Kaiser Permanente’s 50-year commitment to medical education has led to the development of excellent graduate medical education, continuing medical education, and research programs. With guidance from an advisory council, composed of experienced educators and administrators from both the community and the organization and with the assistance of members of the Los Angeles Medical Center Graduate Medical Education (GME) and Continuing Medical Education (CME) committees, the Center for Medical Education was founded in Los Angeles in October 1999.

The Center’s 18 residency and fellowship programs provide training for 165 residents and fellows. Additionally, the Center for Medical Education provides rotations for residents and fellows from nearby medical schools. The Center is also the site for medical school clerkship rotations where third- and fourth-year medical students, residents, and fellows are taught by a talented faculty of physicians from the Southern California Permanente Medical Group.

Center for Medical Education Dedicated
On July 25, 2001, the Center for Medical Education was dedicated in a ceremony which became a celebration of Kaiser Permanente’s (KP) long commitment to medical education. Many local dignitaries, as well as the Surgeon General of the United States, came to celebrate and honor the efforts of KP in promoting medical education. California Assemblyman Paul Koretz praised KP for its leadership and great contributions to the practice of medicine. He recounted his own very positive personal experience as a Health Plan member, including being born at the Los Angeles Medical Center. He stated that KP is very well known for its tremendous quality of patient care but probably not well known “for the good work they do in training doctors.” In addition, he pointed out that “Kaiser has probably the most significant labor/management partnership that one can find in the state. It’s one that is quite remarkable, and I know it is truly successful because I’ve been told that both by labor and management.” It is a model Assemblyman Koretz plans to point to for similar programs in the State of California.

Dr. Oliver Goldsmith, Southern California Permanente Medical Group’s Regional Medical Director joined in the recognitions, stating that the inherent value of KP is that it is an organization where “physicians, administrators, hospital administrators, health planners, and labor unions are aligned and dedicated to the individual patient, our members, and the communities.”

Keynote address given by Surgeon General of the United States
The celebration was highlighted by a keynote address given by the Surgeon General of the United States, David Satcher, MD. Dr. Satcher commended KP, saying, “The dedication of this Center for Medical Education and your commitment to graduate medical education and continuing medical education is so important [for it allows the physician to] use evidence-based medicine and the latest information … in your treatment.” He also challenged the audience to consider “How do a few make...
sure that all Americans have access to quality health care and [how do] we bring the best care to bear in each interaction?"

Dr Satcher addressed current issues in health care, averring, "What is really needed in this country, and what you have said that we really need, is a balanced community health system—one that balances health promotion, disease prevention, early detection, and universal access to care. That is what we need and what we should all be committed to ... if managed health care is to survive and if [it is] to be affordable, we must invest more in prevention and health promotion. So, we need a balanced community health system, and we need to make a commitment to universal access. We need to work out the systems and to make that commitment real."

Dr Satcher closed with a quote from Benjamin Elijah Mays, the president of Morehouse College at the time when he was a student. “It must be borne in mind that the great tragedy in life is not in failing to reach all of your goals—it is in having no goals for which you are reaching. It is not a calamity if somehow you die with dreams unfulfilled but it is a calamity not to dream. It is not a disgrace if you fail to reach the stars, but it is a disgrace if you have no stars for which you are reaching. It is not a disaster if you fail to achieve your highest ideals, but it is a disaster if you have no high ideals for which you are striving. Not failure, but lower aim is sin.” Dr Satcher then concluded, “As we dedicate this Center for Medical Education, it has got to be about high aims and setting lofty goals and then working together to achieve them for ourselves and for America.”

**Los Angeles and California Representatives commend KP**

Throughout the dedication ceremony, public officials presented commendations for KP’s commitment and accomplishments in health care and medical education.

Los Angeles County Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky concurred by stating that “the outstanding staff doesn’t just treat diseases but treats the people,” telling the audience about his fond memories of the medical center and the staff’s compassionate care given to his mother. He stated “I want to salute all of you who are part of the Kaiser family here and elsewhere.”

Richard Cordova, Senior Vice President and Chief Operating Officer of the Southern California Kaiser Foundation Hospital/Health Plan, congratulated SCPMH for bringing to the forefront our medical education programs and for creating the Center for Medical Education.

Los Angeles City Councilman Eric Garcetti stated that he was a “proud member of the Kaiser family” and owed the lives of both his parents to KP for successful cancer treatment.

Judy Boggs, Representative for State Senator Jack Scott, presented a commendation on behalf of the California State Senate which stated, in part, “I congratulate you for your contributions to the health care and well-being of our communities and for your commitment to quality medical education and patient care. You have demonstrated a commitment to quality education for physicians.” She also commended KP for its residency and fellowship programs, including the outstanding research program.

The ceremony concluded with the Manager of the Center, Denise Lenore, unveiling a commemorative plaque that will be displayed in the Center for Medical Education.

Jan Perry and Eric Garcetti (left) present letter of commendation from the City of Los Angeles to Thomas Godfrey, MD, Area Associate Medical Director, LAMC (center).

Zev Yaroslavsky presents Thomas Godfrey, MD, with a Certificate of Recognition from the County of Los Angeles.

Oliver Goldsmith, MD; M Rudolph Brody, MD; David Satcher, MD, PhD; Thomas F Godfrey, MD; and Denise Lenore display dedication plaque.