

Celebrating the Election of Dr Gerardo Moreno to the National Academy of Medicine

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In autumn 2023, the National Academy of Medicine elected one family medicine physician scientist to join their ranks in 2022. This year, the honor was bestowed upon Dr Gerardo Moreno.

Dr Moreno is currently serving as chair of the Department of Family Medicine at the David Geffen School of Medicine, University of California at Los Angeles. Dr Moreno is a native of central California, from the small community of Winton. His family were seasonal agricultural workers, and they would occasionally work in other industries in the wintertime. Dr Moreno's family would go to Mexico in the off season, and he had the opportunity to attend school in Guanajuato, Mexico, during his fourth- and fifth-grade years.

He attended San José State University, where his brother was studying engineering and where Dr Moreno he got his degrees in environmental sciences and chemistry. After his college experience, Dr Moreno shadowed a family physician, Dr Salvador Sandoval, in the central valley near his hometown. Dr Moreno remembers doing home visits with migrant workers with Dr Sandoval, who also identifies as Latino, and how Dr Sandoval was part of the community and was often thanked with harvested vegetables and fruits. This experience convinced a young Dr Moreno that family medicine was his calling. Dr Moreno attended UCLA for medical school, followed by matching at the University of California at San Francisco Family Medicine residency. Here he was exposed to research on pathway programs, and he was amazed that he could build a research career studying how people from minoritized identities could find their way into medicine.

Dr Moreno's leadership in the [PRIME-LA program](#) (a 5-year concurrent-degree program that focuses on leadership and advocacy with a long-term goal to develop leaders in medicine addressing policy, care, and research in health care for

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Figure 1. Dr Gerardo Moreno, MD, MSHS.



Photo: January Moore, ABFM.

the underserved), has made it a national model for upward mobility and diversity in the medical profession, and has provided a means to address the needs of a very diverse patient population. The most common specialty for medical students that complete the PRIME-LA program is family medicine. Dr Moreno has mentored hundreds of trainees and learners from diverse backgrounds. His pathway work has been groundbreaking and eye opening. His team in 2014 produced the definitive paper showing that students who graduate from community college are two-thirds as likely to be accepted into medical school, when corrected for all other factors.¹ This work also showed that community college graduates, when they attend medical school, are more diverse than the group that did not attend community college and they are more likely to serve underserved populations in family medicine.² This spotlight has changed admissions practices throughout the country and

Figure 2. Dr Gerardo Moreno's rendition of Ixchel, Mayan Goddess of Medicine. Acrylic on canvas.

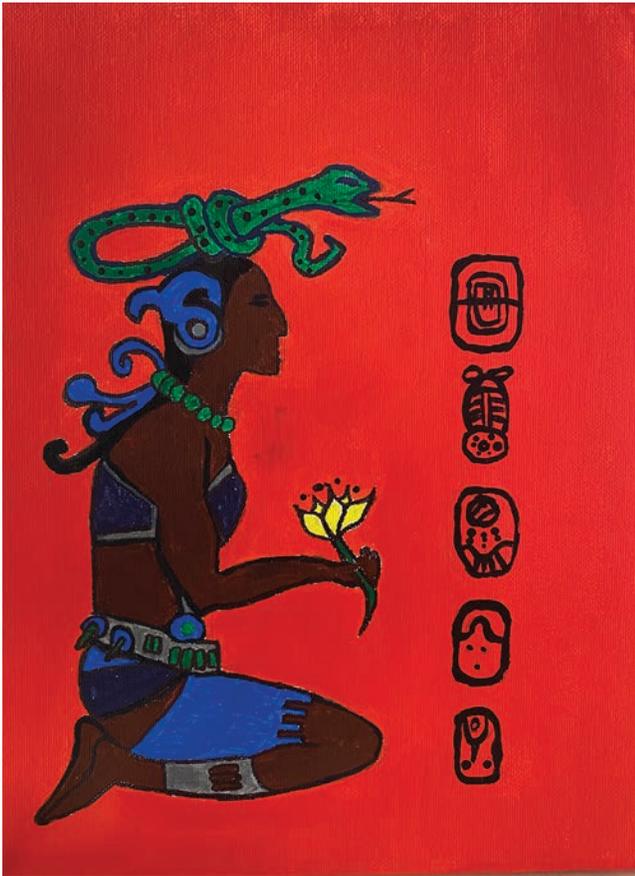


Photo: Gerardo Moreno.

has certainly advanced, if not caused, a national conversation on the exclusionary practices of medicine. He is most proud of his research on physician workforce diversity and diabetes outcomes among older adults³ and minoritized populations.⁴

Dr Moreno was a James C. Puffer MD Fellow at the National Academy of Medicine and currently serves as the president of the American Board of Family Medicine. He is a standing member of an NIH study section reviewing research grants. Although he is extremely busy with his professional activities, he is a devoted family man. He left our interview to fly home for Halloween to participate in trick or treating with his daughter, only to return the next day. Dr Moreno likes to travel and spend time with his family, and he enjoys creating art that speaks to his lived experiences. *Annals of Family Medicine* offers Dr Moreno our heartiest congratulations and is delighted to celebrate this momentous achievement for him and our specialty.



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