

The Mayo-México connection

Long-standing relationship began almost a century ago



MEXICO

Mayo Clinic has long-standing ties with the medical community in México. Since 1966, 194 residents and research fellows from México have trained at Mayo Clinic. Ten of those physicians practice at Mayo Clinic today. More than 60 have returned to practice in their native México after training at Mayo Clinic — many of them in Rochester in the late 1960s and early 1970s. They include prominent academic physicians, ministers of health, leaders of prestigious scientific societies, founders of hospitals and others who have contributed significantly to the health care landscape in México.

Three alumni from México have received the Mayo Clinic Alumni Association Distinguished Alumni Award — Guillermo Ruiz-Argüelles, M.D. (HEM '83), in 2011; Juan Ramón De la Fuente, M.D. (P '80), in 1999; and Donato Alarcón-Segovia, M.D. (IM '64, RHEU '65), in 1996 (now deceased).

The genesis of this relationship dates back almost a century. From 1918 to 1920, William J. Mayo, M.D., served as president of the American College of Surgeons and promoted professional fellowship within the Americas.

According to *The Doctors Mayo* (1941) by Helen Clapesattle:

Foreseeing a tremendous expansion in commerce and travel between the Americas, he [Dr. Will] thought it wise for the college [American College of Surgeons] to promote intercourse with Latin American surgeons.

In his medical impressions of México, Dr. Will wrote:

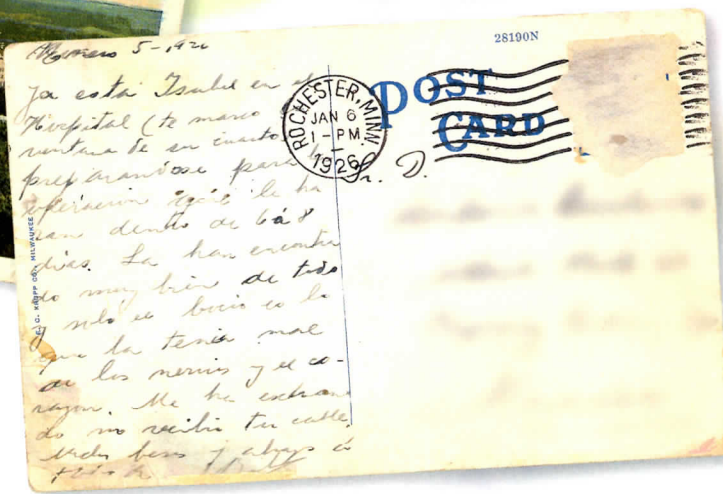
While the United States has been so busy developing within its own borders, Mexico has developed far more than is appreciated by the people of the United States. The country has an efficient medical service, a minister of health, and had scientific development long before the United States. Mexico had the first medical school organized in the Americas.

In 1922, Dr. Will visited México for a month with family and colleagues,

William J. Mayo, M.D. (upper right), acknowledges the crowd's recognition of his ad hoc medical care of bullfighter Luis Freg "Don Valor," who was gored by a bull. Dr. Will's host at the event, Mexican President Alvaro Obregón, asked if he could save the seriously wounded man. In a makeshift care area behind the bullring, Dr. Will opened the wound and grabbed and tied off the artery. The group watching Dr. Will was impressed with the ease and speed with which he stopped the bleeding. Word spread among the audience, which gave him a standing ovation. Dr. Will's feat was legendary in México for many years.



In 1926, a patient from México sent this postcard to family back home, communicating that she had seen eight people to determine what was wrong with her and wishing she would be home soon.



including Henry Plummer, M.D., Donald Balfour, M.D. (S 1909), Willis Lemon, M.D. (I '47, R-D '50), and Albert Ochsner, M.D. (ANES '43), a surgeon and founder of Ochsner Clinic in Louisiana. The group visited México City, Guadalajara and Colima. As was customary when he traveled, Dr. Will visited area hospitals and clinics. This trip and the buzz it created precipitated hundreds of patients taking the train from México City to Rochester in search of medical treatment.

A need to facilitate communication
 With the influx of patients from Latin America, Mayo Clinic recognized the need for Spanish-language help to better serve patients and hired Beatriz Montes, a patient from Havana who came to Rochester for surgery.

According to Clapesattle's book:
 Clinic secretaries bought Spanish dictionaries and registered for correspondence courses in the language, Spanish-speaking nurses were imported for the hospitals, and the public demanded that Spanish be taught in the schools.

Northward trend for care continues

The trend of patients coming north for specialized medical care has continued for decades. Hundreds of patients from México travel for care to all three Mayo campuses each year.

