

David M Lawrence, MD, Community Service Sabbatical Award

Dr Hara Connects Residents With Community Clinics

By Joan Jackson; John Edmiston



Jimmy Hara, MD, FAAFP

Jimmy Hara, MD, FAAFP, long noted for his contributions on behalf of community health in the Los Angeles area, is taking a three-month sabbatical.

While some take sabbaticals for rest and retreat, Dr Hara will be using his to increase

linkages between community clinics and Kaiser Permanente (KP) Graduate Medical Education (GME) Residency Programs in collaboration with the Community Clinic Association of Los Angeles County.

Dr Hara, Director of the Family Practice Residency Program, KP Los Angeles Medical Center, and Southern California Permanente Medical Group (SCPMG) Regional Director of GME, has been honored as the first recipient of the new David M Lawrence, MD, Community Service Sabbatical Award. The award includes a fully paid leave for up to three months plus a \$10,000 contribution to the community-based, nonprofit organization where the recipient spends the sabbatical—in this case, the Community Clinic Association of Los Angeles County. The award aims to document and highlight the significant accomplishments and learnings that Dr Hara

has generated over the years so that KP can continue to build on community partnerships that are vital to its mission.

Awarded by the Kaiser Foundation Health Plan and Hospitals Board of Directors and named for former Chairman and CEO David M Lawrence, MD, the sabbatical was created to acknowledge a KP physician or employee who has made an outstanding contribution to the health of a specific KP community.

Dr Hara has volunteered at the Venice Family Clinic, the largest independent free clinic in the nation, for over 30 years. He has also served as a volunteer and member of the Board of Directors of the Venice Free Clinic for over 20 years,

giving thousands of hours of time during nights and weekends.

In addition to his clinical service, he is a member of the University of California Los Angeles (UCLA) medical school faculty, working with medical students at the UCLA Salvation Army Homeless Shelter Medical Outreach Clinic in Santa Monica and the UCLA Salvation Army Transitional Housing Village Medical Clinic in Westwood. He has actively integrated a community clinic/safety net component into the practical training of medical residents. Over a span of two decades, Dr Hara's weekly corral of medical residents heading to clinics serving Los Angeles's most vulnerable has become legendary.



Dr Hara meets with residents at the Los Angeles Free Clinic.



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When asked how he feels about this special recognition, Dr Hara deflects the focus from himself. “I am proud of my residency graduates,” he says. “By exposing them to free clinic and clinic work, many of them have chosen to continue volunteering in clinics after completion of their training, and some have even gone on to careers at community clinics, free clinics, and disproportionate-share hospitals.”

Dr Hara will use the sabbatical not only to increase linkages between community clinics and KP Residency Programs through the Community Clinic Association of Los Angeles County but will identify additional community health center sites for residency rotations. His work will be aimed at deepening residency linkages by recruiting additional physician specialists as volunteers in community-based clinics in Los Angeles County.

David Lawrence, MD, for whom the sabbatical was named, expressed his delight with the Board’s choice for this first award: “The career of Dr Hara has been devoted to both his patients and his community. He is an outstanding representative for Kaiser Permanente and a wonderful first choice to receive this award.” ❖

When assessing the outstanding submissions for the first David M Lawrence, MD, Community Service Sabbatical Award, the KFHP/H Board of Directors was so impressed with the community work being done, they decided to recognize two additional nominees—Joseph Phaneuf, MD, chief of Staff Education, Union City Medical Offices, KP Northern California Region; and Byron E Conner, MD, Internal Medicine, Skyline Medical Center, Colorado Region.

Dr Phaneuf, who envisioned and spearheaded the Ashland Free Medical Clinic, was honored with a \$20,000 grant to the clinic. The Ashland Clinic will provide basic medical, dental, and mental health care to uninsured residents in the communities of Ashland and Cherryland, California. These communities have among the lowest per capita average income in Alameda County.

Dr Conner, a Colorado Permanente Medical Group physician since 1987, has been recognized with a \$12,000 donation to the Metro Denver Black Church Initiative. The funding will be used to assist health care professionals in recruiting and training lay health advisors to teach preventive health care in the target areas of heart disease, diabetes, and sexually transmitted diseases in churches, community centers, and schools.

In announcing the awards, George Halvorson, Chairman and CEO, KFHP/H, and Thomas Chapman, Chair of the Board of Directors Selection Committee, said the committee was impressed with the scope of community service provided by all of the applicants. “Each has gone above and beyond the requirements of their positions at KP, providing thousands of hours of their own time to improve the health of their communities through volunteerism and freely sharing their expertise and passion for bringing high-quality health care to the most vulnerable members of our population. They are exemplary models of what Kaiser Permanente is all about: People. Understanding. Health.”

For more information on the David M Lawrence, MD, Community Service Sabbatical Award, contact John Edmiston, Community Benefit Program, at john.l.edmiston@kp.org or 510-271-6381. ❖



Joseph Phaneuf, MD



Byron E Conner, MD

Small Things

We are called not to do great things but to do small things with great love.

— Mother Teresa of Calcutta, 1910-1997, 1979 Nobel Prize winner,
Roman Catholic nun and founder of the Missionaries of Charity