

The Ohio FamilyPhysician

Fall 2018 | Volume 70 | Number 3 | ISSN 1536-0474

CHEERS TO 70 YEARS

Page 30

GARY LEROY, MD, FAAFP **FOR AAFP PRESIDENT-ELECT**

“Hope and faith in leadership are born from our desire to obtain that which will not, should not, or cannot be achieved alone.”

Page 25

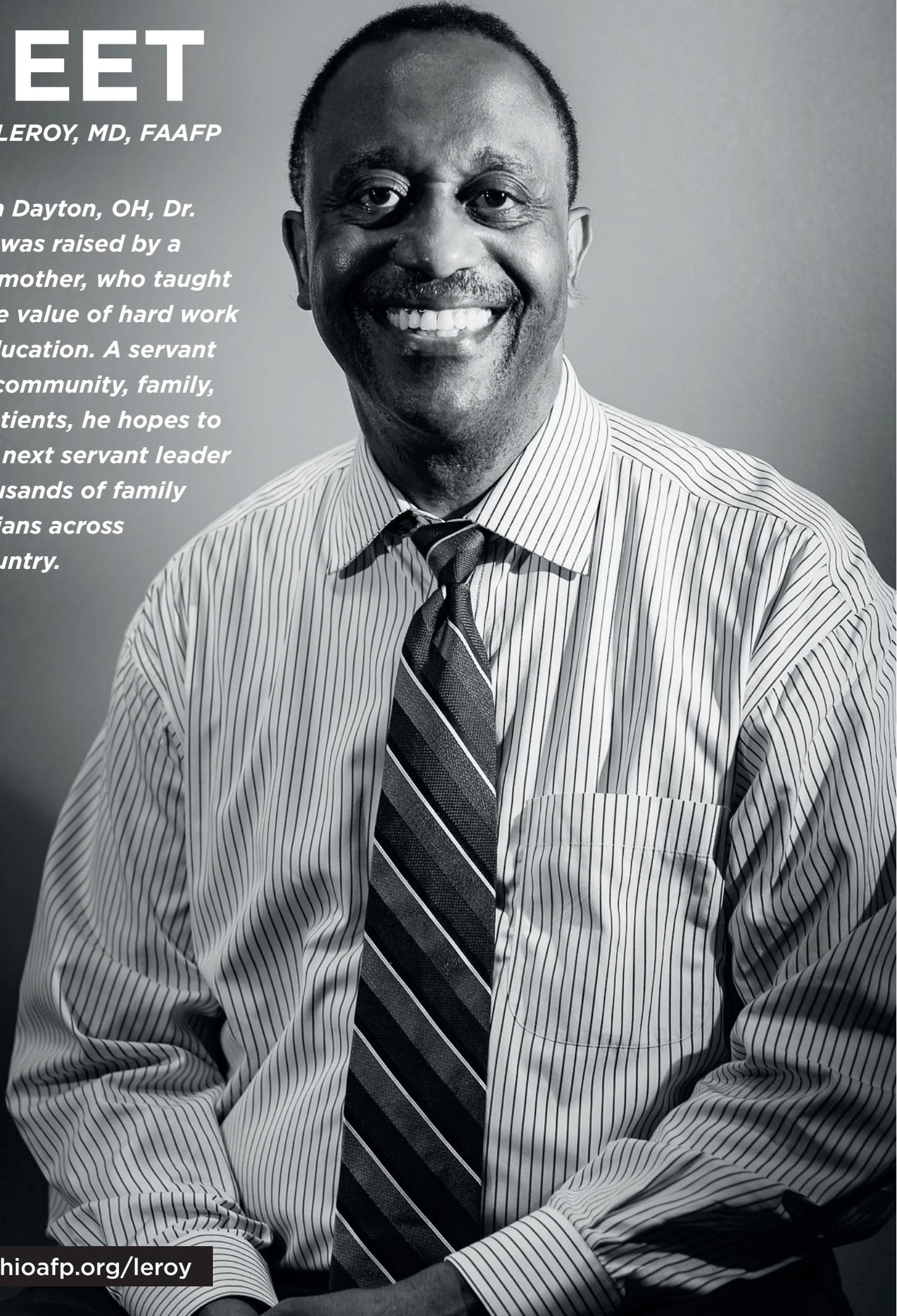


MEET

GARY LEROY, MD, FAAFP

Born in Dayton, OH, Dr. LeRoy was raised by a single mother, who taught him the value of hard work and education. A servant to his community, family, and patients, he hopes to be the next servant leader to thousands of family physicians across the country.

www.ohioafp.org/leroy



Born and living in Dayton, OH, Gary LeRoy, MD, FAAFP, was raised by a single mother who taught him the value of hard work and importance of education. “Before I end my day, I see my 90-year-old mother, who still lives independently in the house where I grew up,” says Dr. LeRoy, with pride. “She gave me more love than what most children receive from two-parent households. Somehow, she knew just what I needed to become a strong and compassionate Black man when the gravity of low expectations were pervasive.”

As a family man and servant leader to his community, Dr. LeRoy wants to lead and advance the specialty of family medicine by elevating the voices of thousands of family physicians across the country. “I want to help our members bring joy back into their respective lives so they can do the same for their own patients and communities,” he says.

From his inner-city, community health center, Dr. LeRoy sees the health disparities that plague not only the poor Appalachian neighborhood that he serves, but the entire country, and still sees hope for doing better. With the rise in opioid-related deaths to unacceptably high infant mortality rates, Dr. LeRoy believes the answers to improving health care for all extend beyond the classroom and office practice setting. Dr. LeRoy is a family physician who sees opportunities rather than challenges.

He’s a father of two, a lifesaver to many, a mentor to hundreds, a leader to thousands, and a friend to all. In a nutshell, this is how people view Dr. LeRoy, one of the most personable, down-to-earth family physicians you will ever meet. “I’m an introvert, extrovert,” he says, in a way that makes it easy to see he feels uncomfortable taking compliments.

