

INSPIRATION



Dr. Anthony L. Jordan was said to have never turned anyone away. "Tell the Lord about me. There'll be no charge," he would tell patients. PETER PIETRANGELO PHOTO ILLUSTRATION; DEMOCRAT AND CHRONICLE FILE PHOTO

Rochester's 2nd Black physician known for generosity, house calls

Alan Morrell Special to the Rochester Democrat and Chronicle

Dr. Anthony L. Jordan was Rochester's second Black physician, but he's known far more today as the namesake of the Anthony L. Jordan Center. • That center is part of the Jordan Health Network, whose mission is to provide comprehensive health care "with dignity and respect to all regardless of ability to pay." It's a fitting tribute to the doctor who was said to have never turned anyone away.

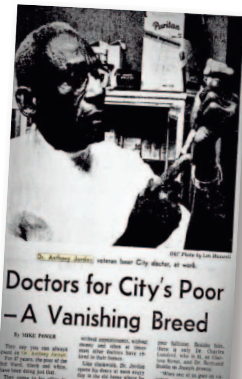
Jordan established his medical practice at 136 Adams St. in 1932 during the Great Depression and served patients for decades, frequently caring for the poor who had no place else to go and, often, no way to pay.

According to a February 2019 article written by Christopher Brennan for the Rochester Public Library's Local History & Genealogy Division, Jordan soon found that much of his business came from the city's Seventh Ward, a multicultural area in northeast Rochester including North Clinton, Joseph and Hudson Avenues.

"Then as now, the neighborhood was largely working class and poor, and though many doctors would not serve its population, Dr. Jordan did," Brennan wrote of Jordan. "He was known as 'the doctor who would come,' when and where he was needed."

Jordan and his family lived above his office in Corn Hill until 1960. Patients came by at all hours. One of Jordan's daughters, Katherine, said in a news story, "It got so that people were sitting on the porch, sitting on the steps. There were a lot of sick people."

A native of what is now Guyana, Jordan immigrated to the U.S. for college, enrolled at Howard University and practiced in North Carolina and



Dr. Anthony Jordan pictured at work in 1969. Patients who couldn't afford a bill sometimes paid him in pies or flour or a book. Jordan made house calls for decades and only stopped because of failing eyesight. He died in 1971. ROCHESTER DEMOCRAT AND CHRONICLE FILE PHOTO

downstate in New York before coming to Rochester.

In the mid-1960s, Jordan received the New York State Medical Society's presidential citation for outstanding service in his profession. When he was honored at a 1967 dinner, Jordan said, "The doors of doctors' offices are open to all, whether they have money or not."

Patients who couldn't afford a bill sometimes paid him in pies or flour or a book. Jordan made house calls for decades and only stopped because of failing eyesight.

When Jordan died in 1971, a friend said in his obituary that he would tell patients, "Tell the Lord about me. There'll be no charge."

The benevolent spirit continues to this day — and Jordan family ties remain. A great-granddaughter of Dr. Jordan, Greer Gladney, is a digital marketing and administrative assistant with the organization.

"What's always impressed on me is how much a center of the community this (place) is," Gladney said in interview published in 2020. "The dedication to the service and the work, that's what's most important."

Alan Morrell is a former Democrat and Chronicle reporter and a freelance writer. A longer version of this story was originally published in February 2020 as part of the RocRoots series.