

# A HEALER BEYOND THE OPERATING ROOM

*Commentary on the life of Ben Carson, M.D.*

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## Commentary on the life of Ben Carson, M.D.

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## 1. Introduction

### A note from Antoinette Rainey



In the fifth grade I was presented with a book that would ultimately serve to shape the direction of my life. My elementary school principal gave me a copy of Dr. Ben Carson’s first publication entitled “Gifted Hands.” Dr. Carson’s biography (see below) discusses his journey from a disadvantaged past to today—professor and director of pediatric neurosurgery at the Johns Hopkins Medical Institutions.

I distinctly remember the impact of Dr. Carson’s story. There I was, an impressionable youth captivated by Dr. Carson’s ability to defeat all odds and ultimately become a world-renowned neurosurgeon. In fact, my initial interest in the neural sciences developed from inquiring about an explanation Dr. Carson gave in his biography concerning the brain’s remarkable ability to recover function following a hemispherectomy—a procedure where half of a patient’s brain is removed. It was then that I began to focus my hopes and dreams for the future.

Following the example of Dr. Carson, I have steadfastly pursued a keen interest in the neurological sciences, striving to become a neurosurgeon someday. Interestingly enough, as a neuroscience major here at Johns Hopkins, I was able to understand the neural mechanisms involved in recovery following the drastic procedure Carson described over a decade earlier. I’m sincerely grateful to Dr. Carson for spurring that initial interest. I am currently a senior and extremely enthusiastic about entering medical school in the next year.

Beyond my academic achievements, I have been actively involved in teaching and uplifting youth through educational endeavors in the Baltimore Community. My hope is to become an inspiration for youth just as Dr. Ben Carson has been for me and countless others. Like Dr. Carson, I believe that it is essential that we all find ways to give back to society. Although we have our own pursuits and goals, we must remember to make time to contribute to the world around us.

One of the pivotal points of my academic career occurred when I read Carson's third publication, "The Big Picture." His insight forced me to step back and evaluate the narrow-minded attitude so many of us adopt when pursuing our goals. Like most pre-med students at Hopkins, I had become so focused and determined by my effort to attend medical school that the world around me seemed to diminish. Carson made a similar complaint about doctors who are so consumed in practicing medicine that they fail to become involved in other services to society that desperately need their resources and expertise.

Dr. Carson challenges physicians to not only be healers of the body, but also "healers of society." Dr. Carson exemplifies this mindset. His healing extends beyond the operating room—touching lives even in the most disadvantaged sectors of society. Dr. Carson is easily one of the most practiced physicians, performing more than four hundred surgeries in a 365 day year; a case load that more than doubles that of the average neurosurgeon. Yet he still makes time to speak at countless engagements year round; uplifting others with his inspirational story and sharing his personal insight on issues such as the healthcare crisis, poverty, racial division, education, and the implications of our nation's current priorities. Dr. Carson's philosophy concerning our responsibility to heal society is definitely one that I will adopt as I continue to pursue a career in medicine.

I believe that it is essential to document the legacy that Dr. Carson has and continues to leave behind. His success and contribution to Johns Hopkins Medical Institutions has been nothing short of phenomenal. Dr. Carson's story and personal achievement is vital especially when we consider the travail of other African Americans in medicine that preceded him.

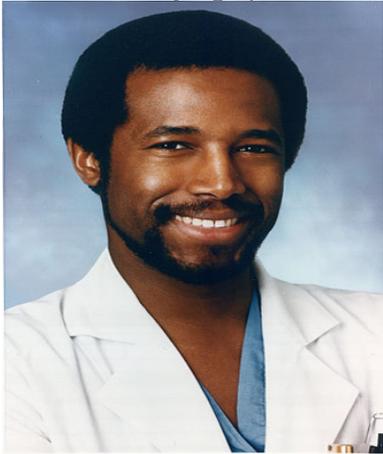
One such individual was Vivien Thomas, a black surgical technician who received little recognition for his part in pioneering groundbreaking open heart procedures at Johns Hopkins Medical Institutions some 40 years before Carson became the director of pediatric neurosurgery there. At the time, Thomas was not honored for his contributions to the Blue Baby Operation because of racial discrimination. Dr. Carson's perseverance and success is all the more noteworthy when we consider the overall atmosphere surrounding the time in which he excelled.

