UCSF Fresno 2015 Graduation Marks 40 Years of Training Physicians for the San Joaquin Valley

WHO:
Approximately 100 physicians, including medical residents and fellows in eight specialties and 11 sub-specialties and three oral and maxillofacial surgery dental residents will graduate on June 11 during a UCSF Fresno Medical Education Program ceremony. Nearly 30 percent of the graduating physicians are expected to stay and care for patients in the San Joaquin Valley.

This year’s graduation marks UCSF Fresno’s 40th anniversary of training physicians for the medically underserved Valley. The graduates include San Joaquin Valley native Rachel Goerzen, DO, and long-time Valley resident Richard Kiel, MD, Anjani Kolahi, MD, who matched at UCSF Fresno with her husband, and Jose Robles-Huerta, DO, who grew up in Los Angeles and is staying at UCSF Fresno to teach future physicians.

Over the past four decades, UCSF Fresno has trained about 3,000 physicians with up to 40 percent staying in the region and contributing to the health and well-being of patients and the economic success of the Valley community.

Media are invited to cover the graduation and the social hour leading up to it.

WHAT:
UCSF Fresno Interim Associate Dean Michael Peterson and above graduates will be available for interviews during the social hour and by phone prior to the day of graduation.

A number of awards will be presented during the graduation ceremony, including honors for outstanding residents and teachers, Borba research awards, the UCSF Fresno Community Service Award, Kaiser Award for Excellence in Teaching, the ICare Award, the Leon S. Peters Resident of the Year Award and the Steven N. Parks Leadership Award.

WHEN:
Thursday, June 11
5 p.m. Social Hour
6 p.m. Graduation Ceremony
WHERE:
William Saroyan Theater
700 M Street
Fresno

Media: Please call (559) 313-6539 to confirm attendance. Interviews will be available during the social hour prior to the start of the graduation ceremony.

BACKGROUND:

Each year, UCSF Fresno graduates approximately 100 physicians from its residency and fellowship programs. Residency training prepares recently graduated MDs and Doctors of Osteopathic Medicine to become specialists, including pediatricians and family practitioners among others, in approximately three to five years. Fellowships offer specific training beyond residency in an area of expertise such as cardiology. Fellowships generally last one to two years. Up to 40 percent of these graduating medical residents and fellows stay in the San Joaquin Valley to practice their specialty and provide care for community members.

“Congratulations and best wishes to all of our graduates. We are proud that nearly one-third of them are staying in the Valley to provide care and teach future physicians,” said UCSF Fresno Interim Associate Dean Michael Peterson. “UCSF Fresno was established 40 years ago by the California Legislature with the intention that the University of California play a pivotal role in addressing the health care needs of the Valley. UCSF remains committed to that long-standing intention and we look forward to training physicians and improving health in the Valley for the next 40 years and well beyond that into the future.”

This year’s graduates include:

Rachel Goerzen, DO, graduated from Selma High School and attended Fresno State. She earned her Doctor of Osteopathic (DO) Medicine degree as part of the second graduating class from Lincoln Memorial University – DeBusk College of Osteopathic Medicine in Tennessee. While Dr. Goerzen attended medical school across the country, she knew she would return to the Valley one day where her family still resides. Goerzen spent four weeks training with UCSF Fresno in Selma during her fourth year of medical school. It was then that her interest in the medical education program was solidified. According to Goerzen, she enjoyed virtually every field of medicine until finally deciding on a specialty. She currently is wrapping up residency training in family and community medicine. After graduation, she will go to work for Valley Health team in Kerman, San Joaquin and later on in Kingsburg where she will provide full scope family practice care, including seeing children, adults, and women for gynecological and prenatal care at all clinical locations. As the first in her family to graduate from college, Goerzen encourages students and future physicians to pursue their dreams and never give up.

