

Negro Physicians  
(Peterson, JS)

GOBIERNO DE PUERTO RICO  
DEPARTAMENTO DE SANIDAD  
SERVICIO DE TUBERCULOSIS

Mayaguez, P. R., April 19, 1940.

P. O. Box 715 *air mail*

Dr. M. O. Bousfield,  
Director for Negro Health,  
Julius Rosenwald Fund,  
4901 Ellis Avenue,  
Chicago, Ill.

*DOB 4/22 MDS 04*  
*see MDS's letter of 4/18/40*

Dear Dr. Bousfield:

I have received quite a detailed report from Dr. Owen's office about the proposed Health Center for Negroes in Philadelphia and enclose a copy of it and a copy of my answer to Dr. Owen.

As far as salary is concerned I gathered from my correspondence with you that the Administrator might be taken into the State at his present salary, yet Dr. Owen suggests a permanent figure less than my present salary.

I had also understood there was quite an urgent need for the Administrator at present, even to the extent of Dr. Owen's wishing to make a temporary appointment until I could get there yet Dr. Tracy writes me:

"The work on the building which is being rehabilitated will probably not be completed until the middle of the summer and it is doubtful if the services of an Administrator will be needed much before then first of September."

and farther on:

"As soon as the money actually received from the Rosenwald Fund, we shall be in a position to make financial commitments with respect to Staff appointments and other details."

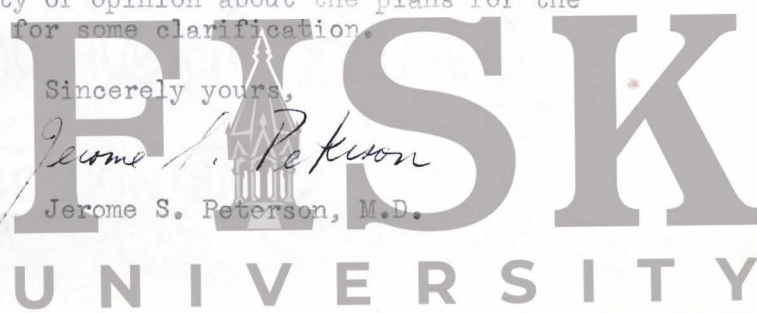
I have, as you see in my letter to Dr. Owen, given what I consider strong reasons for the Administrator being in on the ground floor of the project immediately.

With such a diversity of opinion about the plans for the Administrator I appeal to you for some clarification.

Sincerely yours,

*Jerome S. Peterson*

Jerome S. Peterson, M.D.



P.O. Box 715

Mayaguez

April 19

40

Dr. Hubley R. Owen, Director  
Department of Public Health  
Philadelphia, Pa.

Dear Dr. Owen,

Dr. Tracy has replied quite amply to my letter of April 5th, 1940 concerning the projected Health Center for Negroes in Philadelphia. The scope of the work excites me a great deal and I feel the project will be a very satisfying one. I have read the report on the area, its people, and the few vital statistics with great interest.


The suggested salary for the administrator I find small. My present salary of \$3600 is actually as well as considerably relatively greater when account is taken of relative living costs in Philadelphia and Puerto Rico. I had thought the entrance salary would have been at least \$4000.

Pending your receiving the money from the Rosenwald Fund I should think the presence of the Administrator immediately on the spot during the rehabilitation of the building, the budget making, personnel selection, and equipment choosing would be of great importance. Should I be selected Administrator I would find it much more difficult to walk in cold on an already constructed and organized Center than if I had had a hand in the organizing of it. There is also the question of getting acquainted with the area and population to be served, the medical profession, voluntary agencies, and any other organizations in the area.

Should you think it advisable and possible to bring me to Philadelphia soon may I please hear from you at your earliest convenience by air-mail (ten cents to Puerto Rico). The Commissioner of Health of Puerto Rico is leaving in May for a couple of months and it will be necessary for me to clear this with him. If you find it impossible to arrange for my immediate joining your staff, will you please indicate definitely how far you are committed toward me - am I definitely being offered the position and shall I plan definitely towards my removal to Philadelphia by September first at the latest? Should you not be able to make any definite commitment toward me may I know so as to pursue other plans?

