The Dr. M. Alfred Haynes Endowed Scholarship Fund, an award for students at Charles R. Drew University of Medicine and Science in Los Angeles, has been established as motivation for academic excellence and financial relief. Led by David G. Satcher, the former U.S. Surgeon General who previously served as interim dean at the university, the scholarship rewards students who have demonstrated excellence in community health leadership.

The scholarship honors M. Alfred Haynes, the president emeritus at Charles Drew University, who was a pioneer in addressing racial disparities. Dr. Satcher, who spoke in June 2010 at the university’s commencement ceremony, announced the effort then to establish a scholarship fund that honored his mentor, Dr. Haynes, while at what was then known in the 1970s as Charles R. Drew Postgraduate Medical College. The fund has established a first-year target of $100,000, but support has vastly exceeded expectations. More than $80,000 has been pledged during the first month alone, as donations have continued to be made. University administrators expect the total amount will reach six-figures by year’s end.

The scholarship’s first recipient was Shaunda K. Grisby, a senior from the College of Medicine; Shaunda K. Grisby was chosen to receive the $5,000 award this year. Having completed medical school, she will begin her postgraduate training at Easton Hospital in Pennsylvania. “This award will provide much needed financial help for our students, while reminding them of our pioneers, whose dedication and sacrifices set the foundation for this institution of higher learning,” said Dr. Keith C. Norris, the interim president at Charles Drew University.

Dr. M. Alfred Haynes has been a pioneer in addressing disparities in health status, in access to health care and in professional health education opportunities for underrepresented minorities, and the poor. Over his long and distinguished career, he has been a major architect of social justice for black professionals in the health sciences. Dr. Haynes, one of the first black faculty members at Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore, played an important role in a national study titled “Hunger U.S.A.,” while helping to establish racial integration policies for that university. Following the Watts rebellion in Los Angeles, Dr. Haynes became an early faculty member and associate dean of the Drew Postgraduate Medical School, an institution he later served as dean.

Dr. Haynes has made an impact on patients and on other medical professionals, beginning with his days as a medical officer with the U.S. Public Health Service. As a member of the Institute of Medicine Dr. Haynes co-authored The Unequal Burden of Cancer: An Assessment of NIH Research and Programs for Ethnic Minorities and the Medically Underserved which was published in 1999. He never stopped sharing his knowledge, helping others heal or paving the way as a leader. Dr. Haynes worked tirelessly to reduce cancer mortality in the African-American community.

About Charles Drew University of Medicine and Science:
CDU is a private nonprofit, nonsectarian, minority-serving medical and health sciences institution. Located in the Watts-Willowbrook area of South Los Angeles, CDU has graduated more than 550 medical doctors, 2,500 post-graduate physicians, more than 2,000 physician assistants and hundreds of other health professionals. The only dually designated Historically Black Graduate Institution and Hispanic Serving Health Professions School in the U.S. CDU is recognized as a leader in translational and health inequities research, specifically with respect to heart disease, diabetes, cancer, mental health, and HIV/AIDS. The university is among the top 7 percent of National Institutes of Health-funded institutions and rated one of the top 50 private universities in research in the U.S. Recently, the CDU/UCLA medical program was named the “best performer” in the University of California System with respect to producing outstanding underrepresented minority physicians. For more information, visit http://www.cdrewu.edu/
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