



Tackling secondhand smoke dangers

AAP leaders dedicate Richmond Center of Excellence for Children

by **Alyson Sulaski Wyckoff** • Associate Editor

A dedication was held Dec. 14 for a historic new center that seeks to define and eliminate secondhand smoke risks for children through adulthood.

The AAP Julius B. Richmond, M.D., Center of Excellence for Children, based at AAP headquarters in Elk Grove Village, Ill., is named for the Boston-area pediatrician and former U.S. surgeon general who has been a leader in identifying cigarette smoking as a major contributor to preventable disease.

Dedication ceremonies included a scientific symposium at AAP headquarters. An overview of the Richmond Center was presented, along with remarks from selected guests and AAP executive staff.

"In addition to honoring a man who was one of the earliest, loudest and steadiest voices about the harms of tobacco, this center is a reflection of the Academy's commitment toward elimination of children's exposure to secondhand tobacco smoke," said Errol R. Alden, M.D., FAAP, AAP executive director.

AAP President Jay E. Berkelhamer, M.D., FAAP, called Dr. Richmond "a role model for us all."

Dr. Richmond, who has spent the past 60 years working to advance children's health, is The John D. MacArthur Professor of Health Policy Emeritus at Har-



The Richmond Center dedication honoring Julius B. Richmond, M.D., FAAP, unites (from left), AAP President Jay E. Berkelhamer, M.D., FAAP; attorney Stanley M. Rosenblatt, CEO of FAMRI; Susan Rosenblatt, attorney; Dr. Richmond; AAP CEO Errol R. Alden, M.D., FAAP; and center director Jonathan D. Klein, M.D., FAAP. The Rosenblatts are the husband-and-wife legal team that brought the 1991 class-action lawsuit against the tobacco industry.

vard University. He was assistant secretary for health, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, and surgeon general from 1977 to 1981. His 1979 surgeon general's report was the first to describe the harmful effects of secondhand smoke.

The Richmond Center was launched with the announcement of a five-year, \$8.3 million grant in May from the Flight Attendant Medical Research Institute (FAMRI), which supports research on diseases and conditions

caused by secondhand smoke. A Florida nonprofit foundation, FAMRI was created with proceeds from a class action lawsuit brought against the tobacco industry on behalf of nonsmoking flight attendants who contracted diseases or died from smoke exposure in airline cabins. Dr. Richmond served as the founding chair of FAMRI's medical advisory board.

A plaque presented during the dedication now hangs in Conference Room 1E of the AAP headquarters building. The room is the new "virtual" home of the Richmond Center, which will be administered and staffed at the Academy with affiliate sites at hospitals and universities.

The Richmond Center will provide the latest information, research and preventive efforts on childhood secondhand smoke dangers and foster clinical research in pediatric settings; collect and disseminate data; and study the ethical and legal issues surrounding exposure to secondhand smoke.

The Richmond Center's vision is that "all child health care clinicians will be active participants in the elimination of tobacco/secondhand smoke exposure of children," said Jonathan D. Klein, M.D., M.P.H., FAAP, the center's director and principal investigator and associate professor of pediatrics and of community and preventive medicine at the University of Rochester (N.Y.).

RESOURCE

For more information on Richmond Center projects and resources, visit www.aap.org/RichmondCenter. The FAMRI Web site is www.famri.org.