

# HEALTH

## Celebrating Black History

### Black doctor put medicine on new course

BY DR. RONALD TURCO

How many of us are familiar with the name of Dr. Daniel Hale Williams? The African American physician was one of the most skilled surgeons of his era. In 1893, at Provident Hospital in Chicago, a medical center which he founded, he performed the first fully successful open heart surgery, including the repair of knife wound on the pericardium.

Dr. Williams was born in Hollidaysburg, Penn. in 1865. His father was a barber who worked for better conditions for African American people, started a group called the Equal Rights League, and believed in the value of a good education. He died when Daniel was 11.

The younger Williams be-



Dr. Daniel Hale Williams was one of the first physicians to perform open-heart surgery in the United States and founded a hospital with an interracial staff.

came a barber and had his own shop at age 17. Eventually he was accepted to Janesville Academy, similar to a two year college. Wanting to make people feel good and have a "noble profession" he apprenticed in 1878 with Dr. Henry Palmer, a leading surgeon. After two years of apprenticeship he needed formal medical training but had no money. He borrowed money for the first two years of medical school and his brother, by this time a practicing attorney, paid for his third year.

He received his M.D. degree from Chicago Medical College, affiliated with Northwestern University, in 1883 at the age of 27.

Because of his race, Dr. Williams couldn't work at any hospital. He had his first office while volunteering in an orphanage. He worked in patients' homes and once had to sterilize a patient's dining room so she could have surgery. He occasionally conducted surgeries on kitchen tables, yet utilized the up-to-

date sterilization procedures of his day thus gaining a reputation for professionalism and competence.

In 1883 he was only one of four African American doctors in the Chicago area and six years later was appointed to the Illinois Board of Health. While there he recommended vaccinations for typhoid, scarlet fever and smallpox, fully understanding sanitation problems.

He started a new hospital, the Provident Hospital and Training School for Nurses, especially to help black members of the medical profession. He observed that African-American patients were routinely subject to second-class medical care and that opportunities for most black physicians were extremely limited.

Many African Americans were moving to Chicago and an old building big enough for 12 beds was found. This became the first hospital with black doctors and nurses, the first in the coun-

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## Record Signup for Health Care

More than 147,000 Oregonians signed up for health insurance through HealthCare.gov during the open enrollment period that ended Jan. 31.

Health department officials said enrollment for 2016 is about 31 percent higher than last year, when about 112,000 people in the state signed up. Oregon had

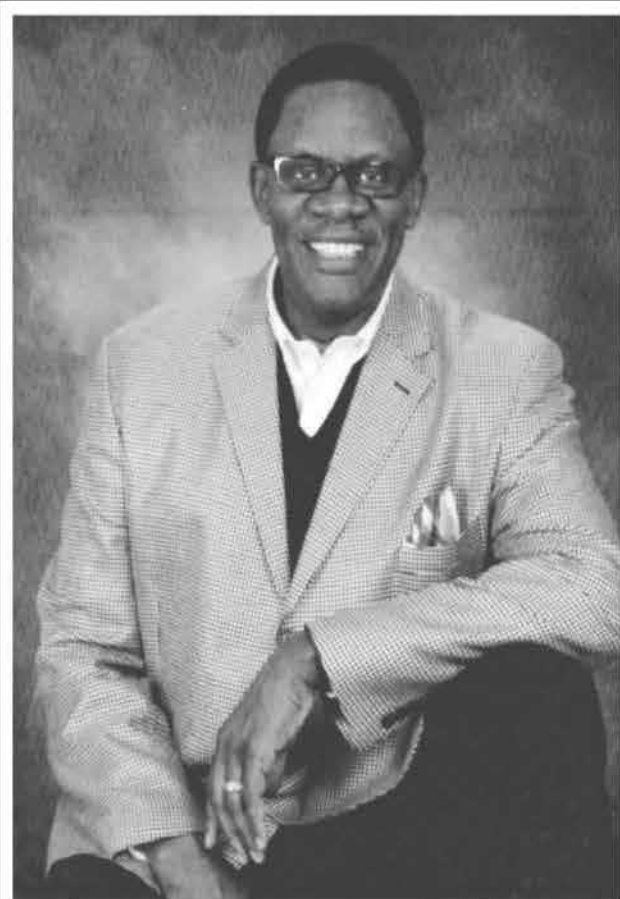
the largest rate of increase in enrollment of any state that uses HealthCare.gov. Seven out of 10 of those who enrolled this year are receiving tax credits averag-

ing \$256 per month to help pay for premiums.

Those who missed open enrollment may still be able to get covered. If they experience a qualifying life event, such as getting married, having a baby, or losing health coverage, they can apply

for a special enrollment period through HealthCare.gov.

Many low-income Oregonians are also eligible for free or low-cost coverage through the Oregon Health Plan, Oregon's Medicaid program. You can apply for the Oregon Health Plan at any time.



Dr. Billy R. Flowers

## THE SPINA COLUMN™

An ongoing series of questions and answers about America's natural healing profession.

### Part 9. Low Back Surgery:

### The unkindest and most unnecessary cut of all.

**Q: Should I try chiropractic for my low back pain or have surgery and get it "fixed right?"**

**A:** We hear this question quite often and considering many physicians' pro-surgery preoccupation, it's no wonder people ask such questions. That is, until they examine the facts. The truth is that in about 90% of low back pain, the problem is mechanical. Chiropractic has had and continues to have the best technique for treating spinal mechanical problems through gentle, exact adjustment with highly skilled hands. And Chiropractic re-

quires no drugs, surgery, recuperation or expensive hospital bills. With Chiropractic, the only side effects are the disappearance of symptoms and the recurrence of vitality.

**Q: Which technique has better results for low back problems, Chiropractic or surgery?**

**A:** According to a recent issue of Computer Medicine, low back surgery is one of the least effective procedures. In fact, 75 to 99% are

unsuccessful. Before you make any decision, heed the advice of the "father" of low back surgery: "exhaust all methods of conservative care before considering surgery to the lumbar (low back) spine." To find out how Chiropractic can help you avoid back surgery, or for answers to any questions you might have about your health, please call us at the phone number displayed below.

### Flowers' Chiropractic Office

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