Dr. Emily Kirby Awards 2026 Texas Medical Excellence Scholarship

November 24, 2026

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Board-Certified Plastic Surgeon Dr. Emily Kirby has announced that Sanjna Das, a fourth-year medical student at the Long School of Medicine at UT Health San Antonio, is the recipient of the 2026 Texas Medical Excellence Scholarship. Das will receive the $2,500 scholarship award to support her medical education.

Dr. Kirby launched the scholarship in 2024 for Texas students working toward careers in medicine and related healthcare fields. She created the award to help ease the cost of training for students entering the profession. Each year, the selection committee chooses one student based on their academic excellence and commitment to forwarding the field of medicine.

"We are honored to support Sanjna as she finishes medical school," said Dr. Kirby, Founder and Medical Director of Kirby Plastic Surgery and Kalos Medical Spa. "Her work with patients at home and in the Dominican Republic reflects the kind of commitment we hoped to recognize when we started this scholarship."

Das described her motivation in an October 2025 Q&A for the Be The Good program of Reed Public Relations, which helped fund her work abroad. "My passion for medicine has been shaped by my interest in serving others, especially those who are marginalized," she wrote. She added that she has grown committed to giving compassionate care to patients whose language and culture differ from her own.

In 2024 and 2025, Das traveled to the Dominican Republic with Project Hispaniola, a yearly outreach trip her school organizes with Buen Samaritano, a Dominican partner. During the 2025 trip, her team devoted its first week to research on prenatal care and folate use among expectant and new mothers, then ran clinics in five bateyes, the villages where sugarcane plantation workers live with little access to medical care. Das triaged patients, examined them in Spanish, filled prescriptions, and made home visits. Her Be The Good grant covered six months of blood pressure medication for the patients the team treated.

In San Antonio, Das volunteers with a harm reduction organization that offers wound care to people who use injection drugs. The skills she learned in street medicine carried over to her work abroad, where she cared for a woman's diabetic foot ulcer and taught her, in Spanish, how to change the dressing. Das hopes to build a career in global health in Spanish-speaking countries. "This is the type of work I see myself doing in the future," she wrote.

"I have always believed that good medicine starts with showing up for the patients who need it most, and Sanjna has done exactly that throughout medical school," Dr. Kirby noted. "We are excited to follow her as she moves on to residency."

Any Texas resident studying for a career in medicine or a related field may apply, and the committee particularly welcomes applications from North Texas students pursuing an MD. The recipient may use the award for tuition, books, school supplies, required technology, campus meals, housing, and transportation.

Dr. Kirby opened her Fort Worth practice in 2011. She is board-certified through the American Board of Plastic Surgery and was the first woman named Chief of Plastic Surgery at Texas Health Harris Methodist Hospital. Her practice includes City Surgery Center, a private, Quad A-accredited surgical suite, and Kalos Medical Spa, which she oversees.

For more information about the scholarship, call Kirby Plastic Surgery at (817) 292-4200 or visit the website. Her office is at 5075 Edwards Ranch Rd in Fort Worth.

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Kirby Plastic Surgery

Board Certified Plastic Surgeon Dr. Emily J. Kirby is the founder and owner of Kirby Plastic Surgery, where she offers aesthetic and reconstructive procedures. The practice also offers non-surgical treatments at Kalos Medical Spa within the practice.

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