



Dr. Fayad named AHA Physician of the Year

Story contributed by The American Heart Association

Pierre Fayad, M.D., Reynolds Centennial Professor and chairman in the UNMC Department of Neurological Sciences, has been named the American Heart Association Physician of the Year.

Pierre Fayad, M.D.



Dr. Fayad -- who also is director of the stroke center at UNMC's hospital partner, The Nebraska Medical Center -- received the award during a ceremony in Washington on Monday.

The award is conferred annually upon the practicing physician who has rendered "outstanding contributions" toward accomplishing the American Heart Association mission. Dr. Fayad was honored for being a pioneer and leader in numerous initiatives to improve the health of his community, especially in the area of stroke.

"This is a wonderful honor for one of our truly outstanding physicians," said John Gollan, M.D., Ph.D., dean of the College of Medicine. "Dr. Fayad's work in the field of stroke certainly merits this national recognition.

"This is excellent news for Dr. Fayad, the College of Medicine and UNMC as a whole."

As stroke center director, Dr. Fayad established and now leads a stand-alone outpatient neurological clinic that received more than 7,000 patient visits in 2008. He also oversees a multidisciplinary "Stroke Code Team" that is responsible for the care of patients with acute stroke.

Countless patients have benefited from Dr. Fayad's neurological expertise, including Lenice Hogan of Omaha.

"I have a complicated medical history and every time I was in the hospital

I was told something different and would leave with no idea what the problem was or where to turn," she said. "From the moment I met Dr. Fayad, I felt absolutely at ease. He took my records and spent a month researching other patients in the world with my condition -- he found three. I'm not scared of what lies ahead because I know he's on top of everything."

Brenda Barry of Woodbine, Iowa, credited Dr. Fayad with saving her husband Lynn's life.

"My husband had been having a series of mini strokes for a few weeks," Barry said. "They would hit him for a few minutes and then he would go about his day like nothing had happened. We knew it wasn't normal, but it was easy to let it go."

Until they met with Dr. Fayad.

"In our initial appointment with Dr. Fayad, he was very thorough and quickly diagnosed the seriousness of the situation," Barry said. "As far as we're concerned, he saved my husband from having a massive stroke that could have paralyzed or killed him. Lynn is healthier than he has been in a decade or longer."

Under Dr. Fayad's leadership, the medical center's stroke center became the first in Nebraska to be certified as a Primary Stroke Center by the Joint Commission.

In 2008, The Nebraska Medical Center was recognized with the Gold Achievement Award of the American Heart Association's Get With The Guidelines-Stroke program, which recognizes 24 consecutive months of providing care that meets or exceeds stroke treatment guidelines set by the association.

Stewart Becker of Omaha suffered a stroke while on a skiing vacation in Colorado. After a week in a Denver hospital, he came home to Omaha and met with Dr. Fayad.

"The perception was that in the middle of the country I wouldn't have the resources I needed (as a stroke survivor)," Becker said. "In Dr. Fayad, I've got an individual with a great reputation with a great institution, and I can get as good of care right in my home city as I could get anywhere."

Dr. Fayad currently chairs the Advisory Committee of the American Stroke Association, a division of the American Heart Association. He is also a member of the association's International Stroke Conference

UNMC programs among the best in 2010 U.S. News rankings

by Karen Burbach, UNMC public relations

UNMC continues to be positioned among the nation's top programs in U.S. News & World Report's rankings of the country's graduate schools.



Rubens Pamies, M.D.

The rankings, which are available online and on newsstands, reflect UNMC's longstanding hold in such program areas as primary care, rural health and physician assistant education.

The annual health disciplines rankings are reported in the magazine's 2010 edition of America's Best Graduate Schools. The online edition includes longer lists of some specialty rankings, as well as additional school directory information.

"Academic health centers are impacted by these tough economic times," said Rubens Pamies, M.D., vice chancellor for academic affairs. "They struggle to maintain programs and keep their strength while, at the same time, being cost conscious. Some have had to cut programs.

"We've made a strategic decision that we won't abandon our core programs and our commitment to rural communities and primary care. These rankings affirm that our programs remain among the best in the country."

The following UNMC programs were recognized in this year's rankings:

- The College of Medicine's rural health medicine program tied for 15th; and
- The College of Medicine tied for 17th in U.S. News' top schools of medicine -- primary care listing.

In addition, these UNMC programs are included in the guidebook and/or online edition, although they were not newly ranked for 2009:

- The School of Allied Health Professions' physician assistant program tied for 14th;
- The College of Pharmacy ranked 29th;
- The College of Nursing's master's degree program ranked 32nd; and
- The School of Allied Health Professions' physical therapy program ranked 33rd.

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The U.S. News rankings on primary care are based on two types of data: expert opinion about program quality and statistical indicators that measure the quality of a school's faculty, research and students.

Rankings for the health specialties -- including rural medicine, nursing and physician assistant -- are based solely on the ratings of academic experts.

UNMC officials encourage students to use many sources when selecting a graduate or professional program. Editors say a ranking is one of the criteria students should consider when selecting a graduate school, in addition to the student's academic and professional ambitions, financial resources, scholastic record. A school's size, atmosphere and location also are factors to consider.