

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Dr. Richard Allen Williams was born and raised in Wilmington, Delaware, the youngest of eight children. Upon graduating from Howard High School at the top of his class with a 4.0 grade-point average, he was awarded a full scholarship to Harvard University from which he graduated with honors as the first African American student at Harvard from Delaware. He received the M.D. degree from the State University of New York Downstate Medical Center, performed his internship at the University of California San Francisco Medical Center, Internal Medicine residency at the Los Angeles County-USC Medical Center, and Cardiology fellowship at Harvard Medical School and Brigham and Women's Hospital in Boston. He was an instructor in Cardiology at Harvard Medical School, and while in this position he founded and directed the Central Recruitment Council of Boston Hospitals, which recruited significant numbers of Black medical trainees to Boston hospitals for the first time in their history. He then served for three years as the inaugural Assistant Medical Director at the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Hospital in Watts, California, and was charged with the responsibility of opening the hospital. During this time he and Dr. David Satcher collaborated on writing the grant proposal which was awarded \$2.5 million by the National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute of the National Institutes of Health to establish the King-Drew Sickle Cell Center, of which he became the Director. Following this appointment, he took a position as Chief of the Heart Station and Coronary Care Unit at the West Los Angeles VA Hospital, eventually becoming head of Cardiology at that institution as well as the first Black full Professor in the history of the Department of Medicine at the UCLA School of Medicine.

Dr. Williams has numerous publications and awards to his credit and is the author of The Textbook of Black-related Diseases published by McGraw-Hill in 1975. This is a 900-page book which detailed medical conditions peculiar to African Americans; no other book of its kind has been written before or since, and it is widely considered the classic seminal work on the medical status of Blacks. It is on the shelves of libraries and in medical schools around the world, including the Library of Congress. Other recent books are The Athlete and Heart Disease: Diagnosis, Evaluation and Management, and Humane Medicine: A New Paradigm in Medical Education and Health Care Delivery. Both of these books were published in 1999 by Lippincott Williams & Wilkins. Two other books by Dr. Williams are in preparation: The Textbook of Ethnic Medicine, and The History of Blacks in Medicine. In 2000 he also published volume II of Humane Medicine. He was funded by AstraZeneca Pharmaceuticals to write a book on healthcare disparities, a topic on which he is one of the nation's leading experts.

Dr. Williams founded the Association of Black Cardiologists (ABC) in 1974 and served as its president for 10 years. He also became the first chairman of the Board of Directors and started the ABC Newsletter. The ABC established the endowed Dr. Richard Allen Williams Scholarship for Black Medical Students in his honor in 1980. Dr. Williams then founded the Minority Health Institute (MHI) in 1987; he is President and CEO of the latter organization. Recently, he served as President of the Charles R. Drew Medical Society in Los Angeles, and was previously a member of the Board of Directors of the Charles R. Drew University of Medicine and Science.

He has been active as a long-time member of the American Heart Association (AHA) and served for over 25 years on the Board of Directors of the Greater Los Angeles Affiliate. He served as Chairman of the “Search Your Heart” Program sponsored by the AHA in Los Angeles in November 2000. Part of that program included the establishment of the Tommy LaSorda Heart Institute at Centinela Hospital.

Beginning in 1974, he has been called on as a consultant to the AHA on matters concerning cardiovascular health in the black community, and he suggested the creation of the Women and Minorities Committee of the AHA, on which he also served. Dr. Williams helped the AHA to organize the first scientific sessions at the annual AHA conventions dealing with issues in minorities.

He is an internationally-recognized authority on hypertension, heart failure, and sudden cardiac death, and his book cited above on the latter topic, ***The Athlete and Heart Disease: Diagnosis, Evaluation, and Management*** contains a Foreward written by the President of the AHA and has been hailed as the most authoritative work on this topic.

Dr. Williams was recently selected as one of the 15 African American “Pioneers in Cardiology” (along with Drs. Charles R. Drew, Dr. Daniel Hale Williams and others), and his portrait and biography are featured on a special annual calendar denoting this distinction. He was also the only Black cardiologist cited for his accomplishments and contributions in the historical book, **American Cardiology**. He has served as a Visiting Professor at a number of institutions including Harvard, Yale, Stanford, the University of North Carolina, and the University of the West Indies in Jamaica. In recognition of his dedicated efforts at improving heart health in the African American community, he was named the recipient of the coveted **Louis B. Russell Award** for 2001 by the American Heart Association. He was also selected by Aetna for a special calendar honoring outstanding African American doctors of the 20th Century in 2002.

Other activities in which Dr. Williams has been involved include service with LA Care where he was a volunteer reviewer of client complaints and grievances and helped to develop policy for HMOs in managing a diverse population of patients regarding language barriers, cultural issues, and problems of access to care for minorities. He is a **founding Board member of the Institute for the Advancement of Multicultural and Minority Medicine (IAMMM)** for which he served as Chair.

