

Caring through Education

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Created 02/06/2010 - 03:49



The first ever Spanish-language “mini medical school” program, La Mini Escuela de Medicina en Espanol, was started on 2008. La Mini Escuela de Medicina en Espanol has become an annual event sponsored by the U.C. Davis Alzheimer's Disease Center in collaboration with other groups at U.C. Davis, including the Center for Reducing Health Disparities and the Center for Healthy Aging.

UC Davis is the first Medical School in the Country to offer this program exclusively in Spanish. At the end of the program attendees are presented with a diploma to recognize their participation and commitment to learning. The third annual La Mini Escuela de Medicina en Español will be held on April 24 at the U.C. Davis Medical Center with plans to videotape some of the presentations for access on YOUTUBE.

With a theme of “Cuerpo, Mente y Espíritu” —Mind, Body and Spirit —the mini-medical school is focused on bringing health information to the Latino community to promote healthy brain aging.

“Our central goal,” said Ladson Hinton, who directs the mini-medical school and also leads the Sacramento ARCC Education Core, “is to empower older Latinos and their families with knowledge that can improve their emotional, bodily and brain health and improve their access to appropriate health care. Improving brain health is an important overall goal.”

In 2008, the Spanish Mini-medical school program was attended by more than 110 Latinos, including many participants at the UC Davis Alzheimer's Disease Center and their families.

In 2009, the mini-medical school drew over 70 participants.

These programs feature 1-2 hour presentations by physicians and other health-care experts, with plenty of time for questions and answers. The presentations were led by well-respected Latino clinicians and health-care experts, with a focus on topics that include mental health and the management of chronic diseases such as diabetes.

Introduced a decade ago by the National Institutes of Health, the mini medical school concept has grown in popularity throughout the United States. Nationally, mini medical schools are public education programs provided by more than 70 medical schools, universities, research institutions and hospitals across the nation. It is a unique educational experience, which creates the classroom environment of a medical school, allowing the community an opportunity to learn modern medical science from actual medical school faculty.

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