

## **Brief History of The School of Medicine Program in Medical Humanities and Arts**

**In the late 1990s, I thought I might have come to the end of my career at UCI. I'd worked for 20 years as a behavioral health specialist in Family Medicine, had earned tenure, had published many papers, taught many residents, served as interim chair of my department, and as co-director of a large required patient-doctor course. I'd accomplished what I'd set out to do, but could see no place I wanted to go. I was seriously thinking of leaving the university. My husband asked me if, before I left, there was anything more I wanted to do, as I might not have the chance to work in an academic setting again. I said, "I'd like to teach a course on literature and medicine." He told me I should do it, so I filled out all the multitudinous elective forms CEP required, and in the fall of 1999 taught the first Patient Stories/Doctor Stories elective in the School of Medicine. It enrolled 3 students, two of whom rarely showed up, so for many sessions it was just Aparche Yang and me. Aparche seemed to enjoy the experience reasonably well, but I loved it!**

**From that single 10 week course, the Program in Medical Humanities (which was approved – more aspirationally than anything - in 2000 by Lloyd Rucker the then-associate dean of medical education) grew to where it is today, with an impressive array of electives (including the Patient/Doctor literature and medicine elective now taught by the insightful Tan Nguyen, an arts and medicine elective taught by the excellent Joel Shallit, an Improv theater elective taught by Joel Veenstra, a UCI professor of drama, a sometime History of Medicine elective, and the 4<sup>th</sup> year elective Art of Doctoring, which enrolls approximately 2/3-3/4 of the graduating class and is now ably directed by Martha Sosa-Johnson). There is also required medical humanities sessions in the Clinical Foundations course and in three third year clerkships. The Program also sponsors the original arts and literature journal Plexus, an annual Medical Student Art Exhibit, various other poetry and theater events in conjunction with the UCI Center for Medical Humanities, Illuminations and other campus groups and encourages pre-med interest in health humanities through advising the undergraduate club Healing through Humanities.**

**The success of the program would not have been possible without the efforts of so many people. Special acknowledgment goes to Ralph Clayman, who is really responsible for connecting the SoM and campus around medical humanities interests in 2014; and stalwart physician collaborators including Tan Nguyen, Penny Murata, Rich Kelly, Anju Hurria, Candice Taylor and Gabriella Miotto. My home department of Family Medicine has always provided unstinting support, and this has been especially true under the leadership of the current chair, Cindy Haq. Dean Stamos has been a steadfast ally of medical humanities and has supported the program not only with words but with deeds. Doug Haynes, now vice-chancellor for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, was instrumental in laying the groundwork for and being the first director of the Center for Medical Humanities on campus which has led to many fruitful collaborations with medical humanities in the School of Medicine. Jim Lee, his successor at CMH, has built a campus environment in which medical humanities is thriving**

and has encouraged a strong relationship with SoM. All of these people and many more deserve so much thanks and recognition.

As I step down from my role as director of the program, after a 44 year career at UCI, I am filled with gratitude at all I was allowed to contribute to countless generations of medical students and residents; and excitement for the infinite possibilities that lie ahead.

#### **INTRODUCTION DR. JULIET MCMULLIN**

One of the main reasons I am so excited about the future of medical humanities at this institution is the recent appointment of Dr. Juliet McMullin to fill the position of director of medical humanities for the UCI School of Medicine. Dr. McMullin is trained as a medical anthropologist with special expertise in narrative and graphic medicine. She is the author of two books, one on revitalizing Native Hawaiian health and the other exploring metaphors of cancer. She has published multiple articles in leading medical humanities, anthropology, social science and ethics journals. Dr. McMullin comes to us from UC Riverside, where she held many leadership roles including chair of her department, interim dean of the College of Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences, Director of the Medical/Health Humanities Emphasis in the School of Medicine and the College of Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences, chair of the undergraduate minor in Medical and Health Humanities Studies and Co-Director for Health Disparities Research. Dr. McMullin is brilliantly positioned to take the UCI program to the next level of excellence and to ensure its reputation for cutting-edge innovation. Her commitment to how narrative engagement around issues health equity and justice can create pathways to wellbeing for patients and health care professionals aligns well with both the School of Medicine and campus priorities of social justice, diversity, equity, and inclusion. Her research and teaching priorities stress the importance of providing platforms for previously disenfranchised voices with an eye toward enlarging and uplifting the culture of medicine.

I have had the great honor and pleasure of working with Juliet on various applied research projects and workshops. I know you will all discover, as I did, what a smart, creative, insightful and compassionate colleague she is. In the 3 weeks she has been at UCI, she has thrown herself into teaching, writing grants, and taking on projects involving both undergrad and medical students, thus demonstrating her passion, work ethic, and leadership. There are so many exciting directions for the medical humanities program and I know Juliet will pursue them ardently by forging and implementing her own unique vision. As I've learned, this work cannot be done alone, and she will need the enthusiasm, knowledge, and wisdom of each of you to ensure her and the program's continued success. Because I have worked with all of you, I can say unequivocally she is lucky to have such phenomenal colleagues.

Please join me in welcoming Dr. Juliet McMullin to the UCI School of Medicine.