Even in his early years at Johns Hopkins, Dr. Carson did experience a degree of racism, but he simply chose not to invest any energy in combating it. Instead, Dr. Carson chose to invest his time and energy in focusing on the phenomenal opportunities that were presented to him in his career. I'm certain that Dr. Carson's conscious decision to focus solely on his achievements is what has led him to the level of success that he enjoys today.

My desire for this project is that many others will become inspired by Dr. Carson's story and further informed by his achievements and contributions to the Johns Hopkins Medical Institutions and the medical world beyond. Further, I hope others understand and appreciate the impact that Dr. Carson has extended beyond his successes in the operating room-- the inspirational story of a man who continues to educate and influence the world around us.

Antoinette Rainey  
Pre-med Student, Johns Hopkins University

## 2. Short Biography—Dr. Ben Carson



On March 4, 2003 I had the opportunity to hear Dr. Ben Carson give a brief synopsis of his inspirational story during a talk he entitled “The Human Brain: World’s Greatest Computer.” I chuckled at the fact that I knew his story from beginning to end as he retold it, having read *Gifted Hands* many times before. Yet, the re-telling certainly had not lost its impact. I remember recalling the irony of Carson’s lecture. There he was describing the intricacies of a neural pathway down to the smallest detail to a lecture room full of hundreds of pre-med students after having just recalled the severity of his early academic challenges in grade school.

Dr. Carson's modest beginnings are certainly what make his career success amazing and almost unfathomable—he was an inner-city kid who literally went from "class dummy" to a world-renowned pediatric neurosurgeon. Many marvel at Dr. Carson's ability to overcome what many would consider impossible odds. Dr. Carson recalled the obstacles he overcame as a youth--reared up in an impoverished broken home in Detroit Michigan, with poor grades, a violent temper, and severe low self-esteem. But despite these unfavorable circumstances Dr. Carson obtained great success.

Instrumental in young Carson's success, was his mother Sonya Carson, who performed domestic work to keep her family financially afloat. With only a third grade education herself, Sonya Carson prayed diligently for wisdom in an effort to help young Ben and his older brother Curtis succeed in school. She implemented an agenda that limited the boys' television viewing and required weekly trips to the Detroit public library. Although she could not read them, she also made it mandatory that her sons write weekly book reports. Reading spurred young Ben's interest in science so much so that he amazed his classmates with his newfound knowledge. Consequently, he rose from being the "class dummy" to the top of the class in one year.

Vigorous studying and a thirst for knowledge enabled young Carson to graduate from high school with honors and gain admission to Yale University where he went on to pursue a degree in Psychology.

While pursuing his medical degree at the University of Michigan Medical School, Dr. Carson's interest shifted from psychiatry to neurosurgery. It was then that Dr. Carson realized that his ability to visualize the brain in three-dimensions, excellent hand-eye coordination, and extensive neurological background were qualities fitting for a career as a neurosurgeon. After medical school Carson became a neurosurgery resident at the Johns Hopkins Hospital in Baltimore. That was almost thirty years ago and today Dr. Carson still practices at the institution.

Dr. Carson is currently the director of pediatric neurosurgery at The Johns Hopkins Medical Institutions, a position he has held since 1984. At age 33, Dr. Carson became the youngest physician ever to head a major division at Johns Hopkins. Dr. Carson is also professor of neurosurgery, oncology, plastic surgery, and pediatrics.

His success and contribution to Johns Hopkins Hospital has been phenomenal. Dr. Carson has received much fame and recognition for performing and mastering ground breaking surgical procedures. Dr. Carson uses his dedication and God-given talent to take on seemingly impossible operations, giving children hope for a second-chance at a healthy and normal life.

