Dr. Giron was driven by his various personal experiences to pursue a career in Family Medicine. His father, a civil rights activist in Guatemala, had a profound effect on his path to medicine. As an adult he understood his father’s sacrifice for social justice and the love he had for his people. This left no doubt that he would dedicate his life working with the underserved. As an immigrant and first generation college student, Dr. Giron benefitted greatly from HCOP programs. While at East Los Angeles Community College (ELAC) he received the necessary mentorship and financial support needed to transfer to a four year university and ultimately gain acceptance to medical school. As a medical student, Dr. Giron enrolled in the program in Medical Education of Latino Community Health (PRIME-LC) at UC Irvine School of Medicine. This is a 5-year dual degree program whose focus is to train leaders who would dedicate their lives working with the Latino community. In addition, Dr. Giron took a year off to pursue a Master’s degree in Public health in Community Health Sciences at UCLA, which exposed him to health issues on a community-wide basis and spent the year learning about the links between discrimination, lack of education, economic disparities, and health outcomes. As a medical student Dr. Giron participated on two occasions in Harbor-UCLA’s Department of Family Medicine Summer Urban Health Fellowship, a successful pipeline project, which started over 20 years ago through funding and support of the Los Angeles Harbor AHEC. That experience impacted his decision to choose primary care and work with underserved communities.

Today, Dr. Giron is an active member of the California Academy of Family Physicians and continues to mentor students in HCOP programs. He is completing his residency at Harbor-UCLA Medical Center in Family Medicine, working with some of the most disenfranchised populations in Los Angeles County.

About the Program…

• The community-based Harbor/UCLA FM residency is located in the industrial harbor region of Los Angeles and serves as the Los Angeles Harbor AHEC.
• Residents have a 3 year curriculum designed to facilitate the development of knowledge, attitude, skills and behavior that assist them to become more effective family physicians by being sensitive to the needs of patients in the context of the community. Using a Community Oriented Primary Care Model, residents conduct and learn about community health analysis, cultural sensitivity, epidemiology, community activism, advocacy and intervention. In addition to inpatient rotations, residents experience patient care in FQHCs, school-based clinics, free clinics, needle exchange programs and soup kitchens.
• At least 50% of graduates go on to work in underserved practice settings and many enter the residency after participation in the AHEC sponsored summer urban preceptorship.
• Find more information at: http://www.cal-ahec.org/laharbor.htm

According to Yasser…

Where I grew up there was a huge lack of resources and no mentors around for me to received guidance from. It was by luck that I made it out of high school and into community college. While at ELAC my first year I felt lost and did not know how I could turn my passion for wanting to become a physician into reality. It was through the Mathematics, Engineering, and Science Achievement program and its relationship to the HCOP program at Cal State Los Angeles that I received the necessary support, counseling, tutoring, and mentorship needed to succeed. Without this support I highly doubt that I would be where I am today, making a difference in people’s lives. Title VII funding of the HCOP and AHEC programs is crucial to students like myself and needed if we are to narrow the educational gap seen in underserved communities.

For more information, contact: Association of American Medical Colleges, Government Relations
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