As he travels the country, with Washington, D.C., and Kansas City, MO, being frequent destinations, Dr. LeRoy always reverts the attention off of him and onto others. “As a teacher, it’s a natural tendency for me to let others shine,” he says. He enjoys hearing the life stories of other family physicians and how they got started, as well as the stories of new medical students eager to start their journey in family medicine.

As the associate dean of student affairs and admissions at the Wright State University Boonshoft School of Medicine, Dr. LeRoy is responsible for more than 460 students, along with 4,000 prospective medical students who are interested in a career in medicine. “I love getting to know every family medicine resident and medical student at the University,” says Dr. LeRoy.

“Opportunities are always out there, we just need to help our patients find them. And we find opportunity by touching the lives of as many people as we can and clearly seeing the realities they are experiencing.”

“To see their excitement reminds me of why I chose to practice family medicine. It is my restless desire to take care of the entire spectrum of the human condition (mind, body, and spirit) including the communities where people live.”

With a strong passion for family medicine advocacy, Dr. LeRoy understands the power and influence that family physicians have at the local, state, and national levels of government, which is why he encourages each member to be vocal and get involved.

“The American Academy of Family Physicians is the third most influential healthcare association in Washington, D.C.,” says a fired up Dr. LeRoy. “With more than 129,000 members, and 400 dedicated AAFP staff, we are sitting at tables with government officials and legislators – not just to sit there, but for our voices to be heard.”

As a practicing, board-certified family physician, Dr. LeRoy also manages a panel of patients at his practice, the East Dayton Health Center (EDHC), where he has worked for nearly 30 years. The EDHC, an inner-city community health center, was created to address the shortage of physicians and medical care available in low-income areas in Dayton.

