

SUSAN E. CRUTCHFIELD-MITSCH, M.D. CHARLES E. CRUTCHFIELD, SR. M.D.

LITTLE DID THE THREE SMILING SUBJECTS pictured on this page dream, 50 years after being photographed, that they would be honored together for their varied and significant accomplishments.

Charles Crutchfield Sr. and Susan Crutchfield both earned BA, BS and MD degrees — graduating together from the U of M Medical School when Charles Crutchfield III was only three years old. Since then, pathways for all three have taken varied directions in interesting and engaging ways.

Dr. Susan, the first African American female to graduate from the U of M Medical School and a diplomat of the American Board of Family Medicine, practiced privately in the Twin Cities and as a college student health service director. The major portion of her professional career was spent in 20 successful years of Occupational Medicine practice as a Vice President/Medical Director for the Prudential Insurance Company.

Dr. Charles, Sr. moved from Alabama to Minnesota at age 15. He states, “I went from shining shoes and picking cotton to saving lives—in just nine years.” After being chosen Intern of the Year at Ancker Hospital (now Regions), his residency was completed at the U of M—and soon thereafter became the first obstetrician/gynecologist of color in Minnesota. His 40+ years of private practice was marked by nearly 10,000 deliveries, Fellowship in the American College of Ob/Gyn and decades of clinical faculty teaching at his alma mater.

Both Susan and Charles Sr. have earned numerous academic and professional awards and have served in a variety of leadership positions for their hospitals and professional organizations. She was Chairman of the Minneapolis Children’s Hospital Board and he was Chief of Ob/Gyn multiple times at United Hospital. The Dr. Charles and Susan Crutchfield Dermatology Lectureship at the U of M was recently established by Dr. Charles III, that cute tyke in the photo.

Susan and Charles Sr. speak respectively of their most gratifying professional endeavors—hers of improving the health of children—with whom she dearly loves to work; his, of playing a major role in increasing the standards of care for minority women. However, along with their many

professional and family accomplishments, standing out in bold relief and probably defining their legacy is their dedicated and energetic service to our community.

Susan has volunteered her time and talents to many organizations including the Southside

Clinic—where she stressed the importance of improving communication with patients in helping them to achieve greater understanding of their health status.

In addition to a multitude of volunteer activities, Charles Sr. continues to consult regularly at the Open Cities Health Clinic where he occasionally purchases needed medications and bus or cab fare for especially needy patients.

Perhaps as important as the many achievements along the lengthy pathways of the good doctors Crutchfield, is the superb guidance and support given to their son, Charles III—who is among the most successfully recognizable physicians in our community. He has embraced and followed their “leading by example” philosophy of giving back to one’s community. The apple did not fall far from those strong and venerable trees.

Charles Sr. and Susan, each independently state that the driving force behind their many special pursuits has been the goal of repaying our community for all it has provided them these many years. Our Luminaries have easily exceeded that target—for which we thank and honor them.



This last page series is intended to honor esteemed colleagues who have contributed significantly to Twin Cities medicine. Please forward names of physicians you would like considered for this recognition to Nancy Bauer, managing editor, nbauer@metrodoctors.com.