

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

January 21, 2010

**CONTACT:** Melissa DelaCalzada  
(619) 278-6139; mdelacalzada@sdhospice.org



**San Diego Physician Jeffrey Stoneberg Honored With National Award**

*Pioneering work improving quality of life for patients with life-limiting illness recognized*

(SAN DIEGO) – San Diego physician **Jeffrey N. Stoneberg, DO**, of San Diego Hospice and The Institute for Palliative Medicine is one of four American physicians named as recipients of the first Hastings Center Cunniff-Dixon Physician Awards.

The awards were given by the Cunniff-Dixon Foundation, whose mission is to enrich the doctor-patient relationship at the end of life, in partnership with The Hastings Center, a bioethics research institute that has done pioneering work on end of life decision-making. The nomination and selection process was administered by The Duke Institute on Care at the End of Life.

Dr. Stoneberg will receive his award in ceremonies held in conjunction with the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration for The Institute for Palliative Medicine at San Diego Hospice on Wednesday, January 27, at 7 p.m. San Diego Mayor Jerry Sanders, San Diego City Councilmember Todd Gloria, and representatives of The Hastings Center and Cunniff-Dixon Foundation will be present at the event.

“This award was incredibly competitive,” said Jan Cetti, President and CEO of San Diego Hospice and The Institute for Palliative Medicine. “I know I speak for everyone in our organization, for every patient and every family that Dr. Stoneberg has worked with that we are thrilled to see his efforts publicly recognized.”

Dr. Stoneberg is a clinical medical director at San Diego Hospice and The Institute for Palliative Medicine. He is responsible for the medical care of home and inpatient hospice patients, and for educating clinicians and other health care workers on care of seriously ill patients including pain and symptom management. The award recognizes his outstanding clinical skills and his achievements in growing the Scripps Mercy Palliative Medicine Consultation Service, a local community health care system.

"This award is well-deserved recognition of Dr. Stoneberg's commitment to advancing palliative care medicine in a very compassionate way," said Tom Gammieri, Chief Executive, Scripps Mercy Hospital. "We are so proud to work with such a devoted physician and patient advocate."

In 2008, Scripps Mercy asked San Diego Hospice and The Institute for Palliative Medicine to take over and develop the palliative medicine consultation service, and Dr. Stoneberg became the Service’s clinical medical director. In that role he has significantly increased the pace of understanding, acceptance, and utilization of the palliative medicine service. He has started new services that have won over clinicians not traditionally involved with palliative care, such as trauma physicians.

“Dedication, excellence in patient care, and role model as teacher – those words describe Dr. Stoneberg well,” wrote his nominator, Laurel Herbst, MD, Chief Medical Officer and Vice President of San Diego Hospice and The Institute for Palliative Medicine. “Jeff’s level of professionalism and compassion has generated wide respect for his teaching and clinical skills by even the most senior physicians at Scripps Mercy Hospital.”

“This is an extraordinary achievement for someone so early in his career,” said Dr. Charles von Gunten, MD, PhD, Provost of The Institute for Palliative Medicine at San Diego Hospice. “Not only has Jeff helped to grow the Scripps Mercy Palliative Medicine Consultation Service, his clinical skills are outstanding, earning him confidence from patients and his peers alike. He never forgets that he is first and foremost a physician, and a healer.”

The prize recipients were selected by a committee convened by The Hastings Center. In addition to Richard Payne, the committee consisted of Eric Cassel, MD, of Weill Medical College of Cornell University and New York Presbyterian Hospital; Thomas P. Duffy, MD, of Yale University; and Kathleen M. Foley, MD, of Cornell University and Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center.

The Cunniff-Dixon Foundation was founded in 2005 by Matthew A. Baxter in memory of his wife, Carley Cunniff, who died of breast cancer, and her attending physician, Dr. Peter S. Dixon, who has a private practice in Essex, Ct. “He was the guiding light who enabled her to die a peaceful death at home with her family and loved ones,” said Baxter.

Speaking of the award recipients, Baxter said, “It is a privilege for us, together with The Hastings Center, to recognize the commitment and contribution that these wonderful physicians are making in end-of-life care.”

### **About San Diego Hospice and The Institute for Palliative Medicine**

San Diego Hospice and The Institute for Palliative Medicine ([www.sdhospice.org](http://www.sdhospice.org)) is one of the 10 largest community-owned, not-for-profit hospices in the country, bringing compassionate, expert medical care to more than 1,000 seriously ill adults and children each day throughout San Diego and North County since 1977. In addition to patient care, The Institute for Palliative Medicine at San Diego Hospice is internationally recognized for its excellence in palliative care education and research and has achieved international recognition for its innovative education programs, patient/family-centered research and evidence-based advocacy since 1989. For more information, visit [www.sdhospice.org](http://www.sdhospice.org) or call toll-free 1-866-688-1600.

### **About Scripps Mercy Hospital:**

Established in 1890 by the Sisters of Mercy, Scripps Mercy Hospital serves the San Diego and Chula Vista communities. With 700 licensed beds, more than 3,000 employees and 1,300 physicians, Scripps Mercy Hospital is San Diego's longest established and only Catholic hospital. With two campuses, Scripps Mercy Hospital is the largest hospital in San Diego County and one of the 10 largest in California. For more information, visit [www.scripps.org](http://www.scripps.org).

# # #