

Faculty Advisors



Estela Hernandez, MD

Pronouns she/ her/ ella

Class of 2001

Associate Program Director & Admissions Committee Chair
Manager, Career Pathways in the Office of the Director of Contra Costa Health Services

Dr. Hernandez joined CCRMC faculty in 2003 then became Associate Program Director in 2005. She has been a longtime mentor and advocate for URM/Bipoc residents.

“Since arriving at CCRMC, My goal has been to increase diversity of residents and faculty. I became an RDC advisor to work more on sustaining diversity and making it more comfortable for minority residents/faculty”

The goal continues to be the same. Her advice for residents is to use all available resources to become the best clinicians possible while also spending time on what makes them happy. For her, seeing more URM residents makes her happy!

Featured to the right with her mentee!



Angela Rodgers, MD

Pronouns she/ her

Class of 2019

Core Faculty, Emergency Medicine Department
Founder / Co-Chair of UBEAM - Unity of Black Health Professionals in Excellence, Advocacy, and Mentorship of Contra Costa County



“Estela is the reason I choose CCRMC, I knew no matter what happened she would be there and she would get it.”

-Sofia, PGY1 at the time



RDC Champions

Martin Escandon, MD



I chose CCRMC because it offers the opportunity to take care of the underserved and to use all of the skills I developed in training, specifically full spectrum family medicine and surgical obstetrics. I am a PCP at the Concord Health Center and supervise the residents on labor and delivery. My path to medicine started through community activism. I was in AmeriCorps working at an FQHC in south Seattle when one of the doctors pointed out that prescribing albuterol did very little to improve asthma rates around the clinic, a historically marginalized neighborhood with poor air quality. The staff at the clinic worked to advocate for cleaner air (encouraging truckers to not idle their trucks) and I came to understand that medicine can be used to push for positive social change.

For future residents, I would pass along the advice mi tío Alberto (who we called Uncle Buckaroo - it's a long story) gave to me before I started medical school. He told me "you have paid the price of admission and now you get to kick the walls." I understood him to mean that I was embarking on a career from which people of our background have been historically excluded. He was acknowledging that the journey to get there was difficult and warning me that the road ahead would be even more difficult. He was right. The further along in my training I went, the less represented I felt and the less welcome I was made to feel. But when the viaje feels especially impossible, I try to remember los consejos de mi tío

"Kick the walls to make room for more people to come along behind you, it's the only way things will change."

Erik Gonzalez, MD



I am currently the Chair of the Department of Family and Adult Medicine. I came to Contra Costa Health as a resident in 2015. I chose CCFMR because

I wanted to work hard and I wanted to learn a broad scope of practice. I decided to stay after residency because I believe this is a great place to work. I liked my attendings/ now co-workers, I like being able to teach residents, I liked being able to work outpatient and inpatient. I like having most of our specialty care in-system and my commute is super chill. Advice for future residents and leaders. This is a job. A great job, a really great job. But just a job. Know your priorities and remind yourself of them when you need to to keep yourself balanced. You are no good to anybody burnt out and over tired.

Remember that many of your patients work just as hard as you do, they're just paid a lot less and usually haven't been as fortunate as you have been.

"Compassion for yourself and others is paramount."

Class of 2021

Silvia Fonseca, MD

I chose CCRMC because I felt like many of the CCRMC attendings were strong champions of family medicine. I had completed my medical training at an academic university where the scope of family medicine was pretty limited. It was very refreshing to come to a place where family medicine was well respected and family medicine doctors were able to train up to perform c-sections, advanced prenatal care, and work in various specialty clinics. I also knew that I wanted to work for a safety net health system as this is where the greatest need exists. I am a primary care physician at the North Richmond Center for Health and I practice full spectrum family medicine. I also work on Labor & Delivery as a non-surgical teaching attending once a week and I work at the Hilltop Planned Parenthood clinic, where I mostly see 3rd trimester prenatal patients. I completed my residency at CCRMC in 2021 and was fortunate enough to be able to stay on as an attending. My advice for future residents is to make sure that you continue to cultivate the relationships and hobbies or extracurricular interests that will help keep you grounded and sane during residency. As you know, medical training is hard and you will have very little time to yourself so try to be intentional about the way that you use that time. Don't feel like you have to spend every spare hour studying or working extra in the hospital-- "it's ok to step away and take time to see your friends and family and to rest and recharge."



Class of 2022

David Pichardo-Gomez, MD

After graduation, David joined Lifelong Medical Care Family Medicine Residency in Richmond as Core Faculty. He still maintains an active relationship with CCRMC, as he oversees the Lifelong PGY-1 and PGY-2 rotations at CCRMC! While he was in RDC he was recruitment co-chair for two years and worked representing the RDC in the residency admissions committee. In the future, he plans to continue to grow in his role as core faculty. He currently leads the wellness center, a space used for group medical visits, community



engagement, and patient empowerment, and he would like to grow its capacity to support the Richmond community as well as for learners. Currently the wellness center offers group medical visits in centering pregnancy, parenting, and healthy eating/cooking groups, which David is looking to expand (pediatric obesity and diabetes are next on the list). He is also looking into expanding the point of care ultrasound program at Lifelong, amongst other endeavors. For the residents reading this newsletter, his advice is the following: stay true to the reasons you went into medicine, keep your head up, stay positive, take it a day at a time, exercise does wonders for stress, and don't forget to have a little bit of fun when you get a chance (especially with your RDC crew if you can)! Residency is stressful but it's only temporary...try to balance learning with the things that keep you well (partner, community, hobby, sleep, food, etc.). Sending much love to my RDC family ❤️

Thank you to everyone for your continued support of The Resident Diversity Council!

**Stay tuned for our next newsletter.
We are excited to announce our new Co-Chairs
Bianka Aguilar and Tiffany Ku!**

Contact Information:

residentdiversitycouncil@cchealth.org