



Dr. Eliseo Pérez-Stable wins Martin Luther King, Jr. Award

Chief of the Division of General Internal Medicine at the Parnassus site, Eliseo Pérez-Stable, MD, received the 2008 Martin Luther King, Jr. Award for his work to increase ethnic diversity within the UCSF community.

Since the start of his UCSF career as an intern in 1978, Pérez-Stable has worked to promote diversity in his research, patient care and teaching and mentoring. "Eliseo is widely recognized as one of UCSF's most important career mentors for underrepresented trainees and faculty," says Robert Baron, MD, associate dean and chair of the Chancellor's Advisory Committee on Diversity.

Pérez-Stable believes it's important that the medical profession reflect the demographics of the patients they serve. "We can't have 33% of the population who are Latino, and less than 5% of physicians who are Latino," says Pérez-Stable. "It's beyond language issues... Just as 50 years ago, there were very few women in medicine. Now, women like the fact that they can go to women doctors – not just for gynecology, but

for everything. I think it's the same thing, giving people more options."

Pérez-Stable's research has focused on health and health care disparities by race and ethnicity in the areas of tobacco use and cessation, cancer prevention and aging. In 1993, Pérez-Stable co-founded the Medical Effectiveness Research Center for Diverse Populations (MERC), a multidisciplinary center which promotes health in racially and ethnically diverse populations and trains investigators – many of them minorities – to conduct research on health disparities.

Pérez-Stable traces his passion for diversity and social justice from coming of age in the 1960s and 70s, and also growing up for the first part of his childhood in Cuba. "I was very interested in social political movements in Latin America," he says. "Once I became a physician, I realized I couldn't do both – be a physician and be active in political groups. But in a way, this is channeling this energy from within, in a profession that generally welcomes that." ■

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