



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**AMA FOUNDATION HONORS WOOSTER, OHIO PHYSICIAN FOR
VOLUNTEERISM**

CHICAGO- Viola Startzman, M.D. of Wooster, Ohio is a recipient of the 2008 Jack B. McConnell, M.D. Award for Excellence in Volunteerism. Presented by the American Medical Association (AMA) Foundation, the award is given to senior domestic physicians for commitment to volunteer medical care to those without access to health care in the U.S. The AMA Foundation presents the award in association with the Pfizer Medical Humanities Initiative.

The award will be presented on Monday, March 31st, at the 2008 Excellence in Medicine Awards Ceremony preceding the AMA National Advocacy Conference in Washington, D.C.

Viola Startzman, M.D., a 93-year-old-physician, has helped the underserved throughout her career. Through her determination and organization, the Healthcare 2000 Community Clinic opened in 1995, and in 2000 was renamed the Viola Startzman Free Clinic, providing quality medical and dental care to low income, uninsured residents of Wayne County, Ohio. In 2003, Dr. Startzman purchased and donated the Clinic's medical building. She has organized physicians and nurses to provide services, worked on legal matters and raised funds for the Clinic. Last year, the Clinic provided nearly 10,000 patient visits. The Viola Startzman Free Clinic is a member of the Volunteers in Medicine Alliance, a national network of free clinics emphasizing the use of retired medical professionals and volunteers to care for the uninsured. Founded by Dr. Jack McConnell, Volunteers in Medicine has developed over 60 clinics in 20 states across the country.

In the early 1960's, Dr. Startzman started a female healthcare clinic in the dining room of a female colleague's home. Since she was a pediatrician, she sought additional training to become a gynecologist and the small clinic eventually became the local office of Planned Parenthood. Among her many volunteer activities, she developed a local hospice organization to care for cancer patients and is very active with First Presbyterian Church of Wooster. She is described by her colleagues as the "most humble, generous, compassionate human being." When asked what was the driving force behind her years of volunteer work, Dr. Startzman stated, "I think everyone has a right to health care, good health care, just as life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness."

"Throughout her career and in a quiet, unassuming way, Dr. Startzman has placed a priority on caring for the underserved in society," said AMA Foundation president Barbara Rockett, M.D. "Through perseverance and personal sacrifice, she started a free clinic in Wooster, Ohio, which serves the neediest of patients in that community. She is truly selfless."

As the philanthropic arm of the American Medical Association, the AMA Foundation is committed to advancing healthcare in America through programs in medical education, research and public health. For more information, please visit www.amafoundation.org or call (312) 464-4200.

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