

touchstone

THE MAGAZINE OF MOUNTAIN AREA HEALTH EDUCATION CENTER

FALL 2015

MAHEC Celebrates Over 40 years of Commitment to Medicine

Global Rural Health

Global Health is Rural Health

A Passion for Geriatric Medicine

Continuing Commitment Even in Retirement

MAHEC Celebration

2015 Community Faculty Awards



From our President and CEO, Dr. Jeff Heck

I recently ran across a letter I had written 30 years ago reflecting on what I hoped my work would be. In the letter, I quoted Dr. Paul Brand, a leprosy surgeon in Africa prior to the days of modern, effective treatment. He said, "I close my eyes and reflect on my life, flashing back through my memories to recall rare moments of intense pleasure and fulfillment. To my surprise, my mind passes by hedonistic recollections of great meals, thrilling vacations, or awards ceremonies. Instead, it settles on instances when I have been able to work closely with a team, and our work has allowed us to serve another human being."

I was inspired again by this quote and am so pleased to see how so many MAHEC teams can confidently come to this same conclusion about their work. Everyone at MAHEC works hard to do what they do every day. I hope you are also inspired by the experiences highlighted in this journal. Whether it is the aspirations of medical students who traveled to Honduras this summer to use medicine for the greater good, or the generosity of Dr. Suzanne Landis who is helping us establish an endowment to support Geriatric Medicine in perpetuity, MAHEC is proud to have such humanitarians in our midst.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jeffery E. Heck". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Jeffery E. Heck, MD
President and CEO, MAHEC
Professor, UNC Chapel Hill



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MAHEC's mission
is to train the next generation
of healthcare professionals
for Western North Carolina
through quality healthcare,
innovative education
and best practice models
that can be replicated nationally.

We value:
Excellence,
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To remove your name from the mail list or
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“GLOBAL HEALTH *is* RURAL HEALTH”

If you ask MAHEC faculty member Benjamin Gilmer, MD, “Global health is rural health,” and providing physicians to fill the deficit in rural Western North Carolina is one of MAHEC’s goals.

“The global experience is really a hook to inspire students to consider doing rural medicine,” says Dr. Gilmer.

That’s why 19 MAHEC family medicine and pharmacy faculty, residents, employees, and students spent two weeks in August working as a medical brigade in rural Honduras.

Continuing MAHEC’s longtime collaboration with the non-profit development organization Shoulder to Shoulder and the community of Camasca, Honduras, the group set up mobile medical clinics providing primary care consultations to over 1,000 patients in ten villages. Brigade members also provided eyeglasses, screened patients for depression, visited homebound patients, taught students about sexual health, distributed water filters with community health workers, and covered OB night shifts in the local clinic delivering six healthy babies during their two-week stay!



Summer 2015 Honduras Global Health Brigade



“The two locations [rural Honduras and rural WNC] are surprisingly similar. Both locations, despite the physical distance that separates them, are close-knit, warmhearted communities that too often have limited access to crucial resources.”

- Dr. Keith Whiteman, Family Medicine Resident

“She [Honduran patient] told me this wonderful thing. She said, ‘When I’m with good doctors, my soul returns to me.’”

- Family Medicine Resident



“It is very different shadowing our residents here [Honduras] than at the clinic at home. It is much more hands-on, and you dive right into helping wherever you are needed.”

- Anna Beth Parlier, MAHEC Research Assistant

A Passion for GERIATRIC MEDICINE

Continuing Commitment Even in Retirement

Suzanne Landis, MD, MPH, Director of the Center for Healthy Aging at MAHEC and leader in establishing Project Access®, retired at the end of June after 38 years of advocacy and research impacting Western North Carolina, the state, and the nation. But her passion for geriatric medicine continues with a pledged gift totaling \$500,000 to establish an endowment at MAHEC for geriatric medicine.

“Having personally witnessed and benefited through her compassionate and intelligent care of my own family members, I can say that Dr. Landis is one of the state’s greatest physicians, and her legacy will and should be enduring. This gift is yet another demonstration of her most honorable and respected commitment to advance Geriatric Medicine for generations to come.”

