

Evening Plenary on Gender Issues: Discourse and Dessert*



Dr. Joycelyn Elders

**Thursday, March 9
8-10 p.m.**

A Reflective View from the Top Dr. Joycelyn Elders

CE CREDITS: 2

Dr. Joycelyn Elders, former U.S. Surgeon General, is the featured guest speaker at the Evening Plenary on Gender Issues: Discourse and Dessert. Dr. Elders, a pioneer in the health professions, was the first African American to be appointed U.S. Surgeon General. Prior to that time, she spent most of her professional life in service to the State of Arkansas, where she was born. She has served as a physician at the Arkansas Children's Hospital and as Director of the Arkansas Department of Health. She is a graduate of the University of Arkansas Medical School and is board-certified in pediatrics and pediatric endocrinology.

Dr. Elders served as the United States Surgeon General from September 1993 to December 1994. In providing background on her accomplishments to members of Congress during the Senate hearings on her confirmation, Dr. Elders stated: "I am a coalition builder. Since becoming Director of the Arkansas Department of Health, I have spent a great deal of my time recruiting the help of churches, schools, civic organizations, judges, businesses, and local communities. I realized that I could not do the job alone. I needed to mobilize all of the resources available in our communities to help save the most valuable resource we will ever have: our human capital. I do not believe that we can dictate from above what local communities need to do to solve the public health problems we are encountering today. We must empower each community to design their own solutions."

Dr. Elders' commitment and conviction regarding quality health care for all people emanates from her personal and professional understanding of the challenges posed by the lack of access to adequate health care. In her book, *Joycelyn Elders, M.D.: From Sharecropper's Daughter to Surgeon General of the United States*, Dr. Elders discusses health care reform, current treatment for HIV/AIDS, women's health, and a variety of other health-related issues. In her professional travels throughout the country, Dr. Elders has seen the impact that social problems have on the health of women and children. During her tenure as Surgeon General, she was a strong advocate for comprehensive health education.

Dr. Elders is a prolific writer who has authored over 200 published articles. She is currently a member of the National Advisory Commission on Rural Health; Board Member, Little Rock Chamber of Commerce; Secretary, Arkansas Science & Technology Commission; Member, Arkansas College Board; and Member, Institute of Medicine, National Academies of Science. She has been awarded honorary degrees from Yale University, Hendrix College, Connecticut College, and Philander Smith College.

During her talk, "A Reflective View from the Top," Dr. Elders will discuss major initiatives during her tenure as Surgeon General, survey the role of women in the current health scene, and provide personal career reflections.

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*fee assessed with registration