Dr. Williams also served for 5 years as a **panelist for the FDA Devices** Committee, during which he contributed to decisions regarding the artificial heart and other instruments. He also was a **member of the Medical Team for the 1984 Olympics**. He is a consultant to Pfizer Pharmaceuticals regarding minority health issues such as the proper application of the principles of evidence-based medicine in the selection of medications for preferred drug lists (PDL) in various states, including California. He is also a member of the AstraZeneca, Forest Pharmaceuticals, and The Medicines Company, lecture bureaus and frequently presents lectures on hypertension, heart failure, dyslipidemia, and other cardiovascular topics. He has also been a lecturer, key opinion leader, and expert consultant for Pfizer, Nitromed, Abbott, Bristol-Myers Squibb, Merck, Novartis, and DuPont. Dr. Williams has also appeared in numerous TV and other media advertisements for Daiichi Sankyo, Pfizer, and several other pharmaceutical companies. He was also a member of the research investigators for AstraZeneca (Atacand) and for Nitromed (BiDil)

Dr. Williams promoted a new concept called **Humane Medicine** for years which was designed to restructure the way in which medicine is taught and practiced in the United States. This concept eventually took on a new name called Cultural Competency, and it formed the basis of the concept of **Healthcare Disparities**. His aim is to revise medical school curriculum to include subjects dealing with infrequently taught topics such as women's health, issues pertaining to race, ethnicity, culture, and religion, biomedical ethics, stress and violence in society, nutrition, molecular biology and genetics, geriatrics, nutrition, and the management of death and dying. He also hopes to have an impact on practicing clinicians by teaching them to utilize a more patient-centered, culturally competent approach to health care delivery rather than a disease-oriented methodology. This effort is under way through several symposia which he has organized throughout the United States. He also focuses on healthcare disparities and was a consultant and reviewer for the landmark report of the Institute of Medicine (**Unequal Treatment**) published in 2002 on racial and ethnic disparities in health.

Dr. Williams relaxes by running (he has run eight marathons including the famous Boston Marathon, and more than 100 10K races), and by playing jazz professionally on the trumpet. He travels frequently to foreign countries where he is able to use the six languages that he speaks. He was chosen by the National Medical Association to receive the prestigious **Dr. John Beauregard Johnson Award** for 1999 and was honored with a testimonial dinner by the Association of Black Cardiologists in August, 2000 in Washington, D.C. in recognition of his lifetime accomplishments. In 2001, his life and career were profiled in the prestigious **Harvard Magazine**, and he was presented with the **Scroll of Merit**, the highest award given by the National Medical Association. He also received the **National Leadership Award** from the Consortium on Southeastern Hypertension Control (COSEHC) and was named as one of the **100 Best Doctors in America** by **Black Enterprise Magazine**. He delivered the Ebert Distinguished Lecture at Harvard Medical School in April 2004 and was presented with **Harvard's Lifetime Achievement Award**, which no other African American has ever received. He is a member of the Boule', Sigma Pi Phi, Gamma Zeta chapter. In 2006, he was selected to make a presentation at the **Oxford Round Table** at the prestigious University of Oxford in England. In recognition of his status as one of the country's leaders of the healthcare disparities elimination movement, Dr. Williams was chosen to present to and moderate the **Health Braintrust of the Congressional Black Caucus** and to keynote the 100th Anniversary of the Southern Medical Association, both held in 2006. He was also presented the **Lifetime Achievement Award in 2007 by the National Minority Quality Forum**. In 2008, he was selected to receive the **Dr. Daniel D. Savage Science Award** presented by the Association of Black Cardiologists, their highest award. His new book entitled **Eliminating Healthcare Disparities in America: Beyond the IOM Report**, has been published recently by Humana Press, Totowa, NJ. (2007). In addition, he collaborated on writing a new book, **The Heart of the Matter**, which was published by Hilton Publishing. Its aim is to provide the basics of heart health to a lay readership. In addition, he was just included in the new 2008 pictorial publication, **Breaking Barriers**, produced by Aetna, which contains the profiles of African American history-makers such as Arthur Ashe, Jackie Robinson, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Malcolm X, Paul Robeson, Dr. Ralph Bunche, Earl Graves, August Wilson, Willie Gary, and other trailblazers in sports, the arts, medicine, politics, social activism, and other fields of endeavor.

At present, Dr. Williams is working on his eighth book, *Healthcare Disparities at the Crossroads of Healthcare Reform*, due to be published in 2011 by Springer. He was recently inducted as an honorary member of **Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity**, is an Archon in the Boule', and was also inducted into the **American College of Cardiology (ACC) as a Fellow**.