Very truly yours,

Jerome S. Peterson, M.D.

  
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Department of Public Health  
Office of the Director  
City Hall Square  
Philadelphia

April 10th, 1940

Dr. Jerome S. Peterson,  
Departamento De Sanidad,  
Servicio de Tuberculosis,  
P.O.Box 715,  
Mayaguez, P.R.

Dear Dr. Peterson:

Dr. Owen has asked me to reply to your letter of April 5th, 1940 just received and I am glad to answer your questions regarding the proposed Health Center for negroes which we are preparing to open in Philadelphia with the help of a gift from the Rosenwald Fund, under the jurisdiction of this department

The scope of the work proposed includes:

1. The continued conduct under the Division of Child Hygiene of the Department of Public Health of a center for maternal and child health, nutrition classes, immunological service for preschool and school children and dental clinics for school children.
2. In addition, arrangements are being consummated for the placing in the new Health Center, one of the tuberculosis clinics operated by the Philadelphia Health Council and Tuberculosis Committee, with the cooperation of Phipps Institute of Philadelphia, which will be transferred from another address in the district to the new plant.

This Health Council is the local branch of the Pennsylvania Association for Prevention of Tuberculosis, and will contribute a monthly sum toward the maintenance of the center in lieu of rent.

3. We anticipate, also, the placing in the Center, a clinic for prevention and treatment of venereal disease, in which the personnel and financial support will be under the direction of the Pennsylvania State Division of Syphilis and Genito-Infectious Diseases.
4. Also, headquarters for the Visiting Nurse Society of Philadelphia will probably be accommodated in our building.

The Director of the Department of Public Health is to be authoritative head of this enterprise. The Administrator of the Center is not a Civil Service appointee, but is appointed by the Director of Public Health.

Such Administrator must be a negro physician qualified by special training and experience in public health matters. The suggested salary is \$3,500 a year. The tenure of office, subject of course to mutual satisfaction, would coincide with the appointment of the Director of Public Health, but there would be every expectation of reappointment by a succeeding Director, since the appointment would be

non-political and not under Civil Service control.

The Budget of the Center is comprised of a fund supplied by contribution made from the Rosenwald fund, which in addition to equipping the Center, it is expected will provide for the salary of the Administrator for two (2) years.

The City Department of Public Health will continue to carry the child hygiene, immunological and dental clinics as at present; the venereal and tuberculosis divisions will be financed by the organizations referred to above.

When this entire project was discussed some two years ago, Council of the City of Philadelphia agreed to accept responsibility for a maintenance fund up to \$20,000 to continue the work of the center, after the gift from the Rosenwald Fund was exhausted. It is hoped such support will be resumed when necessary.

I am enclosing herewith a summary of population and health conditions in the area to be served, in which a large proportion of the population are negroes, but there are also whites who will patronize the clinic.

The Staff will include both negro and white physicians and nurses.

It is not possible at this time to give you a complete statement of the budget planned for this undertaking. Indeed, the help of the Administrator who may be appointed would be of value in compiling such detail budget.

The work on the building which is being rehabilitated will probably not be completed until the middle of the summer and it is doubtful if the services of an Administrator will be needed much before the first of September.

You asked for the latest report of the activities of the Department of Public Health of Philadelphia and I am sending you under separate cover the 1938 Annual Report of the City. You will find on pages 275 to 581 the report of the Department of Health. The 1939 report is not off the press as yet.

Dr. Owen will be glad to hear further from you if there are other questions that occur to you in this connection.

As soon as the money is actually received from the Rosenwald Fund, we shall be in a position to make financial commitments with respect to Staff appointments and other details.

Very truly yours,

Martha Tracy, M.D.,  
Assistant Director.

TC

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