



## **NEWS**

### **Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas L.A. County Board of Supervisors, 2<sup>nd</sup> District**

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#### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Contact:** Aurelio Rojas 213-974-2222

James Bolden 213-200-5314

### **SUPERVISOR RIDLEY-THOMAS CALLS SETTLEMENT OF CHARLES DREW UNIVERSITY LAWSUIT AGAINST THE COUNTY “GOOD FOR HEALTH OF THE COMMUNITY”**

**LOS ANGELES** — Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas today hailed the settlement of a lawsuit filed by the Charles Drew University of Medicine against the county, and said it will pave the way for the university to resume quality medical education and training in South Los Angeles.

“This lawsuit has been a source of bitterness for the past several years and an impediment to progress in clinical services and research,” Ridley-Thomas said, commending the Board of Supervisors and the Drew University Board of Directors for ending the litigation.

Calling the university “a key health and medical partner,” the Supervisor said the settlement will allow “us to move forward and get back to the business of training many of the country’s top medical professionals.”

Drew University opened in 1966, five years before the county opened Martin Luther King Jr. Hospital across the street from the campus. The hospital was later renamed King-Drew to acknowledge the partnership between the county and university.

But in September 2007, after the hospital failed a federal inspection, in-patient services were closed and the Board of Supervisors elected to end the county's contractual relationship with the university.

Details of the settlement were not disclosed, but Supervisor Ridley-Thomas said the end of litigation is good news for the community.

The Supervisor worked hard to bring closure to this matter with the assistance of his chief of staff, Sylvia Drew Ivie, the daughter of Charles Drew, the pioneering physician for whom the university was named.

“The County of Los Angeles and Drew University are both working diligently to meet unmet health training and medical service needs in South LA.,” Sylvia Drew Ivie said of the settlement. “This agreement in good faith by both parties removes an impediment to future planning and collaboration by both entities in the interest of area residents.”

The settlement is the latest good news for health care in South Los Angeles. The Board of Supervisors, acting on a motion by Ridley-Thomas, recently approved a plan to build a new hospital and authorized county officials to proceed with negotiations with the University of California to provide clinical services.

According to the framework agreed to the County and UC System, the 120-bed hospital would open in late 2012 and offer comprehensive services, including an emergency room, surgical beds and ancillary services.

The hospital will be organized as a private, non-profit organization under an independent board of directors with a new, county-operated Multi-service Ambulatory Care Center that will provide out-patient and clinical services.

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