“Over the years, I have watched our neighborhood genuinely improve,” says a hopeful Dr. LeRoy. In 2008, the EDHC became an affiliate of the Community Health Centers of Greater Dayton, which has grown to be a network of six federally qualified health centers in the area. “Each of these centers faces challenges for their patients who are desperately seeking solutions to achieve optimal health.”

For three years, Dr. LeRoy has had the opportunity to serve as an AAFP board member. In his first year on the board, he worked together with his peers to create an executive position charged with strengthening diversity within the AAFP’s leadership and staff.

These efforts resulted in the establishment of the Office of Diversity and Health Equity (ODHE), which launched the EveryONE Project, a toolkit that helps family physicians and their practice teams address social determinants of health.

“It’s a win-win,” says Dr. LeRoy excitedly. “With this toolkit, family physicians are better equipped to address the needs of their patients by connecting them with community partners and ultimately providing them with better care.”

For more information about Gary LeRoy,

Gary LeRoy, MD, FAAFP for AAFP President-Elect

When asked about the lack of opportunities available in particular areas of the country or within low income inner cities, Dr. LeRoy optimistically says, “Opportunities are always out there, we just need to help our patients find them.” He goes on to explain, “We find opportunity by touching the lives of as many people as we can and clearly seeing the realities they are experiencing.”

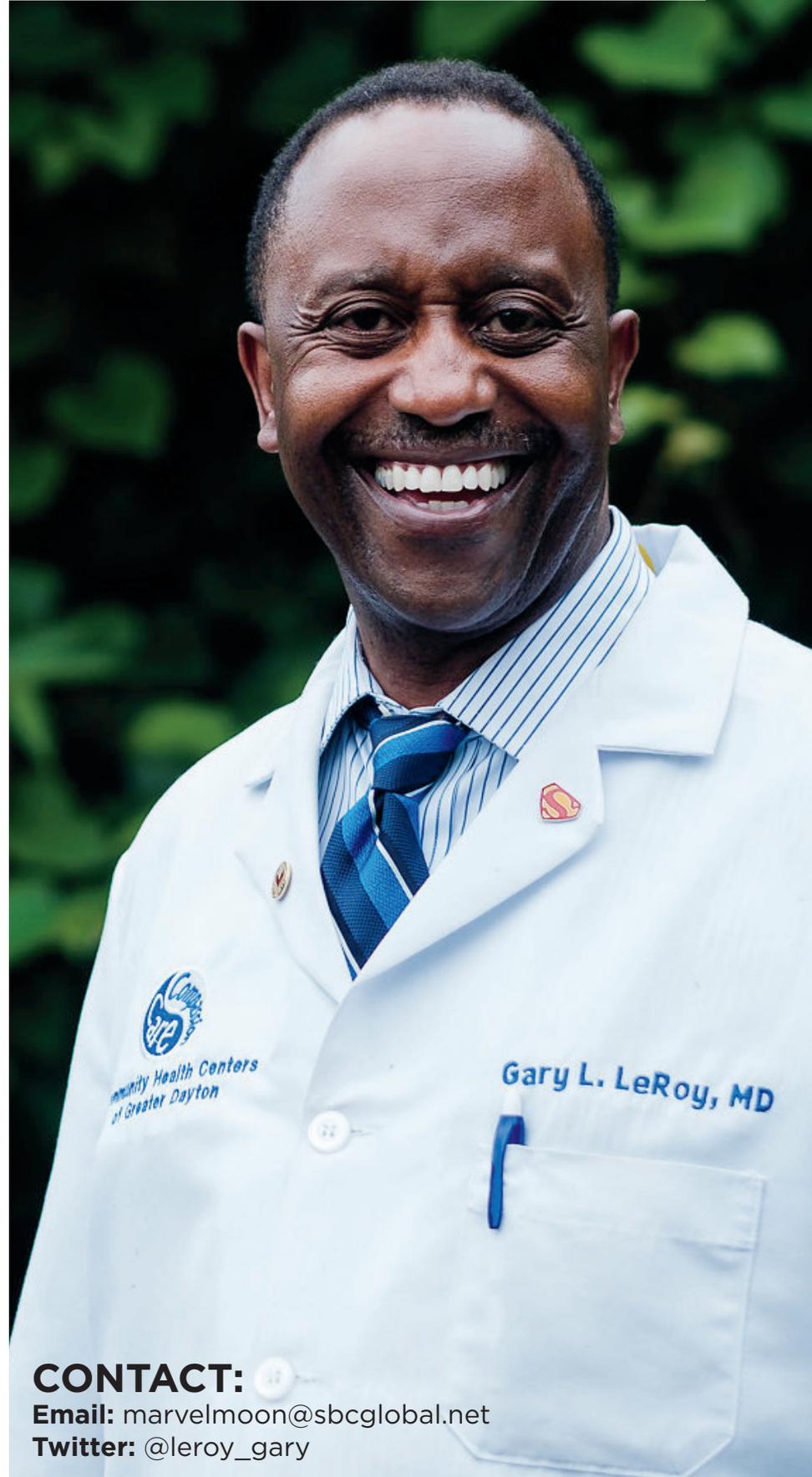
As an avid writer and communicator, Dr. LeRoy uses his voice to advocate on behalf of family medicine and the decisions that affect it. For example, during his tenure on the board, Dr. LeRoy spoke up about the closure of a family medicine residency program in Toledo, OH.

