



For Immediate Release
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California Academy of Family Physicians Foundation Names Dereck De Leon, MD 2018 Educator of the Year

Dr. De Leon, of San Diego, recognized for excellence in training physicians

San Francisco – The California Academy of Family Physicians Foundation (CAFP-F) has named Dereck De Leon, MD winner of the 2018 Barbara Harris Award for Excellence in Education. Dr. De Leon, who practices family medicine in San Diego, was selected from among CAFPs 10,000 members statewide.

“Over more than 25 years, Dr. De Leon has taught and mentored several hundred medical students, residents, staff physicians and others in health care disciplines,” said CAFPs President Lisa Ward, MD, MSPH, MS. “Colleagues say he’s also an ‘outstanding, ‘compassionate’ and ‘popular’ physician to his patients, some of whom have been with him for more than 20 years.”

He also is playing a key role in developing the Kaiser Permanente School of Medicine, which will be located in Pasadena, California.

After Dr. De Leon began practicing with the Southern California Permanente Group in San Diego in 1992, he soon began teaching medical students at the University of California, San Diego, where he currently holds a volunteer Associate Clinical Professor position. He has served as Director of Education for the Kaiser Permanente San Diego (KPSD) Family Medicine Department, Director of Continuing Medical Education (CME) for KPSD, and CME surveyor for the State of California.

He also is the Founding Director of the KPSD Family Medicine Residency Program. In 2008, he advocated to KPSD leadership to start KPSD’s sixth Family Medicine Residency. After gaining approval, he led the process of faculty recruitment, curriculum development, accreditation and more, and opened the program to the first class of residents in 2012. The program has achieved a 100 percent pass rate for physicians seeking American Board of Family Medicine Certification after completing the training. Under Dr. Leon’s leadership, the program has increased the diversity of family physicians in training and expanded its work in underserved communities. In fact, in 2014 the KPSD Family Medicine Residency Program received the R.J. Erickson National Diversity and Inclusion Award.

Some of Dr. De Leon’s other recognitions include being named KPSD Family Physician of the year and Partner of the year in 2011 and “Top Doc” by San Diego Magazine.

As a member of the Executive Curriculum Committee preparing for the KP School of Medicine, Dr. De Leon chairs the third- and fourth-year training subcommittee. Few physicians have had the opportunity to both start a new residency program and then help start a new medical school, but Dr. De Leon's stellar career includes both.

Nationally, he works with the Education Committee of the Association of Family Medicine Residency Program Directors and with the American Board of Family Medicine on a task force that created and evaluated the Post-Graduate Survey for family medicine residency programs.

Locally, Dr. De Leon is passionate about creating a pipeline to help mentor and support students from underrepresented backgrounds who have an interest in family medicine. Five years ago he created and since has overseen the Summer Urban Fellowship Program based in the Otay Mesa/San Ysidro community, one of the most impoverished areas of San Diego. This year-round program provides high school students with exposure to the health professions and mentoring about how to get accepted to college and navigate once there. More than 90 percent of the students in this program have gone on to four-year universities.

Dr. De Leon earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Molecular Biology and a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Economics from the University of Washington. He received his Doctor of Medicine degree from Universidad del Caribe de Cayey, Bayamon, Puerto Rico and completed his residency at Riverside County Hospital/Loma Linda University Family Medicine Residency. He finished a Faculty Development Fellowship at the UCSD School of Medicine and the National Institute for Program Director Development Fellowship as well.

He has been married to his wife Nelly for 27 years, has a son Alexander in medical school and a daughter Arianna who is in law school.

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About the California Academy of Family Physicians: *With more than 10,000 members, including active practicing family physicians, residents in family medicine, and medical students interested in the specialty, CAFP is the largest primary care medical society in California. Family physicians are trained to treat an entire family's medical needs, addressing the whole spectrum of life's medical challenges. FPs serve a broad base of patients in urban, suburban and rural areas, often in California's most underserved areas.*