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Finalist: Physician

Dr. Jim Hayes - Roper St. Francis Healthcare

Dr. Jim Hayes recently retired from his private practice in internal medicine, but he left an important mark on the medical community.

Hayes was instrumental in facilitating the merger of Bon Secours St. Francis and Roper hospitals in the late 1990s. Hayes was a member of Roper's board of directors for more than 10 years. When he was chairman, he worked to bring the two hospitals together. Both hospitals were not-for-profit institutions, and Hayes said it made sense for them to combine resources for a common goal.

From 2003 to 2005, Hayes was a member of the Roper St. Francis Healthcare board of directors. In his retirement, he volunteers with the Roper St. Francis Foundation, the fundraising arm for the health care system.

Hayes is giving his time to chair the Physician Partners Committee, and he initiated the creation of the Roper Xavier Society to encourage local physicians to join an annual giving group.

David L. Dunlap, Roper St. Francis Healthcare's president and CEO, said, "So much has been accomplished during Jim's tenure. His leadership has been vital to our success."

Hayes believes in putting people first and giving back to the community. He doesn't hesitate to do whatever he can for his patients and friends.

One of Hayes' friends was Father Robert Kelly, former chaplain at Bishop England High School. Hayes and his wife didn't hesitate to welcome Kelly into their home when he needed time to recover from some heart problems and a knee replacement surgery.

Later, Kelly fell ill, and Hayes once again made room for him. Kelly lived with Hayes and his wife for about two years until he passed away.

"It was a pleasure for us to have him in our house," Hayes said.

The desire to pursue a career in medicine struck Hayes at an early age. His mother was a graduate of the St. Francis School of Nursing and his father was a pharmacist. In addition, Hayes said he greatly admired the doctor who ran the family practice behind his father's pharmacy.

PHOTO/LARRY MONTEITH



"That was one of the reasons I went into medicine," Hayes said.

In retirement, Hayes said he misses seeing patients on a regular basis.

"The most gratifying experience has been just dealing with patients and being able to help them through some crisis and the bonds that have been formed over the years," he said.