Dr. Carson began to rise to the medical forefront in 1985 when the huge article was released by the *Washington Post* about his success with the then highly unpopular and variably unsuccessful hemispherectomy operation—a dangerous operation involving removal of half of the patients brain. Dr. Carson gained much notoriety after performing

his first successful cerebral hemispherectomy on a child patient that suffered from intractable seizures. One year later, in 1986, his success in performing the 1<sup>st</sup> ever intrauterine made national news. Dr. Carson successfully performed an operation to alleviate the hydrocephalus of one of two twin babies while the baby was still in utero.

To add to an already escalating career, Dr. Carson captured world-wide media attention when he took on another radical and rare surgical procedure. In 1987, he was the principal surgeon in the 22-hour separation of the Binder Siamese twins from Germany. Dr. Carson's success was particularly noteworthy because it was the first time occipital craniopagus twins (joined at the back of head) had been separated with both babies surviving

A decade later in 1997, Dr. Carson was the lead surgeon in a team of South African and Zambian surgeons in an operation that involved the separation of vertical craniopagus twins (joined at the top of the head). It was the first time that such twins joined at that level of complexity recovered from surgery with both patients remaining neurologically normal. More than a dozen attempts had been made prior to that operation but none had been successful.

Today Dr. Carson continues to take on risky surgeries. In 2003, he attempted to separate the two adult Bijani twins from Iraq. Though unsuccessful, this had been the first attempt to separate adult craniopagus twins.

To say the least, Dr. Carson has enjoyed an amazing career. Over the years he has written over 90 neurosurgical publications. Dr. Carson is a recipient of numerous honors and awards including more than 25 honorary degrees and dozens of national citations of merit. Carson is also a member of the American Academy of Achievement, the Horatio Alger Society of Distinguished Americans, the Alpha Omega Alpha Honor Medical Society, and many other distinguished organizations. Dr. Carson sits on the board of directors of numerous organizations, including Kellogg Company, Costco Wholesale Corporation, the Yale Corporation, and America's Promise.

In addition to his academic responsibilities, Dr. Carson is a widely sought after motivational speaker who has addressed a variety of audiences ranging from grade school students to officials of the white house. In fact, in 2003 Dr. Carson was made the Bush administration's newest appointee to the President's Council on Bioethics, a position which allows him to address bioethical issues and bring moral issues to government attention.

In his work, Dr. Carson reaches beyond the scope of medicine and is deemed by many as a dedicated philanthropist. Dr. Carson is president and co-founder of the Carson Scholars Fund which recognizes young people of all backgrounds for exceptional academic and humanitarian accomplishments. Dr. Carson is also president and cofounder of the Benevolent Endowment Network Fund (The BEN Fund), an organization that works cover the medical expenses of pediatric neurosurgery patients with complex medical conditions.

When Dr. Carson is not performing surgeries, speaking at engagements, attending board

meetings, or fundraising, he is writing inspiring and uplifting books. Carson has produced three best selling books entitled *Gifted Hands*, *THINK BIG*, and *The Big Picture*, and is currently working on a fourth publication.

“I feel that the Lord is using me in a number of different ways,” says Dr. Carson. Carson also serves in his local Seventh Day Adventist church as an elder and Sabbath school teacher. Dr. Carson said “I feel that it’s a tremendous privilege to be able to intervene in people’s lives and bring about good health and prolonged health. That’s one of the best things about the medical profession.

One might ask where he finds all the time to engage in so many commitments. Ben Carson is selfless almost to a fault and his busy schedule actually led him into a bout with health issues. In 2003, Dr. Carson was diagnosed with prostate cancer which had progressed so far that it was one millimeter from reaching malignancy. Dr. Carson underwent a radical prostatectomy which has left him completely cured of the cancer today. Dr. Carson was operated on at the Johns Hopkins Medical Institution. By Dr. Walsh, a physician who actually invented the neurostetic prostatectomy.

