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CONTACT:

[JKSCommunications](http://JKSCommunications.com)

Marissa DeCuir

347.574.3136

[marissa@jkscommunications.com](mailto:marissa@jkscommunications.com)

Twitter: [@JKSLitpublicity](https://twitter.com/JKSLitpublicity)

**COURTSHIP A TIMELESS TALE OF YOUNG DOCTORS IN LOVE**

*Before the era of emails and texts, editor Martha Fitzgerald's parents courted by pen and paper, sharing their passion for the healing profession.*

**SHREVEPORT, LA – June 2012** – In 1937, medical students began a two-year correspondence across 1,100 miles, and their fancy turned to deep respect and abiding love. Alice Baker of New Orleans and Joe Holoubek of Omaha became Dr. Alice and Dr. Joe, a professional couple known for their unbreakable bond. *The Courtship of Two Doctors: a 1930s Love Story of Letters, Hope & Healing* (Aug. 15, 2012, Little Dove Press) chronicles their early history, providing an inspiring look at the birth of a marriage and a lifetime of service.

Alice and Joe met during a summer fellowship at Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minnesota, and dreamed of returning there for postgraduate training. It was the waning days of the Depression, and war was beginning to rumble overseas. Grave illness and career setbacks shook their confidence, but the two decided to face their uncertain future together, trusting in each other and the relationship they built letter by letter.

Compiled from a private collection of nearly 800 letters by daughter Martha Fitzgerald, *The Courtship of Two Doctors* recreates the medical era before antibiotics, when health workers were at risk of serious infection, and vividly illustrates the 1930s social barriers challenging two-career marriages. It relates the real-life romance that inspired Dr. Joe's 2004 novel *Letters to Luke* ([letterstoluke.com/](http://letterstoluke.com/)), winner of the Writers Digest Award for inspirational literature and the Independent Publisher Award for religious fiction.

"I hope to inspire new generations of servant healers, encourage young couples to cherish one another, and generate new interest in personal family history," said author and editor Fitzgerald. "I encourage readers to consider anew what treasures lie in your attics or cedar chests—diaries, scrapbooks, wartime correspondence, or other letters lovingly preserved by parents or grandparents. Consider donating them to a local historical archive. But first, spend time with these treasures and rediscover your forbears." Fitzgerald has placed an annotated edition of the complete courtship collection in medical archives in Louisiana, Nebraska, and Minnesota.

*Courtship* has received early praise in medical and literary circles. "What a delight it is to savor this book of letters," said novelist Judy Christie, author of the *Green* series. According to Chancellor Robert A. Barish M.D. of LSU Health Shreveport, this is "must" reading for physicians in training: "A lesson from those who came before that great obstacles can be overcome and all will be worth it in the end." Proceeds from book sales benefit the medical school Dr. Joe co-founded, a local marriage ministry, and other causes Fitzgerald shares with her parents.

Fitzgerald, an award-winning journalist of 27 years, served as a columnist and associate editorial page editor for the Shreveport *Times*. Now an independent editor, writer and publisher, she owns Martha Fitzgerald Consulting ([marthafitzgerald.com](http://marthafitzgerald.com)) and Little Dove Press ([littledovepress.com/](http://littledovepress.com/)). She and her husband, both Louisiana natives, enjoy living on a quiet country road in a bend of the Red River.

Website: [LittleDovePress.com](http://LittleDovePress.com)



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