

# Richard H. Carmona, M.D., M.P.H., FACS 17<sup>th</sup> Surgeon General of the United States (2002-2006)

Born to a poor Hispanic family in New York City, Dr. Richard Carmona experienced homelessness, hunger and health disparities during his youth and dropped out of high school at 17. The experiences greatly sensitized him to the relationships among culture, health, education and economic status and shaped his future.

Dr. Carmona's resume includes being a medic, registered nurse, hospital CEO, police and fire department medical director, trauma surgeon, SWAT team leader, U.S. Army Special Forces soldier, and university professor. After being nominated as 17th U.S. Surgeon General in 2002, he was unanimously confirmed by the U.S. Senate.

Today, Dr. Carmona is Vice Chairman of Canyon Ranch, CEO of Canyon Ranch Health division, and President of Canyon Ranch Institute. He is a Distinguished Professor of Public Health at the Mel and Enid Zuckerman College of Public Health (University of Arizona). He also has dozens of professional affiliations and serves on the Boards of Directors of several national corporations.

Everything Dr. Carmona has done in his life has contributed to where he is today. A charismatic speaker with an unsurpassed passion for prevention, Dr. Carmona's message about eliminating health disparities, improving health literacy and addressing global health resonates with all Americans.

## Topics

### GLOBAL & NATIONAL HEALTH CHALLENGES

Because disease does not recognize geopolitical borders, the health of all Americans and the health status of people around the world are strongly interconnected. With his extensive experience in public health, clinical sciences, health care management, and preparedness, Dr. Carmona discusses the broad context of global health issues and the urgency of addressing the critical challenges of the 21st century.

### WELLNESS & PREVENTION: CHANGING THE WAY WE VIEW HEALTH

Dr. Carmona is dedicated to advancing prevention as an effective means to improve public health and reduce health care costs while improving the quality and quantity of life. The rising cost of health care is unsustainable for future generations and yet more than 75 percent of health care costs could be prevented by eliminating tobacco use and with more physical activity, better food choices, and the increased use of safety helmets and seat belts. As Dr. Carmona explains, the hope of the future lies in shifting the focus from treating disease to preventing it.

*TOPICS continued on back*



### CREDENTIALS

- Doctorate in Medicine, University of California, San Francisco
- Master's degree in Public Health, Policy and Administration, University of Arizona
- Diplomate, American Board of Surgery
- Diplomate, American Board of Quality Assurance and Utilization Review
- Diplomate, Correctional Health Care, National Commission on Correctional Health Care
- Certified Physician Executive (CPE), American College of Physician Executives
- State of California Registered Nurse, C.C.R.N., M.I.C.N.
- National Institutes of Health (NIH) Fellow in Trauma Surgery/Burns/Critical Care at University of California, San Francisco and San Francisco General Hospital Trauma Center

## MY JOURNEY: FROM HIGH SCHOOL DROPOUT TO SURGEON GENERAL

Dr. Carmona's path to becoming Surgeon General was very atypical and characterized by numerous obstacles and challenges throughout his life: "I grew up a poor Latino street kid in New York City. I was often hungry, and was homeless for the first time when I was 6 years old."

His remarkable career has been characterized by public service as a soldier, medic, lifeguard, registered nurse, physician assistant and police officer. He has excelled in all of his endeavors and credits the people who encouraged him along the way and contributed to his education. From immigrant family to Surgeon General of the United States in one generation, his story is poignant and inspiring.



Image Courtesy of U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services.

*Dr. Carmona remains dedicated to advancing the health of children everywhere.*

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