resident in the Tuscaloosa Family Practice Residency Program and continues her volunteer and leadership efforts. Her efforts to organize and supply volunteer medical staff to the Good Samaritan free clinic in Tuscaloosa have earned her the respect and appreciation of her community.