LOS ANGELES – The Board of Trustees of Charles Drew University of Medicine and Science (CDU) has appointed a new leadership team for CDU composed of three of its top executives. The board appointed Keith C. Norris, MD, FASN, CDU’s Executive Vice President for Research and Health Affairs, to lead the Office of External Affairs; Ronald Edelstein, EdD, to continue to serve as Dean of Academic Affairs; and Elizabeth Garcia, Executive Vice President of Operations, to lead the Office of Internal Operations. This executive team has more than nine decades of combined experience and strength in the fields of medicine, education, research and management. Norris, Edelstein and Garcia will serve collectively as the Office of the President after the resignation of Susan A. Kelly, PhD, FAPS, the University’s President and Chief Executive Officer, becomes effective on May 4, 2009.

“The board has great confidence in this team’s strong management skills and its ability to lead Charles Drew University of Medicine and Science in its mission to transform underserved communities through education, training, research and clinical services,” said Board Chairman, Los Angeles attorney Bart H. Williams. “Charles Drew University will continue to make a difference in filling the critical need for access to quality health care in economically disadvantaged, underserved and highly diverse communities in South Los Angeles and around the country. We will move forward with a search for a new University President in a measured way, confident that the University is in able hands in the interim.”

Among the leadership team, Dr. Norris’s new tasks will include working with the community, foundations and other funding sources, the media and other external audiences. At CDU, Norris’s nationally renowned research interests focus on the prevention and early treatment of chronic kidney disease, with an emphasis on improving outcomes for African American and Latino populations. Other areas include the role of vitamin D in chronic kidney disease, calcium management in end-stage renal disease, and hypertension. He is currently a principal investigator on four National Institutes of Health (NIH) grants and co-investigator on several others.

Dr. Edelstein has served at CDU since 1978. He is an educational psychologist and clinical psychologist and received his doctorate in educational psychology at UCLA. As the dean of Academic Affairs, Dr. Edelstein is responsible for academic planning and implementation, academic administration (university accreditation), academic business development, university academic relationships, academic resources, faculty development, health sciences library/learning resources, Information Systems, Academic Pipeline (K-12), Institutional Research and Student Administration. In addition to serving as Dean of Academic Affairs, Dr. Edelstein is an associate professor in the Department of Family Medicine at CDU. Dr. Edelstein also holds a dual appointment in the David Geffen School of Medicine at UCLA in conjunction with the joint Drew/UCLA Medical Education Program.
Ms. Garcia was appointed Executive Vice President of Operations at CDU in 2007. The responsibilities she currently has will be expanded to include all internal operations on campus. Prior to joining CDU, Ms. Garcia was an independent consultant specializing in the area of health care who assisted urgent care centers and physician practices. From 2000 to 2005, Ms. Garcia served as Executive Director of the King Drew Medical Foundation where she developed and administered a $6 million annual budget. She also has served in various capacities in Los Angeles County, including revenue manager for the Department of Health Services, budget analyst in the Chief Administrative Office and Human Services Administrator in the Department of Public Social Services.

"With this team in place, CDU will move forward with its plans to complete its new school of nursing, and it will continue to provide an outstanding education for our students," said Williams. "CDU remains strong and firmly committed to the community-based mission it has had for over four decades: to serve the medically underserved in South Los Angeles and around the country through its education, research and clinical services."

*Founded in 1966 in response to the lack of adequate medical facilities in the area, Charles Drew University of Medicine and Science's mission is “to conduct education, research, and clinical services in the context of community engagement, to train health professionals who promote wellness, provide care with excellence and compassion and transform the health of underserved communities.”*

**For more information, please contact:**
Bart H. Williams, Esq.
Chair of the Board
(213) 683-9295

John L. Mitchell
Media Advisor at
Charles Drew University of Medicine & Science
Telephone: (323) 563-4981 or cell (323) 681-4225