

# The Multicultural Health Institute

Media Contact:

[mhigtkpr@gmail.com](mailto:mhigtkpr@gmail.com)

941.906.9484

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **Merritt Receives National Medical Association Award**

Sarasota, FL – August 3, 2014 -Dr. Lisa Merritt of Sarasota was selected to receive the 2014 Council on the Concerns of Women Physicians Award at the National Medical Association (NMA) annual meeting in Honolulu.

Dr. Lisa Merritt is a board-certified physiatrist, focusing on brain injury, pain management, including sports and work-related injuries in Sarasota, Florida. Over the past 25 years, she has been a passionate and unrelenting advocate for elimination of health disparities. In 1995, while managing her practice and serving as an Adjunct Assistant Professor at the University of California Davis, Dr. Merritt founded the Multicultural Health Institute (MHI) in Sacramento, California to focus attention on health disparities and the economic impact of prevention strategies. A former seven-year President of the Capitol Medical Society and Vice President of the Golden State Medical Society, Merritt was an original member of the California Office on Minority Health statewide multicultural health task force and originator of the initial policy on improving cultural and linguistics standards in health delivery in the State of California.

Moving to Sarasota, Florida in 2004, Dr. Merritt in her practice and through the MHI, has had a singular impact on health disparities through two highly successful community initiatives; her Sarasota Community Health Guide and her creation of the Gatekeepers, lay health advisors and educators involved in neighborhood activities to reduce disparities in HIV/AIDS, diabetes, cancer and cardiovascular disease through preventive health measures that include providing information on health coverage, health awareness and health screenings.

She works with schools, local organizations and leadership to promote science, technology, engineering, arts and math. She created a workshop, "Bones, Beauty and Brains," to inspire middle school girls to pursue their dreams and be able to interact with role models within their community. She has counseled, inspired and encouraged local youth in college preparation, in medical career paths and to work in underserved communities. She is building a living Legacy modeled after her own life.

Dr. Merritt is a longstanding member of numerous professional organizations, including the National Medical Association (NMA), the American Medical Association (AMA), American Academy of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation

(AAPMR), American Academy of Pain Management (AAPM), American College for Advancement in Medicine (ACAM), and The American Academy of Anti-aging Medicine (AAAM). She is also a graduate of the faculty development program at the Morehouse School of Medicine in Atlanta, GA and the Gulf Coast Leadership Institute in Venice, FL.

Dr. Merritt is the author of a number of articles in the field of physical medicine and rehabilitation as well as multicultural health issues and complementary medicine topics, and has lectured both nationally and internationally on multicultural health issues. She is regularly interviewed on topics in the media including TV, radio and newsprint. She has maintained academic appointments as Adjunct Clinical Assistant Professor at Morehouse School of Medicine and currently as Adjunct Assistant Professor at New College Florida. She works on diversity nationally through her affiliation with NMA and locally in Florida to increase medical school student diversity and minority participation in clinical research. She has additionally taken time to participate in research and clinical research trials.

Dr. Merritt has been the recipient of numerous awards, including the AMA Physicians Recognition Award, the YWCA Outstanding Woman Award for Health Services, Fulton County Georgia Wellness Campaign Community Service Award, the Sarasota Biz941 Unity Award in Medicine, the Links, Inc. Community Recognition Award, and the Newtown MLK Community Service Award.

The Georgetown University graduate received her Medical Degree from Howard University, trained in family and community medicine at University of California, San Francisco and completed a residency in Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation at Baylor College of Medicine / TIRR in Houston, Texas.

The National Medical Association Council on the Concerns of Women Physicians (CCWP) addresses the unique issues, concerns and policies regarding the advancement of female physicians. Each year, at one of the most highly attended convention programs with up to 600 attendees, the Council honors female physicians who strive to eliminate health care disparities, provide people of color with quality health care, and address women's health and professional issues through research, community service, and activism.

Dr. Merritt was presented with the award August 3 at the Annual Muriel Petioni Awards Luncheon held at the 2014 NMA national convention in Honolulu, Hawaii.