



Nicholas A. Rango 1944 - 1993

Nicholas A. Rango received his M.D. degree from Northwestern University in 1970, and completed his clinical training in Internal Medicine at Cook County Hospital in 1973. At Cook County Hospital, he was president of the Residents and Interns Association, the professional body representing more than five hundred doctors-in-training. He was awarded a Robert Wood Johnson Clinical Scholarship at Columbia-Presbyterian Medical Center from 1975-1978. During these three years at Columbia, he pursued graduate studies in sociology with University Professor Robert K. Merton and collaborated in developing a clinical course for senior medical students with Dr. Charles Ragan, (deceased), Chairman of Medicine. From 1978 to 1987 he held the Samuel R. Milbank

Chair in Health and Society at Barnard College of Columbia University. During this time, he developed an interdisciplinary undergraduate program in health policy and biomedical ethics for pre-medical students. In 1978, he received the Robert J. Levin Prize in sociology at Columbia University awarded to the outstanding graduate student. In 1986, he defended his Ph.D. dissertation in sociology at Columbia University. His doctoral thesis addresses the role of local voluntarism in the modern urban setting.

Dr. Rango was both physician and social scientist. His scientific research has been published in the Annals of Internal Medicine, the Journal of American Medical Association, the Journal of the American Public Health Association, the Gerontologist and the New England Journal of Medicine. From 1986 to 1987 he occupied the position of executive director of the Village Nursing Home, a 200-bed voluntary non-profit nursing home located in New York City, where he conceived and planned the Home's pioneer three phase long term care AIDS Program. He was appointed director of the AIDS Institute of New York State in 1987. Responsible for planning and coordinating New York's response to the HIV epidemic, the AIDS Institute, located in the Department of Health, is the lead state agency for HIV prevention activities as well as health care programs for the care and treatment of people with AIDS.

In an article last June, The New York Times said "Dr. Rango is regarded by AIDS advocates as the conscience of AIDS in New York. He has attained that status through hard work and preparation, quadrupling the agency's budget in the five years he has been director. But he has also done it through sheer personality, chutzpah and outspokenness...in the opinion of many AIDS advocates, the agency has become a model for the country." During this interview, Dr. Rango revealed that he had AIDS himself, but that he had not allowed his increasingly difficult fight with the disease to deter his aggressive, independent advocacy on behalf of all those who are HIV infected. "I pray for people with AIDS and their loved ones," he said. "But I also pray for children with cancer and for older people facing the culmination of their illness process. Grace is necessary for everyone to get through a difficult journey."