In reference to how his outlook on life has changed since the surgery Dr. Carson said “I certainly appreciate every moment. I’ve tried to cut down on the number of operations I do. I want to spend more time with loved ones and not be a victim of death. The average neurosurgeon dies 10 years earlier than everyone else because of stress.”

The incident has forced Dr. Carson to reevaluate his scheduling and commitments to make more time to acknowledge his own health as well as spending more time with his family which consists of his wife of 28 years, Candy Carson and his three sons Murray, Benjamin Jr. and Rhoeyce.

Dr. Carson with his sons, his wife Candy, and his mother, Sonya (seated).

### **3. Dr. Carson’s Contribution to Johns Hopkins Hospital**

Mention the name Dr. Ben Carson, and most assuredly, one thinks of the Johns Hopkins Medical Institutions. With all the great contributions Dr. Carson has made as director of pediatric neurosurgery, it is not at all surprising that the hospital consistently ranks near number two in the nation for neurosurgery ( according to a yearly report on best hospitals covered by *U.S. News and World Report*). Dr. Ben Carson has definitely pioneered breakthroughs in pediatric medicine at the Johns Hopkins Hospital over the past 21 years--having performed numerous radical surgeries that few physicians would attempt.

Dr. Carson states that there were a combination factors that initially brought him to the institution. As a youth, medicine was the only career that he ever entertained from the time he was eight years old. Dr. Carson said “I was always interested, when I would hear a news story that had anything to do with medicine, even as a kid growing up in Detroit

and Boston, and frequently when they were talking about things on the news they were talking about Johns Hopkins. So it had a presence in my mind and I always sort of identified with Johns Hopkins.”

As aforementioned, Dr. Carson decided to pursue a career as a neurosurgeon when he was a medical student at the University of Michigan. Dr. Carson’s interest in the institution persisted from the time he was a kid until the end of his medical schooling at the University of Michigan. So when the time came for Dr. Carson to decide where to apply for a residency program, he definitely sought out Johns Hopkins. Dr. Carson said “I asked myself, where’s the place that’s best known for neurosurgery, and of course the answer came up once again, Johns Hopkins. Cushing, Dandy, Walter, all the big names in neurosurgery had been here. So I decided that it was going to be high on my list.”

Dr. Carson would ultimately go on to build his career upon the foundation of one of those big named surgeons. It was Walter Dandy who actually performed the first hemispherectomy at Johns Hopkins some sixty years before Dr. Carson brought the then unfavorable procedure to commonplace practice. In 1985 when he performed the operation, it was pretty much out of favor. The success of the operation marked the beginning of Dr. Carson’s fame at the renowned institution.

## The Hemispherectomy Operation ‘85

Removing half of a patient’s brain hardly sounds like an effective treatment for correcting a serious brain disorder. Yet, this daring operation has proven to be a successful method for giving Dr. Carson’s young patients a chance at living a normal life. Dr. Carson performed his first cerebral hemispherectomy in 1985, on a child patient who was experiencing more than one hundred seizures a day. As evident in his description of her in *Gifted Hands*, Carson was immediately touched by four year old Maranda’s bubbly personality. Carson stated that the little girl from Denver, Colorado would often say “I’m from Denverado.”

Carson said “I remember explaining to her parents that I’d never done a hemispherectomy before. That it was a dangerous operation, and their feeling was that she didn’t have a life now.” Despite the obvious risks, Maranda had a full and immediate recovery following the ten hour operation. The operation resulted in a great deal of recognition for Carson. Patients with similar cases poured into the doors of Johns Hopkins from all over the country. At the time there was no other effective treatment, and the hemispherectomies Carson performed proved to be a method that offered great promise.

For a surgeon that had only been around on faculty for one or two years at Johns Hopkins, Carson's publicity spurred quite a bit of criticism. Carson said, "Well, you know, people would say, 'Who is this guy Carson? I don't know who he is. This must be a bunch of crap. I don't believe this.' You know, on and on they would go. And that didn't particularly bother me. I said, they'll find out who I am soon enough."

