

GARY GITNICK, M.D., F.A.C.G.

*Founder and Chairman, Board of Governors
Fulfillment Fund*



Dr. Gitnick is Professor of Medicine and Chief of the Division of Digestive Diseases at the David Geffen School of Medicine at University of California at Los Angeles (UCLA). He heads the largest gastroenterology division in the world with 70 full-time faculty members and a multimillion-dollar budget. Dr. Gitnick received his Bachelor of Science and Doctor of Medicine degrees at the University of Chicago, after which he completed an internship at Johns Hopkins University Hospital. From there he completed Internal Medicine and Gastroenterology subspecialty training at the Mayo Clinic and also spent three years as a Research Associate at the National Institutes of Health. Dr. Gitnick joined the faculty at UCLA in 1969. He was Chief of Staff of the UCLA Medical Center and was Medical Director of the UCLA Health Care Programs. Dr. Gitnick has produced over 300 publications and is the author or editor of 63 books. He is a member and former President of the Medical Board of California. Dr. Gitnick is the Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the Health Professions Education Foundation.

Guided by the personal principle that "one of the most worthwhile efforts in life is to nourish the spirit and mind of a young person," Dr. Gitnick founded the Fulfillment Fund, a non-profit organization, in 1977. His vision, commitment, and courage have impelled the Fulfillment Fund to rise to the complex challenges facing the nation's public education system and to emerge as a national model for one-on-one mentoring and comprehensive college-access services.

The Fulfillment Fund's goal is to help over 2,000 students annually graduate from high school and complete an advanced education. The Fulfillment Fund offers its students a broad-based continuum of services beginning in the 9th grade and continuing through high school, college and beyond, on average, a nine-year commitment to each young person.

As part of its program of total enrichment, the Fulfillment Fund instills in its students the value and principle of community service, and thus fosters generations of youth who are productive, engaged, contributing citizens. Dr. Gitnick asks all Fulfillment Fund alumni to give back by becoming mentors themselves. His inspirational "call to action" is being answered: graduates are "completing the circle," returning to the Fulfillment Fund as mentors, staff and board members.

Recently, Dr. Gitnick has led the charge to replicate the Fulfillment Fund's successful model in other communities in response to requests for assistance. Dr. Gitnick also serves on the Mayor's Education Advisory Council, offering insight, gained through the Fulfillment Fund's twenty-eight years of championing education, college access and youth development.