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2018 Kansas Family Physician of the Year announced: Michael Machen, MD: Commitment is Cornerstone of Care



WICHITA, KANSAS –The Kansas Academy of Family Physicians (KAFP) has selected **MICHAEL MACHEN, MD** of Quinter, Kansas as the 2018 Kansas Family Physician of the Year. He will be honored at the KAFP Annual Meeting “70 Years Caring for Kansans” in Overland Park on Friday, June 15, 2018 during the President’s Dinner. Dr. Machen is a family physician and senior partner at Bluestem Medical, LLP in Quinter, Kansas.

Dr. Machen grew up in Concordia, Kansas. He attended Cloud County Community College for one year. He appreciates his high school and JUCO instructors who supported him – especially in biology and physics. “They were willing to help me out, to make it a good experience,” says Dr. Machen. JUCO was a perfect stepping stone from high school into the University of Kansas, Lawrence. Following KU, Dr. Machen attended University of Kansas School of Medicine in Kansas City. His interest in family medicine soared during his fourth year. He went on to complete an internship and residency at University of Oklahoma of Tulsa Medical College in Tulsa, Oklahoma.

After residency, Dr. Machen moved to Quinter, Kansas where he is now in his 32nd year of practice. He credits the diversity of his experiences in Quinter for affirming his choice to practice family medicine as the right one. “From trauma, to moms and babies, C-sections, colonoscopies and all kinds of procedures; I get up in the morning, look in mirror, and don’t know what I am going to do that day. The days may be long and the challenges many, but at the end of the day I don’t think there is any profession that would provide me with the daily testing of skills and diversity of experiences that family medicine has,” he says.

Commitment to Patients

Dr. Machen has a deep commitment to providing medical care to patients in Quinter, Kansas for over three decades. A patient writes, “When our family thinks about ‘family physician’ we have four descriptors. They are: knowledge, compassion, support, and availability. Dr. Machen is not just our family physician. He is part of our family. He cares for our family with his knowledge, compassionate support, and always being there for us! This is what makes him an exceptional family physician; being a part of families in more ways than one!”

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"He is gifted in his breadth in and depth of medical knowledge, trusted by patients, colleagues and people in general because he is honest and kind," writes a patient. Dr. Machen saw this family through many experiences: from researching and diagnosing an unusual disease to save a life, to being supportive of a pregnant teen daughter, to showing compassion when a loved one was taken early by lung cancer. "His compassion is authentic and ongoing," says the family member. He is an extended family member for many. Patients look to Dr. Machen for his resourcefulness, medical knowledge and vision.

Not only does Dr. Machen care for the locals, but visitors are cared for equally well. KAFP received a nomination letter from the wife of a patients who was from Colorado (600 miles from Quinter, KS). Her husband was in Quinter on a hunting trip when he became ill. Dr. Machen provided such outstanding care, impressing them both, that they chose to nominate Dr. Machen for the award.

Commitment to Communities

Some of Dr. Machen's professional duties just naturally seem to come along with living in a rural community. For instance, he is the deputy district coroner and medical director for Quinter Ambulance Service. Perhaps because of this, Dr. Machen takes a keen interest in trauma. He has been highly involved with the Executive Committee of Northwest Trauma Council and is an appointed member of the Governor's Advisory Committee on Trauma. He is also proud of his involvement with the Kansas Stroke and Heart Collaborative because of the impact on healthcare in Kansas it has made.

Commitment to Profession

In addition to being a member of the Kansas Academy of Family Physicians, Dr. Machen is a member of other professional organizations, including Kansas Medical Society, which he served as president in 2013-2014. He is also a member of the KAMMCO Board of Directors. He is the award recipient of the Ad Aspera Award-KUMC Volunteer Faculty (2017) a clinic award that he shared with his partners; Ad Astra Outstanding Volunteer Award (2014); KAFP and American Academy of Family Physicians (AAFP) Exemplary Teaching Award (2005) in the Volunteer Category.

Dr. Machen is the KU School of Medicine Network Site Director for Medical Education for NW KS. He says, "I get to interact with so many medical and pre-medical students, to look back on it is a warm and fuzzy feeling knowing you had an impact on students. They add a whole other layer to your practice and the enjoyment of practice. The students are bright eyed and excited with their 'wow that was incredibly, amazing!' moments that remind you that yes, what we do IS truly incredible. This is a good thing. It is rewarding to see those students now doing amazing things."

One former student who is now KAFP Board Chair, Lynn Fisher, MD, FAAFP (Plainville) writes about his experience with Dr. Machen, "From the first day of my arrival, I was treated as someone who mattered. Dr. Machen involved me with every aspect of his day: clinic patients, hospital rounds, nursing home visits, procedures such as colonoscopies and the babies we delivered by scheduled C-Section and vaginally. I would be the first to evaluate a patient in the ER and write orders for labs and radiology studies and medications and then provide that information back to Dr. Machen as I assimilated a plan of action. I saw a guy who loved what he did and that his patients adored him. I saw a provider that I wanted to emulate. I wanted to be Mike Machen to some community in the future. And I wanted my nurses to make me pear pie as well!"



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In addition to volunteer teaching Dr. Machen is also an Advanced Trauma Life Support (ATLS) instructor. Interestingly, he and his daughter took the ATLS instructor training course at the same time which was “fun stuff,” he says.

Commitment to Family

Dr. Machen says his biggest accomplishment is his family. He and his wife Susan are most proud of their children – Samantha, Benjamin, Alexandra and Edward. “They are all great people and have grown up to do amazing things and all are very supportive of each other,” he says.

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2018 Kansas Family Physician of the Year nominee finalists included: Dee Ann Stults Bragg, MD (Wichita); Bryan Dennett, MD (Winfield); Edward Hett, MD, FAAFP (Wichita); Elizabeth Sigg Hineman, MD (Scott City); and William Short, MD (Abilene).

KAFP has presented the Kansas Family Physician of the Year award since 1990. Past recipients can be found on the KAFP website at: <https://www.kafponline.org/FPOYrecipients>

About the Kansas Academy of Family Physicians

Founded in 1948, the KAFP represents 1,760 physicians and medical students statewide. It is the only medical society in Kansas devoted solely to primary care. A family physician takes care of the whole family, all ages, both sexes, each organ system and every disease entity. Research has proven that people with access to primary care have better health outcomes than those who do not. In Kansas, approximately one-half of family physicians practice in non-metropolitan areas. Over 25 percent treat uninsured patients, especially children and families receiving public assistance. The mission of the KAFP is to support and serve family physicians of Kansas as they advance the health of Kansans. For more information visit the KAFP website at www.kafponline.org.

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