## The Intrauterine Surgery '86

Perhaps they would find out sooner than even Carson himself had expected. One short year later, Carson gained national recognition for pioneering the first intrauterine surgery. The case was initially presented to Dr. Carson by Phil Goldstein, a director of OB/GYN at Sinai. The case involved a mother who was pregnant with a set of twins, one in which was diagnosed with hydrocephalus—a condition where fluid accumulates on the brain causing swelling and tissue death. The expansion of the baby's head had progressed so rapidly that it threatened the pregnancy, and would have resulted in the loss of both twins unless brain surgery was performed while the twins were still in the uterus.

At the time, the idea of performing brain surgery in utero was pretty radical. In reference to the operation Carson said, "It was initially actually pretty controversial, because an article had come out in the *New England Journal of Medicine* just weeks before that, saying that experimental intrauterine surgery was promising, but that we didn't have technology or the knowledge to do that now, and it probably should not be undertaken. And here we were doing this thing."

The operation was in no way publicized and afterwards when it was brought to media attention, a great deal of opposition and criticism surfaced. After the realization had sunk in that both the twins were normal and progressing well, people concurred with the operation.

Just prior to the procedure that would ultimately launch Carson's career, he remembers the conversation with his wife concerning his fame following the intrauterine surgery. Dr. Carson said "If anything else comes up, our lives are going to change, because the media isn't stupid. If something else happens, they're going to say, 'Wait a minute. Isn't that the same guy who did the hemispherectomy? Isn't that the same guy who did intrauterine? Wait a minute. Who is this guy?' And then they're going to start delving into my background and they're going to see that this guy came from a horrible background and is now chief of pediatric neurosurgery at Johns Hopkins, and things are going to go bananas." Actually, that's exactly what happened. Dr. Carson chanced upon the opportunity to separate a set of craniopagus twins, which are extremely rare.

## **Separating the Binder Twins '87**

To add to an already escalating career, Carson's reputation for doing the impossible really dominated media attention when he separated conjoined twins Patrick and Benjamin Binder, both named after the primary surgeons in the operation. The occipital craniopagus twins (joined at the back of the head) from Germany shared much of the same vasculature.

Dr. Carson mentioned that he had been interested in operating on Siamese twins long before the Binder twins came along. He had been speculating that death from the operation resulted from an inability to prevent exsanguination—the excessive draining of blood from patients during the operation.

After consulting the chief of cardiac surgery, Dr. Bruce Reitz, Carson decided that the heart could be arrested during the operation to prevent excessive bleeding. The blood could be pumped back up again once the operation was done. At the time, Carson had merely been toying with the idea since Siamese twins are extremely rare and occur as few as one in every 200,000 births.

Coincidentally, a few months later the Patrick and Benjamin Binder case was presented to Dr. Carson and he immediately jumped at the opportunity. The procedure involved induced hypothermia, deliberate cardiac arrest and circulatory bypass. It was the first time such a surgical technique had been employed.

Prior to the separation of the Binder twins, no doctor had been able to successfully separate craniopagus twins without causing the death of one or both twins. The operation was exceedingly complex mainly because craniopagus twins share many critical blood vessels. The twenty-two hour surgery involved closing off, severing, replacing, and rerouting the mass of entangled blood vessels shared between the twins. What was particularly difficult about the operation was deciding which twin relied most heavily on which blood vessels and rerouting them accordingly. After a twenty-two hour surgery, both of the boys survived the operation. However, severe disabilities resulted.

## **Separating the South African Twins '97**

In 1997, Dr. Carson performed an even more complicated operation on a set of vertical craniopagus twins (connected at the top of head) from Zambia. Unlike the operation he had performed ten years earlier, the twenty-eight hour operation of the Joseph and Luka Banda resulted in complete recovery following the operation. It actually was the first time that craniopagus twins had been separated and been neurologically normal.

