



DOWNSTATE TIMES

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The Newsletter for SUNY Downstate University Hospital of Brooklyn



The Impact of the 50th Anniversary of the 1963 March of Washington

The Legacy Is Still Important to Downstate

by Kevin Antoine, JD
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EEO&Title IX Advisor

Fifty years ago on August 28, 1963, Americans from all walks of life marched on the nation's capital in what now is simply referred to as "The March on Washington." Eighteen people were on the official program to give remarks, sing, and offer prayer. History forever set apart the sixteenth speaker, Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

With Old Testament fervor, Dr. King delivered perhaps one of the greatest speeches in world history. Dr. King exalted, "We have come here today to dramatize the shameful condition.... we have...come to this hallowed spot to remind America of the fierce urgency of now."

More than a quarter of a million people participated in the March on Washington, making it the largest gathering of Americans up to that time seeking redress of issues from the federal government. Within two

On the 50th anniversary of the March on Washington and Dr. Martin Luther King's famous speech, Kevin Antoine and Shaundelle Goldsmith reflect on its continuing relevance.

years, Congress passed both President Kennedy's landmark Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965.

Sadly, within three months of "The March," President Kennedy would be



assassinated, never living to see the passage of the civil rights and voting rights bills he sent to Congress. In less than 5 years, Dr. King would be assassinated, never living to see federal nondiscrimination laws become the law of the land and duplicated at state and local government levels, colleges and universities, private sector businesses, and at academic health centers.

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DOWNSTATE PHYSICIANS RECOGNIZED AS "BEST DOCTORS" IN NEW YORK MAGAZINE



Congratulations to Downstate Physicians recognized as a "Best Doctor" by New York Magazine

in its annual feature. The list is developed from Castle Connolly Medical Ltd's annual guidebook, "Top Doctors: New York Metro Area."



Jeffrey Birnbaum, MD
(Pediatrics)



Jeffrey S. Borer, MD
(Cardiovascular Disease)



Carl Cohen, MD
(Geriatric Psychiatry)



John Kassotis, MD
(Cardiac Electrophysiology)



Steven R. Levine, MD
(Neurology)



Richard M. Rosenfeld, MD
(Pediatric Otolaryngology)



Paul A. Pipia, MD
(Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation)

March of Washington (continued)

Even here at Downstate Medical Center we enjoy benefits and opportunities as a result of that march fifty years ago. For example, both Downstate and the various unions that represent state employees have standard non-discrimination policies in their employment policies and collective bargaining agreements that mirror the language of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Downstate Medical Center now sponsors a Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Leadership Award.

The first two recipients of that award - H. Carl McCall, chairman of the SUNY Board of Trustees, and the Reverend Al Sharpton, host of MSNBC's Politics Nation - reminded us how both New York State and the unions excluded some Brooklyn residents from construction jobs

in the building of Downstate.

By 1964, excluding Americans from employment based on race, ethnicity, gender, and religion was against federal law. As the impact of the March on Washington reverberated, its reach could still be felt in 1972 with the passage of Title IX of the Education Amendments (Title IX), which prohibits discrimination in ten specific areas, including athletics. The other areas are: access to higher education, career education, learning environment, math and science, sexual harassment, standardized testing, technology, employment, and education for pregnant and parenting students.

Today, private sector businesses also have nondiscrimination policies, including the Joint Commission that has oversight over accreditation of American hospitals. The new Culturally Competent

Patient-Family Centered Hospital Accreditation Standard provides that, "As patients move along the care continuum, it is important for hospitals to be prepared to identify and address not just the clinical aspects of care, but also the spectrum of each patient's demographic and personal characteristics."

International organizations such as the World Health Organization (WHO) and the United Nations Foundation Millennium Development Goals (UNFMDG) have even adopted in part the language of the American Civil Rights Act, Voting Rights Act, and Title IX.

As civil rights workers in the South used to say, once you start something you can't stop at the door. These next fifty years should continue to open closed doors to make the right to health care a constitutional right.



On average, men die at a younger age than women. And yet, men see physicians much less frequently.

This was one of the men's health issues that Dr. Richard Sadovsky, associate professor of family medicine and an expert in men's health, discussed at a recent meeting with congregants of the



Downstate in the Community: Men and Health

By Betty Jung, RN, Patient Educator
Center for Community Health
Promotion and Wellness

Dr. Richard Sadovsky spoke on men's health at Christian Heritage Church.

control of their health. Healthy living also includes regular check-ups, getting routine screenings, and taking medications as prescribed. And, Dr. Sadovsky advised, men should always ask their doctor one very important question: "How can I live longer?"

Health professionals at Downstate might also want to apply Dr. Sadovsky's advice to their own practice habits: For your male patients, remember to dig a little deeper when conducting a history, and you may need to be more persistent with appointment reminders.

Do you need a primary care doctor? The physicians in our Family Medicine Department will be happy to treat you – either here in Suite B, or at Downstate's Family Health Services at Lefferts Avenue. Call 718-270-7207 for an appointment.

Christian Heritage Church on East 42nd in Flatlands, Brooklyn.

And while Dr. Sadovsky's lecture was directed at consumers, many health

professionals at Downstate will surely be familiar with the patterns he described.

Men and doctors? There are issues. Typically, Dr. Sadovsky said, "men won't see a physician unless they have a specific injury or an acute illness. They won't reveal if they have additional medical problems or make a list of questions so they can remember what to ask. They don't want a lot of information because they are afraid of receiving bad news."

And there's more. Men have little patience for long waits, don't like waiting rooms, and often refuse to take off from work to see a doctor. It's difficult for men to think of themselves as being ill – and therefore, they frequently don't seek medical attention until a late stage of their disease.

The good news is, men can maintain good health through healthier living. From eating better to increasing physical activity and reducing stress, men can take

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