Dr. Ace Barash Awarded Physician of the Year

WILLITS, CA -- When you ask anyone in the community to name a great physician, there's one name that always comes up; Dr. Ace Barash. And for his great work, compassion and dedication to his patients and the community, Dr. Barash was awarded 2016 Physician of the Year by Adventist Health.
Dr. Barash was one of 19 physicians to be honored by Adventist Health, with locations throughout California, Hawaii, Oregon and Washington.

Dr. Barash was nominated by employees of Frank Howard Memorial Hospital (HMH) in recognition of his 18 years of service and dedication to providing compassionate care to the Willits community.

When he is asked how he ended up practicing at HMH, Dr. Barash can only say, "It was meant to be. I found the perfect place for me." In an attempt to sum up a long story, he says he was working at another hospital and became good friends with a well-known local surgeon who convinced him that HMH was where he belongs. In 1998, he started seeing patients in the Emergency Room at HMH. After years of private practice, Dr. Barash says seeing patients here was a breath of fresh air. And those that work with him felt the same way about him.

An employee wrote, "Dr. Barash is always willing to listen and advise without judgment. He is very approachable and never makes you feel like your need is any less important than someone else's. He appreciates input and is receptive to others' opinions. He is very concerned about our community as a whole and how to better it."

Dr. Barash wears many hats, including director of inpatient care. Officially, he oversees the care of hospitalized patients and supervises the hospital's nurse practitioners. He also sees patients in the ER and assists orthopedic surgeon Dr. William Bowen in preparing patients for surgery.

Aside from his dedication to his patients, Dr. Barash is also known for his efforts to improve the community. He has been a staunch supporter of improving mental health services in Mendocino County, a cause that is very close to his heart.
"Having seen so many patients in the ER with mental health issues, I felt guilty that I could not do more for these patients. I felt like it was my job to not only address their health issues but also address the underlying mental health issues."

This comes as no surprise to his patients and colleagues. "Dr. Barash goes above and beyond for his patients and staff. You can feel that he genuinely cares. He is an amazing doctor and a loving man and truly exemplifies the mission of Adventist Health," shares an HMH employee.

Rick Bockmann, HMH president and CEO agrees, "Dr. Barash always has a way of making his patients feel like they are the most important person. His patients tell me how approachable he is and he just makes them feel at ease. His care goes beyond his patients, he truly cares about our community and he is very much involved in initiatives to improve the community, such as advocating for better mental health services."

Dr. Barash's good nature and big smile are a regular fixture at HMH, and he's grateful to be able to practice in such a caring atmosphere. "I'm proud of our team at HMH. One patient described it as a 'culture of love'. She said she never heard one employee say a bad word about another, and she's never been to a hospital like ours. We truly care for each other like a family. And patients can feel that," he shares.

Dr. Barash received the award at the Adventist Health Physician Leadership Symposium held in San Diego, California last month.

--HMH—