2024-2025 Golden Stethoscope Nomination

Nominated for: Outstanding Patient/Provider Communication

Name of Nominee Dr. Carlos Vera

It is with sincere regard and gratitude I nominate Dr. Vera for the Golden Stethoscope Award in Outstanding Patient/Provider Communication. As his student, I have had the privilege of witnessing firsthand the trust and connection he cultivates with his patients—in a matter of minutes and throughout the course of their lives. Dr. Vera doesn't just communicate with his patients; he connects with them, meets them where they are, and speaks in a way that reflects not just clinical expertise, but a unique understanding of each patient beyond the clinic.

One of the first patients I ever saw with Dr. Vera had a complex history of uncontrolled diabetes, hypertension, and depression. The patient, emotionally guarded and resistant to care, brushed off concerning symptoms and refused an ER visit, stating he would rather die than have his wife find out about his new chest pain. After trying every logical approach, Dr. Vera ended the visit with a quiet prayer knowing the patient's own spiritual beliefs. As someone from a non-religious background, this was striking to me. But as we stood in that circle, praying for health and peace, the patient's tears said everything. In that moment, Dr. Vera had reached him in a way medicine alone could not. Afterward, Dr. Vera reflected, "Sometimes, patients can't hear what we're saying until we meet them in a place where they canbe heard." Prayer, he explained, was his way of showing this patient that he was not a figure of authority, but a fellow human—offering help only if the patient was willing to receive it. It wasn't about religion. It was about connection. It was about helping the patient see the help he needed to inspire action. That moment captured the core of Dr. Vera's communication style: it is humble, human, and demonstrates deep respect and understanding for the person in front of him.

More recently, a patient with advanced heart failure and an LVAD presented with low blood pressure. While exploring his social history, Dr. Vera asked how much water he was drinking. When the patient responded, "Not much," Dr. Vera didn't dive into a complex physiological explanation. Instead, knowing the patient was a retired mechanic, he explained the importance of fluid and pressure using a car analogy—something grounded in the patient's own world. The metaphor clicked immediately, and the patient agreed to do his best to increase his water intake.

While these stories are small windows into his daily interactions, the true testament to Dr. Vera's communication lies in the patients who have stayed with him over the course of his career. Many have followed him across clinics—from St. Joseph's to the Thornton Clinic—driving long distances to continue receiving care from him. Dr. Vera starts his days before sunrise and often ends them with phone calls to patients late at night and on weekends—earning his patient's trust and loyalty through years of consistent and

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