The Foundation for the History of Women in Medicine

Established in 1998, the Foundation for the History of Women in Medicine was founded with the belief that knowing the historical past is a powerful force in shaping the future. Though relatively young, the Foundation for the History of Women in Medicine has accomplished the following: established the Alma Dea Morani Award recognizing nationally the leadership of outstanding women in medicine; created a research fellowship through The College of Physicians of Philadelphia; provided a grant to initiate the digitization project to the Archives and Special Collections on Women in Medicine at the Drexel University College of Medicine. Affiliations currently exist with The College of Physicians of Philadelphia and the Association of American Medical Colleges.

The College of Physicians of Philadelphia

Founded in 1787, The College of Physicians of Philadelphia is a non-profit educational and cultural institution dedicated to promoting a better understanding of medicine and the roles of the physician in society. The College carries out its mission through its various programs and services including the Mütter Museum, the Benjamin Rush Medicinal Plant Garden, the College Library and the Francis Clark Wood Institute for the History of Medicine, and Philly Health Info. Since its founding, the College has been deeply committed to community service. The College is comprised of many nationally recognized leaders of America’s health care profession.

The Sixth Annual

Alma Dea Morani

Renaissance Woman Award

Audrey E. Evans, M.D.
Audrey E. Evans was born in England and attended medical school at Edinburgh. She graduated in 1950, and in 1953, with the help of a Fulbright Award, came to the United States for pediatric training at the Children’s Hospital in Boston and at the Johns Hopkins Hospital. She returned to the United Kingdom in 1953. There the system for pediatric care is a hospital consultant service, and she was advised that the limited number of appointments available would probably be filled by men. On this basis, she returned to Boston where she joined the Oncology Service at the Children’s Hospital in 1957. At that time there was little effective treatment for children with cancer, so the focus was a balance of research and care for the family. Dr. Sydney Farber coined the phrase “total care” and his service was unusual in that it included pediatricians, research scientists, nurses, and social workers. In the seven years spent there, Dr. Evans was privileged to participate in several studies on leukemia and solid tumors that led to the cure of some of these diseases.

She then spent four years as head of hematology/oncology at the University of Chicago, after which she came to The Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia in 1969 at the invitation of Dr. C. Everett Koop to head a special oncology service, separate from hematology. She built the foundation for the present Cancer Research Center at The Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia, now one of the largest centers in the world of its kind, with 40 pediatric oncologists and a budget of $5 million. Because of her interest in the “total care” of children and their families, she set the wheels in motion that led to the creation of the first Ronald McDonald House. She also played a part in the Ronald McDonald Children’s Charity, which is the largest children’s fund in the United States.

Since she resigned as Chief of Oncology in 1989, she has focused on studies of new agents specifically for the treatment of neuroblastoma, a childhood cancer that has not achieved the success of many other tumors.