



THE HEALTHCARE FOUNDATION FOR ORANGE COUNTY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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LOCAL PEDIATRICIAN NAMED “CHAMPION OF HEALTH”

The HealthCare Foundation for Orange County, a local health philanthropy, has named Dr. Alberto Gedissman as “Champion of Health” for his work in violence reduction and injury prevention with local children and teens. The award provides a \$5000 grant in Dr. Gedissman’s honor to a local health care charity of his choice. He has selected Children’s Hospital of Orange County to receive this gift.

Dr. Gedissman and eleven other nominees were recognized before their peers, at a joint meeting of California Chapter 4 of the American Academy of Pediatrics and the Orange County Obstetric and Gynecological Society. Dr. Gedissman’s work in violence and injury prevention, as well as efforts within his own medical group to incorporate health education and literacy promotion in his work with low-income families, were among the reasons for his selection as the first recipient of this honor.

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Other nominees included Dr. Phyllis F. Agran; Dr. Kenneth E. Bell; Dr. Dennis J. Buchanan; Dr. Gregory S. Buchert; Dr. Carmelita Co-Casquejo; Dr. Kwing-Wah Chan; Dr. Maria E. Minon; Dr. Cynthia H. Sholly; Dr. Jacob Sweidan; and Dr.

Julianne S. Toohey. In presenting the award, Foundation Chairman Marven E. Howard and Director Susan G. Zepeda noted that all candidates had “gone beyond the realm of their own clinical practice, to bring health and hope to low income families, and to make Orange County a safer, healthier community in which to live.”

Ms. Zepeda noted that a recent report of The Center for Studying Health System Change, a Washington-based think tank, showed that only 46% of physicians in a staff or group HMO provided charity care, compared to 81% of physicians in a solo or two-physician practice. Those in hospital-owned practice settings reported 61% involved in such care. That is why this year’s award focused attention on the charity care and community work of local pediatricians, gynecologists and obstetricians. In future years, Champions of Health candidates will be drawn from other local health service sectors.

The HealthCare Foundation for Orange County is a relatively new foundation, funded by gifts and bequests from individuals and by the net proceeds of the sale of United Western Medical Centers. Its mission is to promote health and support healthcare for the benefit of the Orange County community. The Foundation’s hope in sponsoring this award is to express appreciation for the commitment of the honored physicians, and encourage others to take on the dual challenges of charity care and community prevention efforts in today’s challenging financial environment.

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