



Hector Perez Garcia
Médico sem Fronteiras.

Hector Perez Garcia nasceu no dia 17 de janeiro de 1914, na cidade de Llera, no México. Em 1917, devido à Revolução Mexicana, fugiu com sua família para o Texas.

Em 1929, alistou-se no Exército dos Estados Unidos e foi condecorado com a patente de segundo-tenente. Graduiu-se em Zoologia na Universidade do Texas e, em 1940, doutorou-se em Medicina.

Com o fim da Guerra em 1945, retornou para o Texas, onde começou a praticar a medicina com um dos seus irmãos. Seu intuito era assistir os pacientes, mesmo que estes não tivessem condições de arcar com o tratamento. Acometido por nefrite, necessitou de hospitalização. Vendo sua saúde tão fragilizada, prometeu que se fosse curado dedicaria sua vida à luta pelo povo. Batalhava pela igualdade e pelos direitos humanos.

Hector Perez García was born on January 17, 1914, at the town of Llera, in Mexico. In 1917, because of the Mexican Revolution, he fled to Texas with his family.

In 1929, he joined the United States Army and reached the rank of second lieutenant. He graduated in Zoology at the University of Texas; and, in 1940, he earned his doctorate in Medicine.

With the war over in 1945, García returned to Texas, where he began to practice Medicine with one of his brothers. His aim was to provide medical assistance even if patients could not afford to pay for treatment. Affected by nephritis, he needed to be hospitalized. Moved owing to his fragile health, he promised that in case he recovered, he would dedicate life to his people, fighting for equality and human rights.

As an altruistic person, García became interested in the working conditions of Mexican immigrants to the United States. He was faced with an alarming situation: employees working in unfavorable and completely unhealthy environments. Worried about this reality, he got together some people in search for solutions to that situation, what resulted in the foundation of the American GI Forum. The organization intended to combat discrimination against

immigrants from Mexico. It also aspired to improve their educational and professional formation, besides their housing conditions and the medical care they received.

Determined to fight for the rights of his people, who worked for America's economic growth, Doctor García went before the National Advisory Committee on Farm Labor, asserting that the immigrants' situation was a case of national emergency. After his speech, he managed to call the government's attention as well as that of some means of communication, such as the New York Times and the Look magazine, which published articles about the issues he defended.

He achieved his goals and stood out in the United States being awarded honor prizes and medals, such as the Presidential Medal of Freedom by President Ronald Reagan, the highest civilian honor in the United States. He also received the MAPA Award, granted by the Mexican-American Physicians' Organization, due to the excellent service rendered to Hispanics in the whole American state, among others.

García died on July 26, 1996, leaving us the inheritance of a brilliant career, which still in our days is an inspiration for the new generation of Americans.