

Herald-Tribune

Family physician Fleener wins national award

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Dr. Carola Fleener was recently named physician of the year by the American Academy of Specialists in Family Medicine, a national affiliate of the American Association of Physician Specialists. Fleener is the co-owner of the Sarasota Children's Clinic, which she operates with her daughter, Dr. Barbara Fleener.

The award recognizes Fleener's contributions to the growth, recognition, and leadership within the American Academy of Specialists in Family Medicine



Fleener was featured in the Herald-Tribune's series on Florida's Medicaid program, "2 Million Kids. \$24 Billion Battle," which highlighted her struggle to maintain her practice in the face of shrinking reimbursement from the state program.

The Sarasota Children's Clinic primarily serves Medicaid-enrolled children, and Fleener continues to accept new patients regardless of their insurance status. She, her daughter and nearly all of her office staff speak Spanish and English.

Fleener has been active with the American Academy of Specialists in Family Medicine since 2003 and served in leadership roles with the group in recent years.

Born and raised in South America, Fleener received her medical degree from the University of Carabobo in Venezuela. She furthered her training at the University of South Florida medical school and at Johns Hopkins All Children's Hospital in St. Petersburg.