



UCSF Fresno
Medical Education
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MEDIA ADVISORY
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UCSF Fresno graduates class of 2008 resident physicians

One-third are expected to stay in the Central Valley to care for area residents

FRESNO – The UCSF Fresno Medical Education Program will graduate more than 60 resident physicians in a ceremony to be held **Thursday, June 12, beginning at 6:30 p.m., at Copper River Country Club** (11500 North Friant Road) in Fresno. A social hour for the graduates, their families and friends and UCSF Fresno faculty and staff members will be held at 5:30 p.m.

One-third of the graduates are expected to stay in the Fresno vicinity and Central Valley to care for area residents.

Among them:

- Loan Dao, MD, started her path to becoming a physician on the other side of the globe when she and her family escaped from Vietnam in the late 1970s. Fluent in Vietnamese, Dao will continue to practice in California.
- Amber Mahal, MD, completed her training while caring for her infant daughter during the child's bout with liver failure. Mahal will join her husband's internal medicine practice in Fresno.
- Neil Smith, DO, was raised by a single mother in the Bay Area. He credits his grandparents with inspiring him to become a physician and pursuing a specialty in geriatrics. Smith plans on practicing psychiatry in the Valley after completing a one-year fellowship at UC San Diego. His wife, Sarah, a 2007 graduate of the UCSF Fresno pediatric program, is a physician at Children's Hospital Central California.

"I am tremendously proud of all of our resident physicians," said UCSF Fresno Associate Dean Joan Voris. "UCSF Fresno attracts the finest quality of medical residents - many of them have ties to the Valley or they develop roots in the Valley and set up practice here. Growing our own is the surest way to address this region's shortage of physicians."

Graduation highlights include:

- Welcome remarks by Joan Voris, MD, Associate Dean, UCSF Fresno
- Graduation address by Michael Peterson, MD, Chief of Medicine, UCSF Fresno
- Presentation of the prestigious *Kaiser Award for Excellence in Teaching*. Of the four Kaiser awards presented by the UCSF School of Medicine, one is given to an outstanding faculty member in the Fresno program.

(More)

- Other awards include: *Outstanding First-Year Resident, Outstanding Resident Teacher, Outstanding Attending Teacher, Outstanding Non-Physician Teacher, Borba Award for Outstanding Research, and the Dizon Community Service Award.*

For more information about the UCSF Fresno graduation ceremony, please call (559) 499-6534.

UCSF Fresno Medical Education Program plays a substantial role in providing healthcare services to residents of California's San Joaquin Valley and training medical professionals in the region. The medical education program has trained approximately one-third of Valley physicians currently practicing in one of the seven specialties in which it provides training. Since its inception more than 30 years ago, UCSF Fresno has graduated more than 2,000 resident physicians. UCSF Fresno faculty and medical residents care for the overwhelming majority of the area's underserved populations. The program currently trains about 200 medical residents, nearly 200 medical students and a number of fellows in cardiology, critical care, minimal invasive surgery, and pulmonary medicine. UCSF Fresno also provides academic preparation programs for middle- and high-school students interested in the health professions through the Doctor's Academy and Junior Doctor's Academy. UCSF Fresno is a key partner in the proposed UC Merced School of Medicine and will play a significant role in the training of medical students at the planned school.

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