

Dr. G. Gayle Stephens (1928-2014)

A founder of family medicine in the United States, Gayle Stephens was a family physician, writer, thinker, teacher and leader whose ideas and convictions have guided the development of family medicine, primary care, and medicine as a profession for decades. He provided consistent intellectual leadership that connected history, philosophy, religion, psychiatry, the family, the community and the sciences to the practice of medicine. He wrote regularly about our successes, our challenges, and our shortcomings. He particularly advanced the importance of relationships in clinical practice and the role of the personal physician as a trusted and trustworthy agent for patients.

Keystone Conferences

In 1986, Gayle decided to pull together some personal friends and others from diverse backgrounds to engage in the first public reexamination of the political and intellectual origins and development of family medicine as a discipline since its founding in 1969. He did this without institutional sponsorship. He held it in Keystone, Colorado, near his family's mountain home. Those who attended, paid their way. This event inspired two subsequent "Keystone Conferences" that Gayle helped organize...the last was in 2000, called Keystone III, and was the stimulus for the *Future of Family Medicine* project and its continuing offspring today.

The principles behind the Keystone conferences were always to promote honest, open conversations among a variety of thoughtful, informed people--teachers, scholars, advocates, and clinicians-- across generations, searching together for a way forward. Gayle guided the talk toward ideas, not just tactics...about meaning, not just processes...and about aspirations grounded in fundamental values, not the shifting sands of the day. With Gayle's passing, the American Board of Family Medicine Foundation decided to sponsor an ongoing conference series and, with the consent of his family, has named it the *G. Gayle Stephens Keystone Conference Series*.

An invitational conference planned for June 5-7, 2015 will be the first conference in this newly established series and the fourth Keystone conference. It will focus on what promises personal physicians in the United States are prepared to make as to when and where they will be there for their patients. Several large group sessions will be streamed live...stay tuned for log-in information.