

From the University of Mississippi Medical Center Division of Public Affairs

UMHC RECEIVES NATIONAL RECOGNITION FOR LEADERSHIP IN SUPPLIER DIVERSITY

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JACKSON, Miss. – University of Mississippi Health Care received the Supplier Diversity Leadership Award at United Healthcare's annual conference Sept. 22 in Chicago. It marked the first time a UHC-member organization received the award for the development and implementation of an outstanding supplier diversity program.

The award is based on several criteria, including the structure and strength of the organization's supplier diversity program, new programs or techniques that facilitated growth of diverse businesses in 2010, the use of diversity contracts, community involvement and outreach to diversely owned local businesses, and senior leaders' involvement in supplier diversity development.

UMHC's Supplier Diversity Program is administered by Ed Smith, UMHC chief supply chain officer. David Putt, CEO of University Hospital and Health System, accepted the award on behalf of UMHC.

According to Dr. David L. Powe, chief administrative officer for University of Mississippi Medical Center, UMHC's Supplier Diversity Program was established in July 2008 to create mutually beneficial relationships with suppliers of differing backgrounds which strengthens the community and creates "shareholder value" for the institution.

"The supplier initiative concentrates on the inclusion of minority, women, disabled and veteran suppliers and continually identifies new opportunities for additional suppliers within these categories to participate," Powe said. "Part of the UMMC Supply Chain Management's mission is to create access to opportunities for these suppliers by strengthening relationships with key stakeholders in the Jackson area and requiring cutting-edge supplier performance."

"This is a core strategic value and an integral part of the Medical Center's strategy."

The program creates mutually beneficial business relationships with diverse suppliers in communities statewide. These businesses are required to be competitive in pricing and not compromise UMMC's goal of acquiring the highest-quality supplies, equipment and services in support of patient care, education and research.

Powe said the initiative is developing strategic alliances with stakeholders and is improving supplier performance by meeting federal and state requirements, building local, state and national advocacy, providing accurate and timely reporting and ensuring quality management.

"Diverse suppliers share the same struggles that small businesses do in the marketplace. They frequently are underestimated, overlooked and lack the necessary resources to build success," Powe said. "UMMC, as one of the largest employers in Mississippi, has proven through a healthy reputation that supporting and promoting supplier-diversity programs makes business sense."

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The University of Mississippi Medical Center, located in Jackson, is the state's only academic medical center. University of Mississippi Health Care represents the clinical programs of the Medical Center and includes University Hospitals and Health System and University Physicians, the faculty group practice. UMMC encompasses five health science schools, including medicine, nursing, health related professions, dentistry and graduate studies, as well as the site where University of Mississippi pharmacy students do their clinical training. The Medical Center's threefold mission is to educate tomorrow's health-care professionals, conduct innovative research to improve human health, and to provide the highest quality care available to the state's citizens. A major goal of the Medical Center is the improvement of the health of Mississippians and the elimination of health disparities. For more information, contact the Division of Public Affairs at 601-984-1100 or visit us on the Web at <http://publicaffairs.umc.edu/>