

Masters In The Art Of Medical Education



Words," said Rudyard Kipling, "are, of course, the most powerful drug used by mankind." Few people understood and capitalized on that sentiment more successfully than the late Honorable Walter H. Annenberg, namesake of the Annenberg Center for Health Sciences at Eisenhower.

In his remarkable lifetime, the media magnate and titan of politics, the arts, and philanthropy founded TV Guide (which at its peak in the 1970s boasted a weekly paid circulation of 20 million), served as United States Ambassador to the Court of St. James's, Great Britain, and amassed a private art collection valued in excess of \$1 billion. He was also a Founder and Trustee of Eisenhower Medical Center.

In 1981, Ambassador Annenberg funded the establishment of the Annenberg Center for Health Sciences at Eisenhower to provide, in his own words, "quality, innovative continuing medical education to physicians and other health professionals by merging current educational theory with the latest developments in medicine to improve physicians' abilities to provide accurate information and advice, resulting in improved outcomes for patients and their families." The Ambassador envisioned a center that would be "an unmatched facility where leaders in education, medicine, government, and industry will gather to contemplate issues of the next century."

The Center includes a 485-seat auditorium, multiple media-equipped classrooms, a dining room and kitchen facility, and state-of-the-art video conferencing capabilities. Ambassador Annenberg sought to provide global, patient-focused education that was not available anywhere else.

Another of his intellectual passions was the integration of the visual and healing arts. As the Ambassador himself noted, "When the Center was opened, it seemed fitting to initiate an acquisitions program for reproductions of paintings in world-renowned museums that demonstrate the link between art and medicine. These images represent not only medical conditions and treatments, but also the state of mind — how people of an era viewed sickness and health, death and life. Visitors to the Annenberg Center can benefit from and enjoy these works because they tell the greatest tale of all — the story of the human condition." Indeed, all visitors are treated to a collection called The Art of Medicine, which includes works by Brueghel, Goya, El Greco, Michelangelo, Picasso, Rembrandt, Delacroix, Da Vinci, Toulouse-Lautrec and Wyeth, among others.



In 2005, more than 26,700 health care professionals attended Annenberg Center for Health Sciences at Eisenhower conferences and programs. In addition, nearly 10,000 residents of the Coachella Valley attended the Indian Wells Center for Healthy Living at Eisenhower community outreach education courses hosted by the Annenberg Center.

The Annenberg Center for Health Sciences at Eisenhower has gone on to pioneer advances in continuing medical education with the goal of preventing and managing illness, improving the delivery of health care, and increasing the professional and the public understanding of medical issues. The nationally-accredited center remains one of the few non-medical school non-profit continuing education facilities in the United States, and its programming has reached more than one million medical professionals. The Center's reach extends through its national activities and through weekly Grand Rounds and Tumor Conference lectures which benefit Coachella Valley physicians and provide them with the latest in best practices and scientific evidence. The Center also reaches hundreds of thousands more local residents annually, hosting the Indian Wells Center for Healthy Living at Eisenhower community outreach education courses where Valley residents can learn the latest health care information on such illnesses as diabetes, arthritis, high blood pressure, and asthma, to name a few. The Rancho Mirage Speakers' Series also takes place each year at the Annenberg Center. The Center has evolved into a leader in national and local health care information, instructional design, visual communication arts, teleconference production and conference services.

One program dear to the Annenberg Center and consistent with the original vision of the Ambassador is a program entitled Africa Calls. A unique program utilizing distance learning via audio teleconferencing, Africa Calls educates African physicians and other health care workers focusing on women's health issues in evolving African nations.

The series brings a world of scientific information and technology directly to the third world cultures in most desperate need. Open access to such information speeds treatment and lessens the economic burden on the world economy.

On the eve of its 25th anniversary, the Annenberg Center for Health Sciences at Eisenhower is embarking on an ambitious endowment endeavor started with a generous \$2.5 million gift from Mrs. Leonore Annenberg and the Annenberg Foundation. The goal of the endowment is to raise the needed funds so that the interest generated from the endowment will support and expand the Center's medical education programs.

The Annenberg Center's mission is to keep physicians and other health care professionals current with the latest medical treatment options available. Today's telecommunications technology is changing rapidly. In order to remain at the forefront, the Center continually upgrades and expands both knowledge and technological capabilities. In addition, the medical sciences are advancing at an unprecedented rate. It is widely believed that after only seven years in practice nearly 50 percent of the knowledge gained by physicians in medical schools has been replaced with new and advanced information.

Throughout his life, Ambassador Annenberg was the consummate visionary leader who believed that communication is knowledge, and knowledge is a powerful resource in creating a healthier and happier world. Corresponding with its 25th anniversary, the Annenberg Center has begun a Leadership in Continuing Medical Education initiative to identify and train the future leaders of continuing medical education. The Center also plans to increase the opportunities for collaborative continuing education endeavors with Eisenhower Medical Center and build on the successful "Managing Prostate Cancer in Today's Older Male" continuing medical education course launched last year with the Eisenhower Lucy Curci Cancer Center.

"Having been part of the Annenberg Center for Health Sciences since its beginnings, I am proud to celebrate our milestone of a quarter-century of providing quality education programs for health care providers and the residents of the Coachella Valley," says Merle Bolton, MD, and Chairman of the Board of the Annenberg Center. "We look forward to continuing and expanding our efforts in the future." President and Chief Executive Officer Philip Dombrowski concurs, "The Annenberg Center for Health Sciences is taking seriously the vision of our founder who created the Annenberg Center so that leaders in education, medicine, government, and industry could meet to collaborate to improve health care both locally and worldwide." If you are interested in contributing to the Annenberg Center's 25th anniversary endowment, please contact Philip A. Dombrowski, President and Chief Executive Officer of the Annenberg Center for Health Sciences at Eisenhower, at 760-773-4533.

