

MEDICC'S TOP TEN ACHIEVEMENTS

1997-2017

1

MEDICC has built the only nationwide bridge between the American and Cuban health and medical communities aimed at better, more equitable health outcomes. We have taken over 1,000 medical and public health students to Cuba for electives accredited by 118 US universities; and since 2004, over 1,125 health professionals, policymakers, journalists, business executives and opinion leaders have traveled to Cuba with MEDICC's Gateways Program. These include members of Congress, foundations, medical school faculty and boards, health system directors, and leaders of premier US organizations and institutions. Cuban professionals have also attended US conferences and capacity-building seminars with MEDICC support. MEDICC now takes up the challenge of transforming this mutual learning into long-term bilateral collaborations between US and Cuban partners.

In 2016, President Obama adopted key MEDICC recommendations contained in "A Safer, Healthier Future through U.S.-Cuba Cooperation", a MEDICC white paper delivered to him by supporters in the administration and Congress. The president authorized US medical centers to collaborate with Cubans in commercial as well as non-commercial research and to permit Cuban pharmaceuticals to enter normal FDA regulatory channels and be sold in the United States if approved. The newly mandated Treasury and Commerce regulations also open the door for US advances in medicine to be tested in Cuba. MEDICC's advocacy now aims to step up health cooperation by further opening the door to Cuba; to end the ban on patients' and other US travel to the island; and to drop the US embargo that limits trade in medicines and medical equipment between our countries.

2

MEDICC's Community Partnerships for Health Equity (CPHE) link 12 multi-ethnic, intergenerational, low-income communities in a national network across the US, all working to improve health outcomes and equity. Some 300 participants from 100 local organizations have traveled to Cuba through CPHE, half of them neighborhood residents most affected by social and health disparities.



3

These local leaders have been empowered by examples of community-engaged health approaches in Cuba, inspiring their innovation back home as they work towards health and health care for all. Now CPHE expands to new cities, and is actively supporting the next generation of leaders dedicated to the right to health and wellbeing for all our people.

4

MEDICC's MD Pipeline to Community Service has offered a boost to the over 200 US medical students on Cuban scholarships at Havana's Latin American School of Medicine, who have pledged to serve in shortage areas back home. Over the last ten years, MEDICC has awarded \$289,000 to support 151 students by defraying costs of preparing for and taking their medical licensing exams; since 2009, MEDICC has arranged 194 summer rotations across the country; and US volunteer mentors continue to offer valuable career and residency advice to these physicians-in-training, most of whom come from low-income families.



The result: of those already in residency programs or practicing, 90% have chosen primary care specialties, and 100% are working with medically underserved communities, in both urban and rural settings. MEDICC sees these young doctors as the future of health care for all in the United States, and is committed to study the results of their practice and to develop their leadership.

MEDICC has supported the Latin American School of Medicine (ELAM) and other Cuban medical schools with over 5,000 textbooks, and links to 3,000+ journals online. MEDICC also supports ELAM graduates in other countries: financial aid to Garífuna graduates in Honduras, who with community residents built the country's first indigenous hospital; and to graduates in El Salvador, breaking ground to combat the deadly epidemic of chronic kidney disease that has already killed more than 20,000 subsistence farmers. MEDICC pledges to advance this support and give greater visibility to other key programs initiated by ELAM graduates in the 80+ countries where they work.

5

When a devastating hurricane hit Haiti in 2010, Cuban doctors were already there, and Latin American School of Medicine graduates flocked to join them. When Ebola hit West African countries, Cuban health professionals were the largest contingent to volunteer, risking their lives to treat the victims. **And MEDICC, although far away, was also there...with partners like Global Links, marshaling resources to equip these heroes. We are proud of such partnerships and of our work with them as "first responders" to international appeals, and are always on the alert to issue calls for assistance when disaster strikes.**

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Directed by Academy Award nominee Connie Field, MEDICC produced and distributed the feature film ¡SALUD!, thus far viewed by over 100,000 across the globe. The film, documenting Cuban health care and its international cooperation, raises key issues related to the right to health care. Among its prizes: the US Council on Foundation's Henry Hampton Award for Excellence in Film & Digital Media, the American Medical Student Association's first Film Award, and Notable Video by the American Library Association. Now, MEDICC is working on a series of video shorts to deliver the message "Why Cooperation with Cuba Matters to Your Health."



MEDICC has given an "English-language voice" to the science of Cuban health professionals by publishing their peer-reviewed manuscripts in MEDICC Review journal. Submitted in Spanish, these papers would not normally be available to the largely English readership accessing them through PubMed, Elsevier or Thomson-Reuters services, where *MEDICC Review* is indexed. Some 40,000+ article reads are registered monthly from over 130 countries, 60% in the USA. Going forward, MEDICC Review will broaden its scope to give a platform to health professionals and others in the Americas on the front lines of work to ensure universal health care throughout the region, including the United States.

"Beautifully produced and full of valuable work. Fabulous."

- Richard Horton, Editor, *The Lancet*

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9

MEDICC has earned international recognition as the "go-to" organization for factual, reliable expertise on Cuban health care, its history, institutions, movers and shakers. MEDICC authors have appeared in publications such as *The Lancet*, the *American Journal of Public Health*, *Scientific American*, the *New England Journal of Medicine*, *The New York Times*, *San Francisco Chronicle* and *Huffington Post*; and its leaders sought out by PBS, NBC News, Amnesty International, BBC, Reuters and other major media. MEDICC speakers have been featured at Congressional hearings, foundation meetings, the Academy of Medicine, and other scientific events. Moving forward, MEDICC expects to generate greater visibility internationally, providing balanced and evidence-based expertise on Cuban health.



Over 750,000 people have so far watched the TEDMED talk "Where to train the world's doctors? Cuba", by MEDICC founding director Gail Reed. In the talk, Gail outlines how Cuba's Latin American School of Medicine tackles the global shortage of physicians by graduating over 25,000 since 2005...young MDs from low-income communities in the Americas, Africa and Asia who pledge to return home to serve local communities that need them most. The talk was the first from the 2014 TEDMED event to be featured by TED.com.

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