

## 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

## *"Wrong Place, Wrong Time: Violence, Trauma and Health Equity"*



**Guest Speaker:**

**John Rich, M.D., M.P.H.**

*Professor and Chair of Health Management and Policy,  
Drexel University School of Public Health*

**Friday, October 21, 2011**

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

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

6:00 p.m.  
Cocktails  
Atrium

6:30 p.m.  
Dinner  
Great Rooms

7:30 p.m.  
Lecture  
Auditorium

**Speaker: John A. Rich, MD, MPH**



**John A. Rich, MD, MPH**, is Professor and Chair of Health Management and Policy at the Drexel University School of Public Health. He has been a leader in the field of public health, and his work has focused on serving one of the nation’s most ignored and underserved populations—African-American men in urban settings. His goal is to tackle the corrosive combination of urban violence, poverty, lack of primary care, and low societal expectations. An African American man raised in Queens, N.Y., Dr. Rich said he was largely able to avoid similar trauma, growing up with working-class neighbors and parents who stressed the value of education - a teacher mother and dentist father who sent him to parochial school.

On September 19, 2006, Dr. Rich was awarded a \$500,000 MacArthur grant for his work in addressing the primary health care needs of young men in the inner city by designing clinical services and training programs. He joined the Drexel School of Public Health in July 2005, where he helped establish the Center for Nonviolence and Social Justice. Supported by more than \$1 million in grants, the Center focuses on urban trauma as a public health issue and provides a program of healing for victims of violence. Dr. Rich is noted for his research using in-depth interviews with young African American victims of violence to understand the effect of trauma in their lives.

Prior to coming to Drexel, Dr. Rich served as the medical director of the Boston Public Health Commission. In 1990, he was awarded the Kellogg National Fellowship, a three-year initiative to learn about the social and health concerns of young black men. Dr. Rich launched the Young Men’s Health Clinic at Boston City Hospital in 1993; a primary care clinic designed to meet the needs of young men in the inner city. He served as Principal Investigator on a number of CDC-funded grants including REACH Elders and Steps to a Healthy Boston. In 1997, he received a five-year award from the National Institute of Mental Health to study the experience of violence among young African-American men.

He graduated from Dartmouth College with a B.A. in English. He received his medical degree from Duke University Medical School. He completed his internship and residency in internal medicine at Massachusetts General Hospital. He then completed the Harvard General Medicine Faculty Development Fellowship, also at Massachusetts General Hospital. Dr. Rich holds a Master of Public Health degree from the Harvard School of Public Health. He serves on the Board of South Africa Partners, the Institute for Safe Families, Healthy Philadelphia, and the Juvenile Law Center. In 2009, Dr. Rich was inducted into the Institute of Medicine of the National Academy of Sciences. His recently published book about urban violence *Wrong Place, Wrong Time: Trauma and Violence in the Lives of Young Black Men* has drawn critical acclaim for its gripping account of the impact of post-traumatic stress disorders on survivors of youth violence.

**Program**

**Welcome .....****Will Ross, M.D., M.P.H.**  
Associate Dean for Diversity  
Office of Diversity Programs

**Introduction of.....James Crane, M.D.**  
**John Rich M.D., M.P.H.**  
Associate Vice Chancellor for  
Clinical Affairs

**“Wrong Place, Wrong Time: Violence,  
Trauma and Health Equity” .....****John Rich, M.D., M.P.H.**  
Professor and Chair Health  
Management Policy  
Drexel University School of  
Public Health

**Presentation.....Will Ross, M.D., M.P.H.**  
Associate Dean for Diversity  
Office of Diversity Programs

**Questions.....Audience**