

Homer G. Phillips and the Legacy of Public Hospitals in St. Louis

In 1905 Dr. John Green, President of the St. Louis Medical Society, with a keen understanding of the plight of public hospitals in other cities issued this charge to St. Louis physicians on the eve of opening a new City Hospital:

"Will it vouchsafe to the pauper a medical care equivalent to that which his pecuniarily more fortunate fellow citizens receive? Will it fulfill to the utmost its function of providing instruction in practical medicine to the undergraduate student? And will our hospital be thoroughly in accord with the spirit of medical enlightenment?"

*Presidential Report, St. Louis Medical Review
January 14, 1905*

A succession of public hospitals failed in that charge -- City Hospital No. 1 (Max C. Starkloff), City Hospital No. 2, and St. Louis County Hospital, despite their professed missions, opened as segregated facilities. Only under duress, and toward the twilight of their existence, did they admit and treat irrespective of race, creed or color. There is one bright exception, the Homer G. Phillips Hospital. It opened its doors as a truly "public" facility in 1937, still shrouded in intrigue after the mysterious assassination of its main advocate and benefactor, attorney Homer Gilliam Phillips. At a time in American society when people of color were restricted from most medical training programs, the Homer G. Phillips Hospital became the premier training ground for African American medical professionals -- many of whom remained to deliver high quality health care in the St. Louis area and who later assumed prestigious positions throughout the nation. The successes of its subsequent years of operation (as well as the complex issues surrounding its closure) became legendary in the annals of public hospitals. It closed its doors on August 17, 1979, followed by St. Louis City No. 1 in 1985, St. Louis County Hospital in 1987, and St. Louis Regional Hospital in 1997. While we cannot now walk the halls of Homer G. Phillips Hospital, we can learn much from its history, presented by the very people who strived diligently to provide culturally sensitive care to the patients who so deeply trusted and loved them and their hospital. This lecture series is named in honor of the historic Homer G. Phillips Hospital in St. Louis.

 Washington
University in St. Louis
SCHOOL OF MEDICINE

The Homer G. Phillips Public Health Lecture Series

"Healing Communities - A Local and International Perspective"



Guest Speaker:

Frank Richards Jr., M.D., F.A.A.P.

*Director of Parasitic Disease Control Programs,
The Carter Center*

Friday, October 15, 2010

**Washington University School of Medicine
Eric P. Newman Education Center (EPNEC)**

**320 South Euclid Avenue
Saint Louis, Missouri 63110**

5:30 p.m.
Cocktails
Atrium

6:30 p.m.
Dinner
Great Rooms

7:30 p.m.
Lecture
Auditorium

Speaker: Frank Richards Jr.



Dr. Frank Richards Jr., an expert in tropical infectious diseases, came to The Carter Center from the U.S. Center for Disease Control and Prevention where he spent more than 20 years in a career focused on parasitic disease control and eradication in the Americas and Africa. Over the course of his career he has worked on schistosomiasis control in Egypt, Guinea worm eradication in Cameroon, lymphatic filariasis elimination in Haiti and Nigeria, and malaria control in Guatemala, Nigeria and Ethiopia. Dr. Richards' particular expertise is in onchocerciasis (river blindness) and the delivery of Mectizan® tablets (donated by Merck & Co.) through mass drug administration programs. He has been involved in the Guatemalan

Mectizan distribution program since 1987 and in the Nigerian Mectizan distribution program since 1992. He participated in the launching and operations of two major regional river blindness programs endorsed by the World Health Organization: The Onchocerciasis Elimination Program for the Americas (launched in 1992), which reaches six countries in the Americas, and the African Programme for Onchocerciasis Control (launched in 1996) reaching 18 countries in Africa. Dr. Richards has directed the Carter Center's river blindness programs since 1996; those programs currently assist ministries of health in eleven countries to provide over 14 million Mectizan treatments per year. He also directs programs which provide millions of treatments for lymphatic filariasis and schistosomiasis in Nigeria, and bed nets to prevent malaria in Nigeria and Ethiopia.

Dr. Richards' awards include the Williams College Bicentennial Medal in recognition of contributions to global public health, the Commissioned Corps Outstanding Service Medal for contributions to the battle against river blindness, the Department of Health and Human Service Secretary's Award for Distinguished Service for the Guinea worm eradication effort, and the American Society for Tropical Medicine and Hygiene's Bailey K. Ashford Medal. Dr. Richards has authored or coauthored over 140 articles, letters, and chapters. He holds faculty appointments at the Emory Rollins School of Public Health (in the Department of Global Health) and the Emory School of Medicine (in the Division of Pediatric Infectious Disease), and is on the medical staff at Children's Health Care of Atlanta. In addition to English he is conversant in Spanish and French.

Dr. Richards, the son of Dr. and Mrs. Frank O. Richards Sr., graduated from University City High School and in 2009 was inducted into University City's Hall of Fame for his work battling diseases that affect the poorest of the poor. His father is a retired surgeon, graduate of Talladega College and Howard Medical School, a fellow of the American Academy of Surgery and an emeritus faculty member of Washington University School of Medicine. Dr. Richards Sr. completed his clinical training at Homer G. Phillips Hospital and is contributing author to the book [A Century of Black Surgeons: the USA Experience.](#)

Program

- Welcome** **Will Ross, M.D., M.P.H.**
Associate Dean for Diversity
Office of Diversity Programs
- Introduction of.....** **Larry J. Shapiro, M.D.**
Frank Richards Jr., M.D.
Executive Vice Chancellor and
Dean for Medical Affairs
- "Healing Communities:
A Local & International Perspective"** **Frank Richards Jr., M.D.,
F.A.A.P.**
Director Parasitic Disease
Control Programs,
The Carter Center
- Presentation** **Will Ross, M.D., M.P.H.**
Associate Dean for Diversity
Office of Diversity Programs
- Questions.....** **Audience**