

The Frederick K.M. Plessner Memorial Award

THE AWARD

California Medical Association's Frederick K.M. Plessner Memorial Award is presented to the CMA member physician residing and practicing in California who best exemplifies the ethics and practice of a rural practitioner. Mr. Plessner requested in his will that, in selecting the winner, consideration be given to services donated by the physician to the indigent or services rendered to charitable groups. The Plessner Award traditionally is presented at the CMA House of Delegates meeting.

The CMA Board of Trustees selects the Plessner Award recipient. Nominations for the award are submitted by CMA's component county medical societies and reviewed by the CMA Committee on Nominations, which makes a recommendation to the CMA Board of Trustees.

The Award, consisting of a \$1,000 stipend and a commemorative silver bowl, is financed with income from a \$50,000 endowment as stipulated in Mr. Plessner's will. Besides the Frederick K.M. Plessner Memorial Award presented by CMA, a similar Plessner award is presented in Michigan through the Michigan State Medical Society and the University of Michigan. Mr. Plessner's estate also underwrites the Frederick and Besse Moulton Plessner Loan Fund for medical students at the University of Southern California.

WHO WAS FREDERICK K.M. PLESSNER?

Frederick K.M. Plessner, though not himself a physician, was the son, grandson and great-grandson of physicians and held great admiration for the medical profession.

According to accounts of relatives, Mr. Plessner worshiped the American dream, Horatio Alger and the self-made man. Fred Plessner never had any financial help or a business partner, and he never had an employer throughout his entire working life. He made his fortune operating a chain of theaters on the East Coast and florist shops on the West Coast, and, for the last 25 years of his life, built and managed apartments in Southern California.

Frederick Plessner was born in Saginaw, Michigan, in 1889, graduated from the University of Pennsylvania's Wharton School of Business and Finance and earned a commission as a cavalry officer during World War I.

Mr. Plessner was a lifelong bachelor. According to his nephew, "In all his life he never smoked, never drank and the most profane word he was ever heard to use was 'rascal.' A 'rascal' was someone who had cheated him out of a sum of money in excess of \$100,000. Lest you think Fred Plessner weird, at his death he left a female blond 30 years his junior in a condo in Spain. Fred Plessner never married because he felt it was illogical as smoking cigarettes."

Mr. Plessner's generosity is attributed to his esteem for the medical profession and his gratitude for the handsome scholarship he received to Wharton School of Business. It is said he was most grateful to higher education as an institution for having made his way of life possible.

2006 Frederick K.M. Plessner Memorial Award



Ann D. Lindsay, M.D.



ANN D. LINDSAY, M.D., has committed her professional career to promoting public health and energetically caring for her patients in Humboldt County. She has raised both her community's awareness and her government representatives' awareness on major health issues, and she has diligently served her community as Public Health Officer for the past 12 years. She remains committed to her individual patients through her private practice in family medicine, which has been in operation for more than 20 years in the rural area of Arcata. She is most deserving of this year's Frederick K.M. Plessner Memorial Award.

Colleagues describe Dr. Lindsay as tireless, and always willing to tackle tough situations and face new challenges enthusiastically whether it involves her patients, public policy, or her community's health. Dr. Lindsay does not just raise awareness of health issues, she finds solutions – helping the homeless, educating teens about sexually transmitted diseases, and even getting legislation passed to make HIV prevention easier.

Dr. Lindsay received her bachelor's degree from Swarthmore College in Swarthmore, Pennsylvania, and her medical degree from Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland. She completed her internship and residency at the University of California, San Francisco, in family medicine. At UCSF, Dr. Lindsay noticed that there were very few women in the medical field to serve as mentors. This inspired her to pursue her own goals in the medical field so that she in turn could serve as a role model to the generation that followed.

Dr. Lindsay began her career in Humboldt County in the 1980s at a community clinic, and soon after opened a practice with her husband, Alan Glaseroff, M.D. Dr. Lindsay took immediate notice of health issues in her community. She is recognized for raising awareness about childhood obesity and the need for childhood dental care, for her involvement with teen sexuality education, and for bringing attention to the impact of drug abuse in her community.

Dr. Lindsay was appointed Humboldt County Public Health Officer in 1995 after serving in the position temporarily the year before. As Health Officer, Dr. Lindsay was able to direct even more of her efforts toward public

health in her community, especially in the most remote areas.

One such public effort brought Dr. Lindsay into the office of Assemblywoman Patty Berg, 1st District, advocating for what became Assembly Bill 547. Signed by the Governor in 2005, the measure removed the need for County Boards of Supervisors and City Councils to declare a state of emergency every two weeks to enact needle exchange programs. The new law further aided in the prevention of HIV and AIDS.

Humboldt County presented Dr. Lindsay with several challenges, especially drug use among residents. Humboldt County has the second highest drug-related death rate of any California county. Dr. Lindsay faced this challenge fearlessly, and collaborated with legislators and drug clinics in an effort to lower the drug-related death rate. "Drug abuse need not be a death sentence," she said. She established a program that distributed Naloxone, a treatment that can prevent death in cases of drug overdose, to drug users in the community. Subsequently, the California Society of Addiction Medicine awarded her their 2005 Community Service Award for her significant accomplishment in lowering the overdose death rate in Humboldt County. She and CMA also support legislation and policy that would require health insurers to pay for drug and alcohol treatment on par with other illnesses.

Dr. Lindsay's work excludes no one. She fights for children, recovering drug addicts, the homeless, friends, and colleagues. In 2004, she received recognition as the Second Senate District's "Woman of The Year" for her exceptional service to the public health of Humboldt County and the significant differences she's made in her rural community. Dr. Lindsay, former president of Humboldt-Del Norte County Medical Society and a member of CMA and her county society since 1981, serves on the county society's executive board. She also continues to practice medicine with her husband.

Golfing, knitting, running, and bass-playing occupy Dr. Lindsay when she is off-duty. Lindsay lives a comfortable life with her husband, son, and daughter, and the family has its own country blues band. She and her husband often play music together at local coffee shops.