



Stuart Nelson, M.D.

Class of 2013

Stuart Nelson, MD, FACMI, was born in Santa Monica, CA and moved to Oroville with his family when he was six years old. He attended Bird Street and Central Schools, and graduated from Oroville High School (OHS) in 1964. While at OHS he was a member of CSF, was awarded a Milligan Scholarship, and was a semi-finalist in the National Merit Scholar competition. He was also student body class president and on the brain brawl team. As a member of Block O, he played football, basketball, baseball, and ran track. Stuart was a member of the OHS football team that played in the first Victory Bell Game in 1963. He returned to Oroville to participate in the 50th anniversary celebration of the cross town rivalry.

After graduating from OHS, Stuart attended the University of California at Berkeley (Cal), earning his BA degree in mathematics. He then went on to State University of New York, where he completed his medical studies and received his doctor of medicine. He interned at Philadelphia General Hospital at the University of Pennsylvania. He completed his residency in Internal Medicine at Metropolitan Hospital Center in New York City. He was certified by the American Board of Internal Medicine in 1978.

For the next three years, Dr. Nelson served on the faculty of the State University of New York at Stony Brook in the departments of Internal Medicine and Community Preventative Medicine. In 1991, he moved to the Medical College of Georgia where he practiced Internal Medicine and trained students and residents. His research interests at this time were in the area of computer applications to medicine and he collaborated for several years with one of the founders of the field of Medical Informatics.

In 1996, Dr. Nelson moved to the National Library of Medicine (NLM), in Bethesda, MD and served there for sixteen years and led numerous initiatives of national importance. The NLM collects, organizes, and makes available biomedical science information to investigators, educators, and practitioners and carries out programs designed to strengthen medical library services in the United States.

Dr. Nelson went to NLM as part of the National Institutes of Health (NIH), as Head of the Medical Subject Headings Section (MeSH). MeSH is the library's controlled vocabulary thesaurus used for indexing articles for MEDLINE (from which the publication Index Medicus is derived) and other NLM databases. The NLM has been in business in the electronic vocabulary creation and distribution business for fifty years, from the start of MeSH, and has been involved in the dissemination of clinical vocabularies and administrative code sets for more than twenty years via the Unified Medical Language System (UMLS).

IN 2012, Dr. Nelson joined the company Apelon, Inc. as Chief Innovation Officer, a position he currently holds. Apelon is a long standing provider of terminology and data interoperability solutions and based in Ridgefield, Conn. It is an international clinical informatics company focusing on data standardization and interoperability. Apelon software and professional services help leading healthcare enterprises, life sciences organizations and government agencies improve the quality, comparability and accessibility of their information.

Dr. Nelson created Rx Norm that provides normalized names for clinical drugs and links its names to many of the drug vocabularies commonly used in pharmacy management and drug interaction software. RxNorm can mediate messages between systems not using the same software and vocabulary. NLM issues weekly updates and full monthly releases of RxNorm.

Dr. Nelson received the National Library of Medicine Board of Regents award in 2004, and the National Institutes of Health Award of Merit in 2011. He has published extensively in the field of medical informatics, especially in the area of computerized vocabularies.

He provided training to the Stony Brook Fire Department Emergency Medical Technicians (EMT's) - 1980-1991, and served as a Science fair Judge for local elementary and middle schools in the Washington DC area -1998 to 2012.

Dr. Nelson also spent several years participating in an organization that provided dinners to students attending after school and evening tutorial sessions at local elementary and middle schools in the US capital city area.

Dr. Nelson and his wife reside in Vienna, Virginia and he continues to return to Oroville to participate in class reunions.