What accounted for the success? It seems that the new decade brought with it an advanced technology that actually allowed Dr. Carson to experience the operation before he actually performed it. Dr Carson said “One of the reasons I was able to do that [the operation] successfully was because of something that happened here, and that is we have the virtual workbench here. So I was able to separate the twins and study them in virtual reality before I went over there to South Africa.”

The virtual workbench had actually been developed by a radiologist and a medical university in Singapore. What adds to the amazement of the circumstance was that many legal entanglements involved in the use of the virtual workbench followed the Banda twins’ operation. Those entanglements prevented the virtual workbench from being commonplace for years following the Banda twins’ operation. Fortunately, Carson had been able to employ the technology before the use was prohibited

Cason said “I didn't have my \$350,000 Zeiss operating microscope that I have at Hopkins or my \$400,000 3-D wand or my lasers or my ultrasounds or any of that fancy equipment. The only equipment Carson had was his loupes and a scalpel. Surely the virtual workbench had offered him a huge advantage that may have made the difference of life or death for the Banda twins.

Today, the virtual workbench is now commonplace for surgeries. In fact, just last year Dr. Carson used the virtual workbench to prepare for the operation to separate craniopagus twins Lea and Tabea Block. “A 3-D Virtual Workbench integrated the twins’ angiogram, CT and MRI studies into a single hologram floating in the black space of a computer console. Using hand levers, surgeons were able to manipulate and study the images and, in essence, “practice” the surgery in advance.”

## **Attempted Separation of the Adult Bijani Twins ‘03**

For Ben Carson, radical operations are not a thing of the past. In 2003, Dr. Carson was a member of a team of surgeons in Singapore operating on twenty-nine year old Ladan and Laleh Bijani, adult conjoined twins from Iran. Prior to the operation, no attempt had been made to separate adult craniopagus twins.

Dr. Carson had warned the Iranian sisters that there was a fifty –percent chance that either or both of them would die during the operation. But they were willing to risk death for the opportunity to live separate lives—and unfortunately that is exactly what happened. After a fifty-five hour operation exsanguination ensued and both women died in the operating room.

Dr. Carson said “As we were well into the operation, it became clear to me that we should stop the operation due to vascular complication. They were still in terrific shape, their brains were healthy, and we could study the vascular shifts and come up with a strategy. The family said, "Absolutely not! If they woke up and they were still together, the level of depression would kill them." The surgical team proceeded with the surgery at the request of the family. After the twins were separated severe hemorrhaging ensued and the twins died a short while after.

## Seeing Dr. Carson’s Big Picture

It’s very likely that Dr. Carson will continue to embark upon these unconventional surgeries throughout the remainder of his career. Dr. Carson is not afraid to take risks. After all, risk-taking is what has allowed him to enjoy a successful career. Carson sees risks as learning opportunities which eventually lead to better healthcare and better procedures.

In the book *the Big Picture*, Carson explains how low he felt after an unsuccessful separation of South African craniopagus twin sisters—an operation he had performed in 1994 before that of Joseph and Luka Banda. For two and a half years Dr. Carson could not fathom why God had allowed him to become involved in an operation that was impossible to fix.

After the operation an autopsy had revealed that the Makwaeba twins were completely symbiotic, sharing heart and kidney functions. They were only able to survive as long as they had because they were conjoined. Dr. Carson was again presented with another rare operation that he would understand the implications of the failed first procedure. The failed operation with the Makwaeba twins essentially served as preparation for the remarkable operation with the Banda twins. It would serve as a blueprint for the first operation producing neurologically normal patients.

Dr. Carson said "There is almost nothing in science that we do perfectly from the beginning." Carson’s “big picture” perspective allows him to understand that risks and plight ultimately work to fine tune medical procedures. This mindset has allowed Carson to prosper all throughout his twenty-eight year career at Johns Hopkins. .

## 4. A healer beyond the OR

As aforementioned, Dr. Carson invests a great deal of his time in his humanitarian endeavors. Dr. Carson tries to squeeze as many speaking engagements into an already hectic schedule in effort to use every opportunity to influence youth. Dr. Carson has a natural affinity towards aiding youth.

