

New York State Academy of Family Physicians

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Buffalo Physician Honored by Statewide Medical Society

Albany, NY: Buffalo physician, David M. Holmes, MD, has been named NY State Family Physician of the Year by the New York State Academy of Family Physicians. He will receive the award during the Academy's annual awards luncheon on June 9 at the Desmond Hotel in Albany during the Academy's Congress of Delegates.

Dr. Holmes was selected by the Education Commission of the Academy from among several family physicians nominated by patients and colleagues. Dr. Holmes' biographical sketch included his personal mission statement: "The purpose of my life is to love and honor God and my family and make a positive and significant difference in the lives of others."

"The Family Physician of the Year award is the highest honor bestowed by the New York State Academy of Family Physicians," explained Vito Grasso, executive vice president of the Academy. "It is presented to a physician who, in the judgment of the Academy, has exemplified the highest standards of patient care and advocacy. We are very pleased to recognize Dr. Holmes and are honored to have a physician of his obvious commitment to medicine and outstanding patient care among our membership."

Dr. Holmes was cited for numerous contributions to medicine including co-founding of a free medical clinic at Cornerstone Manor in 2003. Cornerstone Manor is a homeless shelter for women and children in Buffalo. In 2004, he worked with Eastern Hills Wesleyan Church and Harvest House Ministries to establish Good Neighbors Health Care. Located in Buffalo's lower east side, Good Neighbors provides free health care to those without insurance. He continues to volunteer as Medical Director of the family medicine services there. The other free services offered include optometry, dental and chiropractic care. Dr. Holmes also serves as president of the Western NY chapter of the Christian Medical and Dental Associations. This is a national organization which encourages physicians and

dentists to put their faith into practice by caring for those in need locally and internationally.

Kathleen Armenat, RN, of Lancaster was among the supporters of Dr. Holmes' nomination. "He is a man of integrity, intelligence and great compassion, all essential characteristics to a great doctor," she wrote, "He gives every one of his patients kind, compassionate and competent care, and they leave with hope – a priceless gift."

Dr. Holmes is in practice with Kaleida Health's Niagara Family Health Center in the lower west side of Buffalo. He is also Clinical Assistant Professor, Director of Family Medicine Clerkship and Electives and Associate Vice Chairman for Medical Student Education in the Department of Family Medicine at the University at Buffalo.

As a 4th year medical student at the University of Buffalo School of Medicine and Biomedical Sciences, Michael Zang wrote a letter on Dr. Holmes' behalf. "Of note is Dr. Holmes' ability to transcend the basic parameters of the patient-doctor relationship," he wrote, "He accomplishes this by attending to not only the physical complaints, but also underlying emotional and social needs."

"Anyone who spends time with him walks away a better person for having been touched by his compassion and ability to motivate others to reach beyond themselves to a hurting community," wrote Kathleen Szymanski, RN, who has volunteered with Dr. Holmes at the Cornerstone Manor.

A letter from Matthew Mack, an intern in the University of Rochester family medicine program, captures the essence of the comments received on behalf of Dr. Holmes. "This is a physician after all," Mack wrote, "who visibly cares about his patients' bodies, minds and souls; who volunteers his time for his community's underserved many hours a week, who makes time for his own family of six, and who maintains a strong hold on his own faith. Dr. Holmes exacts an even greater impact on those fortunate to be around him however, by actively drawing them into his life. . . . It was Dr. Holmes who showed me everything I needed to know about being a committed and compassionate physician with leadership skills, while remaining utterly devoted to family and personal beliefs."

Dr. Holmes received a B.A. from Stanford and his M.D. from the University of Vermont. He completed a residency in family medicine at the University at Buffalo.

"It's never made much sense to me to work where I'm not needed," Dr. Holmes said, "Working in under-served areas is challenging, but very gratifying."

Dr. Holmes has been married for 20 years to Lucy Holmes, M.D. who is also an accomplished and well respected physician in Buffalo. They have four children: Esther, Naomi, Joshua and Nathan.