Through the *AAFP Leader Voices* Blog, Dr. LeRoy passionately spoke against the hospital network’s decision to dismantle the program. When the hospital recognized that the closure attracted national attention, they relented and developed an alternative plan to keep the family medicine residency slots in Toledo alive.

Through social organization, Dr. LeRoy was able to use an AAFP platform to inspire action which he sums up as, “One voice can make a difference, but together we can make a change.”

As a child, Dr. LeRoy always wanted to be a superhero. He even created an imaginary alter ego, Marvelmoon, who desires to make the world a better place. Now, his fictional hero is embodied in his love of family medicine and passion that drives him to serve.

“It’s truly been an honor and incredible learning experience to serve on the AAFP Board of Directors,” says an emotional Dr. LeRoy. “Family physicians are the essential, foundational backbone of health care. I look forward to the future of our specialty and the incredible strides we will make together as family medicine heroes and she-roes.”



CONTACT:

Email: marvelmoon@sbcglobal.net

Twitter: [@leroy_gary](https://twitter.com/leroy_gary)

MD, FAAFP, visit: www.ohioafp.org/leroy

the BIG QUESTIONS

Gary LeRoy, MD, FAAFP, who is running for the American Academy of Family Physicians President-Elect, takes on the tough questions. Let's not let him off easy.

1. What are three things on your bucket list? 1) Visit every continent on earth - except those two really cold ones; 2) Live to be a vibrantly healthy 100-years old - and die laughing at my birthday party; 3) Becoming president-elect of the AAFP and doing such a great job the Congress of Delegates adopts a resolution to allow an extended term!

2. What's the strangest talent you have?

I have no strange superpowers. All puns intended, I guess my "strange" talent is that I have never met a "stranger". If someone is willing to say, "Hello" I am always willing to make a new friend.

3. What is the coolest trait your mom passed down to you?

The love of flowers and gardening. It's that Mississippi cotton sharecropper trait that I inherited. I know how to make incredible things grow from seeds. As physicians, we do the same thing. We plant healthy seeds of hope in people's spirit, we nurture it, and then stand back to watch incredible things grow.

4. What recipe do you know by memory? How to cook a hamburger and French fries, but often times I'm not asked to cook... (and for good reason!)

5. What's on your playlist right now?

Tim McGraw's song, "Be Kind"; Aretha Franklin's song, "R-E-S-P-E-C-T"; and Pharrell William's song, "Happy."

Dr. LeRoy enjoying Jeni's Ice-Cream in Columbus, OH.