Dr. Carson said, "I made a commitment to myself that at every opportunity, I'd encourage young people. As I became more well-known and started getting more

opportunities to speak, I decided that teaching kids how to set goals and achieve them would be a constant theme of mine. Nowadays I get so many requests, I can't accept anywhere near all of them. Yet, I try to do as much as I can for young people without neglecting my family and my duties at Johns Hopkins."

## **Diagnosing our nation's education issues : The Carson's Scholars Fund**

"My biggest thing, really, is about education and the United States of America, and the fact that we are a pinnacle nation, and other pinnacle nations have faltered and met their demise because they did the same thing that we're doing. They became enamored of sports and entertainment, lifestyles of the rich and famous. They lost their moral compass, they forgot what made them great, they went down the tubes."

One of Carson's major concerns involves the subtle message that our nation conveys to youth. Carson's qualm is that too often we place athletes on pedestals while youth who seek academic excellence receive less praise and recognition. Consequently, children place a higher value in sports and entertainment. Though neither of these things do harm, they take emphasis away from developing the bright young minds which will be needed to contribute to our country in the future. To help alleviate this problem Carson and his wife Candy began what is now the Carson Scholars Fund in 1994. This endeavor recognizes students in grades 4-11 for academic and humanitarian achievement.

"My goals for the future are to really have a Carson Scholar in every school in the United States. I want every 4th- and 5th-grader to recognize that they can be on the same kind of pedestal as the all-star basketball player or wrestler through superior academic performance and humanitarian efforts"

Carson's hope for the Fund is primarily to help our nation's youth remain competitive with children from other countries in science, math, and technology. Another focus is to try to change perception of high academic achievers among their peers across our nation. The rationale is that students that pursue academics will be admired and recognized as well as athletes. This, in turn, may help influence other students to also aspire to excellence.

## **Diagnosing our nation's healthcare issues: The Benevolent Endowment Network Fund, Inc**

*(The BEN Fund)*

Ben Carson is truly an advocate for his patients. As a physician, he understands first hand, many of the social issues that prevent patients with complex neurological disorders from affording operations. In many fronts, Dr. Carson has been active in healthcare

reform. Carson not only speaks and writes about reform, he also does something about it. In 2002, Dr. Carson co-founded the Benevolent Endowment Fund to help cover the medical expenses of uninsured patients with complex medical conditions.

Through this endeavor, Dr. Carson's vision of providing greater access to health care for children will become a reality. Carson said "Just think about it: One-seventh of our economy is related to medicine. If we were smart enough to put 10 percent of that away each year, for 10 to 15 years, we'd be talking about a base of \$3 trillion. Imagine what you could do with the interest on that: You could take care of the 40 million people who have no insurance -- and a lot more than that."

Dr. Carson states that if this practical method is used over the course of 10 to 15 years of collecting interest, we can start discussing free healthcare. Dr. Carson explains that it actually wouldn't be free but paid for.

Dr. Carson has been diagnosing problems and carrying a prescription for many of the issue we are challenged by. As a doctor, teacher, leader, and humanitarian, Dr. Carson continues to educate and influence others to heal the largest problem areas in our society.



## 5. Resources

### Books

*Gifted Hands: The Ben Carson Story*, by Ben Carson, M.D., Harper Paperbacks, 1993.

*The Big Picture: Getting Perspective on What's Really Important in Life*, by Ben Carson, M.D. Zondervan Publishing House, 1999.

*Think Big: Unleashing Your Potential For Excellence*, by Ben Carson, M.D., Zondervan Publishing House, 1992.

### Websites

<http://www.carsonscholars.org/>

<http://www.benfund.org/>

<http://www.drben Carson.com/>

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### Articles

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<http://www.centerpointforleaders.org/leadership/carson.html>

### **Interviews**

<http://www.achievement.org/autodoc/page/car1bio-1>

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**Mame Warren--17 December 1999**

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