Richard Kiel, MD, is a two-time graduate from UCSF Fresno. This year, he is completing sub-specialty training in cardiology. In 2011, he completed residency training in internal medicine and served as a Chief Resident for the Internal Medicine program from 2011-2012. Dr. Kiel is the son of the late actor Richard Kiel and Diane Kiel. Born in Southern California, Kiel has called the Valley home for the past 35 years. He has two brothers and a sister. Kiel and his wife Lisa have two
children. A self-described non-traditional student, Kiel graduated from Yosemite High School in Oakhurst, attended Fresno City College and went on to graduate Suma Cum Laude from Fresno State. He earned his Doctor of Medicine degree from the Drexel University College of Medicine in Philadelphia. According to Kiel, he chose UCSF Fresno for training because of the opportunities to work with diverse patients and pathologies. The mentorship he received in cardiology from renowned cardiologists, John Ambrose, MD and Prakash Deedwania, MD, also was important to his decision to train at UCSF Fresno for the past seven years. In addition, Kiel points to their guidance as being instrumental to his development as a physician and scientist. After graduation, Kiel will pursue an additional fellowship in advanced heart failure, cardiac transplantation and pulmonary hypertension at the UCSF Medical Center Parnassus campus. After completing that training, he plans to return to UCSF Fresno as a faculty member to help expand access for Valley patients to cutting edge heart failure treatments.

Anjani Kolahi, MD, is a first-generation Indian American. Her parents emigrated from Maharashtra, India to the U.S. Dr. Kolahi grew up in southern California. She graduated from UCLA with a degree in sociology and gerontology, and earned her medical degree from the SUNY Buffalo School of Medicine. Her husband Kourosh Kolahi, MD, is training in orthopaedics at UCSF Fresno. The Kolahi’s matched at UCSF Fresno as a couple in the National Resident Matching Program. In college, Dr. Anjani Kolahi had a special interest in the geriatric population and as her urge to understand and advocate for the population grew, she decided to become a physician to better serve the cohort. After spending thousands of hours in the hospital as a pre-med student volunteer and through various medical school clinical experiences, she realized she wanted to expand her patient population to be involved in patients’ lives from the "womb to tomb" and decided on family medicine as her medical specialty. After graduation, she will join the UCSF Fresno Family & Community Medicine faculty with an emphasis on women’s comprehensive reproductive health, advocacy, global health and in-patient medicine.

Jose Robles-Huerta, DO, is completing residency training in internal medicine. He and his wife Irene have two children. Dr. Robles-Huerta is the son of immigrants and is thankful for his parents’ encouragement and support he received from the mentoring program the Fulfillment Fund. He credits both his parents and the mentoring program with helping him achieve his professional goals. Robles-Huerta grew up in the Rampart district in Los Angeles. He was one of the few students from his high school class to go to college. Robles-Huerta said he learned quickly that he was underprepared for college level academics and had to study twice as hard. He also worked several jobs and took out loans to finance his education. He graduated from Occidental College and went on to earn a Master’s from Pennsylvania State University. He was part of the first medical school class at the A.T. Still University - School of Osteopathic Medicine in Arizona. According to Robles-Huerta, he chose UCSF Fresno because it is a community-based program with an academic environment. After graduation, he will join the faculty at UCSF Fresno as a hospitalist.

###

UCSF is the nation's leading university exclusively focused on health. Now celebrating the 150th anniversary of its founding as a medical college, UCSF is dedicated to transforming health worldwide through advanced biomedical research, graduate-level education in the life sciences and health professions, and excellence in patient care. It includes top-ranked graduate schools of

(more)
dentistry, medicine, nursing and pharmacy; a graduate division with world-renowned programs in the biological sciences, a preeminent biomedical research enterprise and top-tier hospitals, UCSF Medical Center and UCSF Benioff Children's Hospitals. Please visit www.ucsf.edu.

UCSF Fresno, established in 1975 and now celebrating its 40th anniversary, plays a vital role in providing healthcare services to residents of the San Joaquin Valley, training medical professionals in the region, conducting research that addresses regional health issues and academically preparing a pipeline of students for careers in health and medicine. Please visit www.fresno.ucsf.edu