



Editorial Comment

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I believe the children are our future
Teach them well and let them lead the way
Show them all the beauty they possess inside
Give them a sense of pride to make it easier
Let the children's laughter remind us how we used to be...

— *Greatest Love of All*, Whitney Houston (1965-2012)

On Saturday, Feb 11th, 2012 there were many memorable events. One was the Ribbon-Cutting Ceremony for the new El Paso Children's Hospital (EPCH). Another was the first Young Achievers Forum (YAF) program for 6th graders held in El Paso on the UTEP campus. And, lastly, the sad death of Whitney Houston, who is known for her music, including the song with the lyrics quoted above. That song, and the singer, holds many personal memories for me. I thought it fitting that I was left hearing those words in my mind the same day that the other two events specifically for children occurred.

The Ribbon-cutting ceremony at EPCH was beautiful. While attending, I ran into many physicians, hospital employees, residents and a few patients. All were happy to see what could be achieved with hope, prayers and perseverance. We stand ready to see how the hospital will continue to grow and change as patients are admitted and specialists begin to make their offices there.

I also attended and presented at the YAF program. This program was funded and organized by a business group in El Paso called Comunidades en Accion (Communities in Action) who modeled it after an annual Career Day event that is held in Houston. This was the first such program in El Paso. The program was held over 4 hours in UTEP and involved 6th graders from many schools in El Paso ISD and surrounding school districts. More than 800 students and 200 parents attended. Career categories such as Health Sciences, Finance, Liberal Arts, and Education were represented by presenters. The goal of the program was to introduce children at this age to careers to which they might aspire and to give them information about what it might take to achieve

their goals. My session was specifically on the courses they might need in middle school and high school in order to gain college entrance. We then talked about why learning each subject might be important in a health career. For instance, we talked about how a pediatrician needed to use math every day to be sure prescriptions contained the correct dose. Doctors also need to know medical history to understand why we need to get a flu shot every year. I need to know another language in order to communicate effectively with my patients who don't speak English. The students were very vocal and excited and they participated well. I enjoyed my involvement in this program and hope that it will become a yearly event for El Paso's children.

I truly believe that children are our future so I say, "Keep up the good work, El Paso!"

Continue to fund hospitals that keep our children healthy and become active in programs to help children learn and grow.

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