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Dr. Berry wins top award

By PHYLLIS HUDSON

Dr. Leonidas H. Berry, veteran Cook County Hospital physician, has received the prestigious Schindler Award for his contributions in teaching, research and practice of stomach and intestinal disease.

The presentation was made in Toronto, Canada, during the annual Digestive Disease Week. Dr. Berry, who has practiced medicine for over 40 years, is a graduate of Rush Medical College of the University of Chicago. He said his life-long dream was to be a physician. "When I was 12 years old I turned in an English paper," he stated. "And I signed it Leonidas H. Berry, M.D. After many years of hard work and study, little Leonidas' dream came true.

Dr. Berry also attended Wilber Forest College and has taught and practiced at Provident Hospital, as well as Cook County. He was the first black physician at Michael Reese Hospital where he helped establish the first out-patient clinic for narcotic addiction. The doctor is the senior author and editor of a book on stomach diseases and has had more than 80 articles published in medical journals.

In 1970 Dr. Berry started the Flying Black Medics, a group of physicians who volunteered their time during the height of racial un-

rest in Cairo, Ill. During that time, Dr. Berry said 95 per cent of the people were below the poverty level and health care was at an all time low.

Dr. Berry worked and studied with Rudolf Schindler, the inventor of the first practical gastroscope, which allows physicians to observe, take pictures and perform biopsies of the lining of the stomach and other parts of the digestive tract through a periscope—like flexible tube with an electrical light at its tip.

Dr. Berry was especially pleased to get the award because it bears the name of a man he worked closely with. He was given the award, not only for his expertise in gastrointestinal endoscopy, but also for teaching and training more than 350 specialists for 35 years.

Dr. Berry grew up in Virginia. The physician said when he first started practicing medicine things were

different. "I really don't like the direction I see medical care going in," he stated. "Everything has become so impersonal, so-called scientific. The pendulum is going to have to start swinging back to the realization that the care of human beings can never be a totally exact science."

Dr. Berry is presently senior attending physician emeritus at Cook County and senior attending physician at Michael Reese and Provident Hospitals. He is also clinical associate professor emeritus at the University of Illinois Abraham Lincoln School of Medicine and was formerly chief of Cook County Hospital's Gastroenterology and Endoscopy at the Cook County Graduate School of Medicine and is now a member of the trustee board.

An admitted "workaholic," Dr. Berry is active in the African Methodist Episcopal Church, is married and has two daughters.

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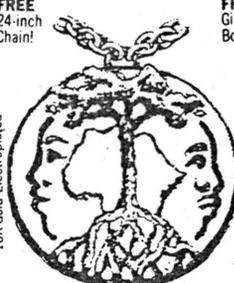
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