

Dayton's Community Partnerships Win Top National Honors from AAMC

by Mark Willis

Wright State University School of Medicine and its Dayton community partners were honored recently by the Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC) for their efforts to address a unique mix of urban and rural health care needs in Dayton and the Miami Valley region. The School of Medicine was selected as the 1997 recipient of the AAMC's Outstanding Community Service Award at a ceremony held in November in Washington, D.C.

"The purpose of this award is to recognize the vitally important service medical schools and teaching hospitals provide to communities across the country," said AAMC President Jordan J. Cohen, M.D. "We salute Wright State University for its innovative leadership to instill in new physicians the value of community service, and for its highly effective efforts to provide compassionate health care services to the underserved citizens of the Dayton area."

Previous winners of the AAMC community award include the University of Miami, the University of Medicine and Dentistry-New Jersey Medical School, Boston University School of Medicine, and Montefiore Medical Center in New York City. Finalists this year were the UCLA Medical Center in Los Angeles, Rush Medical College in Chicago, and Wright State in Dayton.

"We consider the Dayton community to be the real winner of this award. Dayton deserves the national recognition for its tradition of community partnerships in health care," said Dean Kim Goldenberg.

"This award recognizes the partnership we have developed with members of the medical community to meet the needs of Dayton and the Miami Valley," said President Harley Flack. "The award also is a clear indication that Wright State is fulfilling its mission as a metropolitan university that's here to serve the community."

An AAMC site survey team toured Dayton in September and reviewed more than a dozen community-based programs. All of them involve partnerships between Wright State and other community organizations. The survey team visited the Yellow Springs Family Health Center, the East Dayton Health Center, and the Charles R. Drew West Dayton Health Center.

Programs honored by the AAMC Outstanding Community Service Award include:

- Reach Out of Montgomery County, a collaboration with the Montgomery County Medical Society and the Combined Health District of Montgomery County, provides volunteer physician services to Dayton's working poor.
- The Injury Prevention Center of the Greater Dayton Area, a collaboration with Dayton-area hospitals, is developing a regional approach to preventing injuries in the Miami Valley.
- The Center for Healthy Communities, a partnership between Wright State, Sinclair Community College, and a host of community organizations, is working to improve access to health care in Dayton's inner-city neighborhoods.
- Community psychiatry programs conducted in collaboration with the Ohio Department of Mental Health, the Montgomery County Alcohol, Drug Addiction, Mental Health Services (ADAMHS) Board, and patient advocacy groups, provide community-based psychiatric services for people with chronic mental illnesses.
- The Child Abuse Review and Evaluation (CARE) Team at Children's Medical Center, which provides multidisciplinary services to children who have been abused, is actively involved in community education efforts such as the "Never, Never Shake a Baby" campaign.
- Wright State's Substance Abuse Intervention Programs work with local

courts and other community agencies to provide timely diagnosis and intervention counseling for people with alcohol and drug abuse problems.

■ The Institute for Rehabilitation Research and Medicine (IRRM) is developing exercise therapies that can improve the quality of life for people with disabilities.

■ Health research programs conducted by Wright State's Division of Human Biology, involving thousands of research participants in the Miami Valley region, are developing new insights about risk factors for cardiovascular disease.

■ Medical student service initiatives such as the Student- to-Student program and Minority Health Month activities provide health promotion and education to tens of thousands of people in the community.

■ With community guidance, programs such as Horizons in Medicine and others have helped Wright State to be a national leader in the diversity of its medical students.

“All of these programs reach beyond the traditional boundaries of a medical school and university,” Dr. Goldenberg said. “Their achievements would not be possible without the active involvement of our community partners in the Dayton area.”