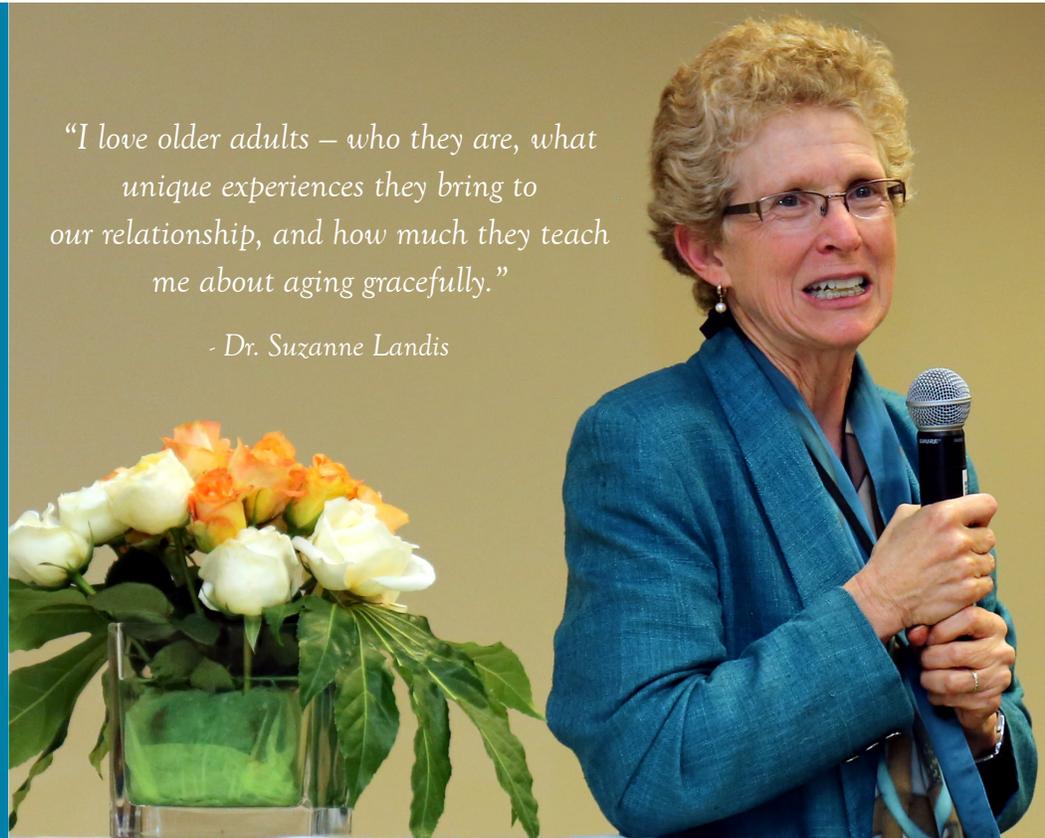
- Dr. Jeff Heck, MAHEC President and CEO

The Suzanne Landis Geriatric Medicine Fund is an Endowment to Support:

- ❖ *Innovation in the care of the elderly*
- ❖ *Improved healthcare access for vulnerable and frail elderly*
- ❖ *Research efforts that contribute to the knowledge and practice of clinical geriatrics*
- ❖ *Enhanced services that improve the quality of life for older people living in the community with a special focus on prevention, access and primary care*

“I love older adults – who they are, what unique experiences they bring to our relationship, and how much they teach me about aging gracefully.”

- Dr. Suzanne Landis



Dr. Landis is highly regarded among colleagues and community partners for her vision, innovation, research and commitment to excellent care for all patients.

She was the Director of the Center for Healthy Aging at MAHEC where she actively saw patients and taught with the Family Medicine Residency and the Geriatric Medicine Fellowship Programs. She also practiced geriatrics at Givens Estates and focused research efforts on changing systems of care for geriatric patients. Dr. Landis is a tenured professor in the Department of Family Medicine at UNC-Chapel Hill and has mentored scores of residents and led several quality improvement initiatives and community coalitions to improve healthcare.

In 1995, in response to the growing number of uninsured residents of Buncombe County, Dr. Landis led a group of physicians to create Project Access®, a network of volunteer physicians serving over 3,000 patients each year. The program has won numerous awards, including the Innovations in American Government Award. As many as 100 communities across the country have since replicated this model.

Dr. Landis has served as a National Health Service Corps physician, a Robert Wood Johnson Clinical Scholar, a Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services Innovation Advisor, and a Hartford Practice Change Leader.

She is a skilled clinician, teacher, researcher, and innovator whose work has greatly benefited our region, state and the country.

“She was our sounding board, our teacher, our mother and our friend. A perfect melding of toughness and tenderness that I came to realize is essential to the practice of what we call ‘the art of medicine.’ . . . I think it would not be a far cry to contend that through her tireless work on behalf of the underserved and excellent mentoring of doctors who have largely stayed in the area, that Suzanne too has touched the life of virtually every person in the region.”

