



Richard E. Meiers, HAH president and CEO from 1990 to 2009.

Richard E. Meiers was the president and CEO of the Healthcare Association of Hawaii (HAH) for 19 years, from July 9, 1990 to August 21, 2009. HAH is the nonprofit trade association for the hospitals, nursing homes, assisted living facilities, home care and hospice companies. It has close to 180 members across the healthcare continuum in Hawaii, and is the state affiliate of the American Hospital Association, the American Health Care Association, and the National Association for Home Care and Hospice.

Rich came to HAH after a distinguished 30-year military career, which included serving as the Chief of Staff at Tripler Army Medical Center and retiring with the rank of colonel.

He was president of the board of St. Francis Healthcare System of Hawaii, and was the first board member who was not a nun. He also served on the boards of the Hawaii Health Systems Corporation, the Organ Donor Center of Hawaii, Catholic Charities, and Mountain Pacific Quality Health Foundation. He was also a Fellow of the American College of Healthcare Executives, and served on the Governor's Blue Ribbon Panel on Health Care.

During his tenure he worked to maintain and increase reimbursements to healthcare providers, address the shortage of nurses and other health care professionals, and reduce the number of patients in hospitals who are waitlisted for long term care.

He was instrumental in incorporating home care agencies and hospice providers into the Healthcare Association of Hawaii, thereby creating the only association in the nation with hospital, long term care, and home care and hospice members.

During his presidency HAH also became one of the founding supporters of the Farrington Health Academy, which helps high school students explore health care careers, and which was designed to address Hawaii's healthcare workforce needs. This year the academy graduated its 26th class. Graduates have gone on to careers as physicians, nurses, physical therapists, certified nursing assistants, dental hygienists, and other professionals in the healthcare field.

When Rich retired in 2009, HAH created the Rich Meiers Healthcare Administration Scholarship in his honor at the Hawaii Community Foundation. Each year, a student studying healthcare administration is selected to receive the scholarship and the recipient is invited to attend the HAH Awards and Scholarship Gala in the fall.

"Hawaii is a better place because of Rich Meiers. His hard work and dedication to quality healthcare has meant better care for all," said HAH President and CEO Hilton Raethel. "Here at HAH we are saddened by the news of his passing, and send our condolences to his family. He was part of the HAH `ohana for a long time, and remained an emeritus member of HAH for many years. We will miss him."