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Dr. Ricardo Azziz named president of the Medical College of Georgia

John Millsaps - 2010 March 2

The Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia today named Dr. Ricardo Azziz, a physician/scientist/executive with more than 20 years of leadership in biomedical research, medical education and health care, as the eighth president of the Medical College of Georgia (MCG), Georgia's health sciences university.

“Dr. Azziz stood out from the rest of what was an impressive pool of candidates in this search,” said Executive Vice Chancellor and Chief Academic Officer Susan Herbst. “His credentials are outstanding. We feel he is the best person for the job.”

Regent James A Bishop, chair of the Special Regents' Committee for the presidential search at MCG, added that the committee is extremely confident in the ability of Azziz to lead the institution as it expands its capacity to educate healthcare professionals to meet state needs.

Azziz holds the endowed Helping Hand of Los Angeles Chair in Obstetrics and Gynecology and has served as professor and chair of the Department

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of Obstetrics and Gynecology and director of the Center for Androgen-Related Research and Discovery at Cedars-Sinai Medical Center (CSMC) in Los Angeles since 2002. At the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA), he has served as professor and vice chair of the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology and professor of medicine in the David Geffen School of Medicine since 2002, deputy director of the Clinical and Translational Sciences Institute and assistant dean for clinical and translational sciences since 2008.

During his tenure at CSMC and UCLA, Azziz has led institution-wide initiatives to measure and improve faculty productivity, new faculty development and retention, and academic excellence. He also serves as health systems executive for one of the largest providers of Ob/Gyn services in California, in one of the largest free-standing medical centers in the Western United States. Under his leadership, the medical center has consistently ranked among the top 50 institutions providing gynecologic services in U.S. News & World Report's annual Best Hospitals survey.

Over the past eight years, Azziz has built one of the premiere academic departments of obstetrics and gynecology on the West Coast, reversing operational losses and enhancing fiscal profitability, academic productivity, operational efficiency, educational excellence, faculty and trainee morale, individual accountability, leadership development and training, new investigator mentoring and development, faculty and resident diversity and medical staff/faculty relations and engagement, while building a diversified, dynamic, forward-looking faculty.

Before coming to Los Angeles, Azziz taught at the University of Alabama at Birmingham from 1987 to 2002, where he served in a variety of faculty positions in the departments of Obstetrics and Gynecology and Medicine.

As a clinician, Azziz maintains a nationally recognized practice in the care of women suffering from reproductive endocrinologic disorders, in particular, androgen excess. He is a fellow of both the American College of Surgeons and the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists and has been recognized annually by America's Top Doctors since 2001.

Azziz founded and is the senior executive director of an international nonprofit organization, the Androgen Excess & Polycystic Ovary Syndrome Society. He is the former president and a former board member of the Society of Reproductive Surgeons and also formerly served on the board of the American Society for Reproductive Medicine.

Azziz' research into androgen-excess disorders in women has been continuously funded by the National Institutes of Health (NIH) for the past 20 years. He is currently a member of the Data Safety Monitoring Board of the Reproductive Medicine Network of the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development of the NIH. He previously served the NIH in multiple other capacities, including the Advisory Panel of the National Cooperative Program for Infertility Research and on the Center for Scientific Review's Reproductive Endocrinology Study Section. He is a

senior mentor and past program chair of the Network of Minority Research Investigators of the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases of the NIH.

The author of six textbooks, more than 150 book chapters and reviews, over 200 peer-reviewed articles and 250-plus abstracts, he received the President's Achievement Award for Clinical Investigation from the Society for Gynecologic Investigation in 2000, among other awards and honors.

A native of Uruguay, Azziz earned a bachelor of science degree in biology/pre-med, graduating magna cum laude from the University of Puerto Rico in Mayaguez. His medical degree is from the Pennsylvania State University College of Medicine in Hershey. Following an internship and residency in obstetrics and gynecology at Georgetown University Hospital in Washington, D.C., Azziz completed a fellowship in reproductive endocrinology and infertility at the Johns Hopkins Hospital in Baltimore, Md. He also holds master's degrees in public health and business administration from the University of Alabama at Birmingham.

Azziz has been a member of the Phi Kappa Phi Honorary Society since 1973 and the Beta Gamma Sigma Honor Society of AACSB Accredited Business Programs since 2000.

Herbst noted, "The Medical College is of utmost importance to the future of this state, as a beacon of excellence for medical research, the education of health professionals, and the welfare of all Georgians. We must lead the nation in the health sciences and reach the highest order of academic achievement. Dr. Azziz will take us there."

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