- Dr. Amy Santin

Fostering Exceptional Healthcare for Older Adults



Doris has entrusted MAHEC with her healthcare for the better part of two decades. She resides at Givens Estates where Dr. Landis met with her regularly to discuss her health. At 94, Doris feels that the sound state of her health can be partially attributed to Dr. Landis’ care. “She cares, she listens, and she tells you why she’s doing what she’s doing,” says Doris.

One of Doris’ earliest experiences with Dr. Landis had a truly lasting influence. She had only just met Dr. Landis shortly before Doris required admission to the hospital. At that time, Dr. Landis had been traveling and was “off-duty,” yet she visited the hospital to inquire as to how she was feeling. Doris states, “It was totally unexpected, but greatly appreciated. That’s the way she was; she went the extraordinary mile.”

Doris’ experiences speak to the level of commitment of Dr. Landis, and serves as an inspiring example for future generations of physicians. The depth that one is able to achieve through medicine in touching others’ lives is unmatched, and Dr. Landis serves as a reminder of this through the stories of Doris and countless others.

“That’s the way she was; she went the extraordinary mile.”

GLOBAL RURAL HEALTH & GERIATRIC *Giving Opportunities*

Global Rural Health Fund



“The global experience at MAHEC is really a hook to inspire students to consider doing rural medicine.”

- Dr. Benjamin Gilmer

Unique rural training experiences abroad and in WNC with a focus on underserved populations. Our goal is to establish a Global Rural Health Fellowship offering one year of advanced training to physicians who have completed their medical residency.

Impact

Physicians with global health experience are well-equipped for the challenges of family medicine, especially to serve patients with complex medical issues in under-resourced communities in WNC and abroad.

Donor Giving Supports:

- ❖ Global health training experiences
- ❖ Rural medicine training in WNC
- ❖ A Fellowship at MAHEC in Global and Rural Health

Geriatric Medicine Fund



“I love older adults—who they are, what unique experiences they bring to our relationship, and how much they teach me about aging gracefully.”

- Dr. Suzanne Landis

The goal of this endowment is to advance geriatric medicine at MAHEC in the spirit of Dr. Landis and promote the health and wellbeing of older adults now and in perpetuity.

Impact

Improved healthcare access for vulnerable and frail elderly, research efforts that contribute to the knowledge and practice of clinical geriatrics, and enhanced services improving the quality of life for older people living in the community.

Donor Giving Supports:

- ❖ Innovation in the care of the elderly
- ❖ Improved healthcare access for vulnerable and frail elderly
- ❖ Research efforts that contribute to the knowledge and practice of clinical geriatrics

Give online at www.mahec.net

Send a check payable to MAHEC Foundation in the enclosed envelope

Donate a gift of stock or make a planned gift by contacting giving@mahec.net or (828) 257-4494

MAHEC *Celebration*



On Saturday, September 26th, MAHEC celebrated 41 years by honoring the more than 750 community faculty who support and mentor students and residents. These faculty members help MAHEC train the next generation of healthcare professionals for Western North Carolina. Congratulations to the 11 community faculty who were recognized by students and residents for their outstanding role in medical and residency training!



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2015 Community Faculty Awards

David R. Beaty, MD

Obstetrics and Gynecology
 Pardee Hospital Center for Women's Health

Kenneth Cassell, MD

Internist
 Mission Health

Andrea Currens, MD, FACOG

Director of Medical Student Clerkships
 and MAHEC Ob/Gyn Resident Faculty
 MAHEC Ob/Gyn Specialists

Teresa A. Fralix, MD, PhD

Family Medicine Physician
 Blue Ridge Health Center

Valerie Garrett, MD

Hospitalist
 Mission Health

Bryan K. Hodge, DO

Assistant Program Director
 Hendersonville Family Health Center

Kathy R. Meacham, PhD

Professor of Philosophy & Religion
 Mars Hill University
 Course Co-Director Ethics & Humanism
 UNC School of Medicine Asheville Campus

Ansley Miller, MD

Pediatric Hospitalist
 Mission Children's Hospital

Marianne R. Pestoff, MD, FACOG

Obstetrics and Gynecology
 Grace Ob/Gyn

Brad Stone, MD

Anesthesiologist
 Asheville Anesthesia Associates

Aaron Vaughan, MD

Director of MAHEC/Mission Primary Care
 Sports Medicine Fellowship
 MAHEC Family Medicine

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