Robert Ferrigni, M.D. (U '88), is medical director for the international practice at Mayo Clinic in Arizona. "We have a strong flow of patients from México because of geography," he says. "Mayo Clinic conducts events throughout México for patients to hear presentations on medical topics from physicians representing all three campuses. We strive to keep Mayo Clinic visible as a tertiary care facility and resource to patients and physicians in México. The international office in México City and the Spanish webpages are instrumental in this effort."

According to John Noseworthy, M.D. (N '90), president and CEO of Mayo Clinic, the last several years have seen an investment in engagement with Spanish-speaking audiences. "We have re-energized our efforts globally, through community, research and education collaborations, and social media," he says. "We've increased the availability of Mayo's trusted health information in Spanish in support of our deep-rooted organizational commitment to international outreach and diversity. Our founders understood the value of diverse talents,



Mikel Prieto, M.D., Robert Ferrigni, M.D., and Salvador Alvarez, M.D., are medical directors of Mayo Clinic's international practice in Rochester, Arizona and Florida, respectively.

backgrounds and beliefs in providing the best care to patients, and that core belief persists today at Mayo Clinic. Without Spanish-speaking patients and staff, Mayo Clinic wouldn't be where it is today."

Earlier this year, Mayo Clinic announced the addition of the first international member in the Mayo Clinic Care Network — Médica Sur in México City. Médica Sur physicians can now connect directly with Mayo Clinic specialists on patient care questions via eConsults and have access to the latest Mayo-vetted medical information through AskMayoExpert.

A continued need to facilitate communication

To facilitate referrals for Mexican physicians and better serve patients, Mayo Clinic established a Representative

Office in México City in 1997. Two Mayo employees help physicians and patients schedule appointments, arrange travel, become familiar with Mayo Clinic before appointments, and obtain medical records and other information after visits.

Each Mayo Clinic campus offers Spanish-speaking appointment personnel and language interpreters to enhance service. More recently, Mayo Clinic has taken other steps to better serve the thousands of patients from Latin America — and U.S. Hispanic patients — it treats every year and to tell the Mayo story to a broader audience:

- **Spanish webpages**
(MayoClinic.org/espanol)

Enrique Wolpert-Barraza, M.D.



“ Our founders understood the value of diverse talents, backgrounds and beliefs in providing the best care to patients, and that core belief persists today at Mayo Clinic.” – John Noseworthy, M.D.



Mayo Clinic relationships with México — past and present

- William J. Mayo, M.D., traveled to México almost a century ago, including a well-publicized trip in 1922.
- More than 60 physicians from México trained at Mayo Clinic and now practice in México.
- More than 500 laboratory tests from México are read each year by Mayo Medical Laboratories.
- In 1997, Mayo Clinic established a Representative Office in México City to assist patients and referring physicians in accessing care at any Mayo Clinic campus.
- Mayo Clinic's Global Business Solutions has a relationship with Intersistemas, a publishing house in México, to translate and distribute Mayo Clinic website content and books in Spanish throughout México and Central and South America.
- Grateful patients from México funded the Alberto Baillères International Patient Center at Mayo Clinic in Arizona to assist international patients with appointments, interpreter services, lodging and travel, community resources, and financial and billing questions.

Distinguished alumni distinguish themselves

Guillermo Ruiz-Argüelles, M.D. (HEM '83), and Juan Ramón De la Fuente, M.D. (P '80), each has received the Mayo Clinic Alumni Association Distinguished Alumni Award, and each continues to distinguish himself.

Dr. Ruiz-Argüelles, general director, Hematology and Internal Medicine Center, Clínica Ruiz de Puebla, was selected for a 2013 mastership in the American College of Physicians. Masters are selected because of personal character, positions of honor, contributions toward furthering the purposes of the American College of Physicians, eminence in practice or in medical research, or other attainments in science or the art of medicine. Masterships have been awarded since 1923.

Dr. De la Fuente, former dean at Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México (UNAM) — the largest university in Latin America — was awarded the Doctor of Humane Letters honoris causa at the 2013 commencement at Arizona State University. The university awarded the honorary degree to recognize Dr. De la Fuente's contributions in medicine, academia

and governmental leadership, especially in the areas of patient rights, affordable medication and reforms in health care delivery in México.

Dr. De la Fuente engineered several research centers that specialize in diverse disciplines, strengthened a model for education, and created undergraduate curricula and graduate programs. His research on alcohol abuse led to the design of a tool of universal validity for the reliable identification of this program from its early stages. This tool has been adopted by the World Health Organization, International Labour Organization and the United Kingdom's National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence. Dr. De la Fuente also is the elected chairman of the Council of the United Nations University, the collegial body that analyzes global issues and proposes solutions to various United Nations agencies, including the General Assembly.

Guillermo Ruiz-Argüelles, M.D. (left), and Juan Ramón De la Fuente, M.D.

