

Biography of Michelle Silva Dern, M.D., F.A.A.P.

Dr. Michelle Silva Dern is a board-certified pediatrician whose career has been defined by excellence in clinical care and leadership within the pediatric community. With over two decades of experience, she is recognized for her dedication to children's health, her expertise in adoption medicine, and her commitment to advancing pediatric care both locally and globally.

Dr. Dern earned her Bachelor of Arts degree in Animal Physiology from the University of California, San Diego, in 1989 before completing her Doctor of Medicine at the University of Texas Southwestern Medical School in Dallas in 1993. She returned to UC San Diego for her pediatric training, completing her internship and residency before serving as Chief Resident.

Her career began in 1997 at UC San Diego in the Pediatric and Adolescent Medicine clinic where she served as Associate Clinical Professor of Pediatrics, mentoring medical students and residents. In 2006 she entered private practice at El Camino Pediatrics, where she worked as a full-time pediatrician and adoption medicine consultant for ten years. Since 2016, Dr. Dern has been a full-time pediatrician at Scripps Coastal Medical Center in Encinitas and maintains privileges at Scripps Memorial Hospital, La Jolla. In addition to her clinical work, she has contributed as an expert medical witness.

Beyond her direct patient care, Dr. Dern has been an influential leader within the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP). She served over a decade on the Executive Board of the American Academy of Pediatrics, California Chapter 3 (AAP-CA3- San Diego and Imperial Counties), starting as Treasurer, then Secretary, Vice President, President, and finally serving in the role of Immediate Past President, shaping policies and programs that support children's health across the region. She continues to serve on the Chapter Advisory Committee, School Health Committee, Reach Out and Read San Diego Advisory Committee, and as Chair of the AAP-CA3 Infectious Disease Committee. At the state level, she contributed to the AAP California Finance and Executive Committees.

Her service extends into hospital and community leadership as well. At Scripps, she has been active on the Vaccine Committee since 2016 and previously contributed to the Physician Well-Being Committee. She also plays an ongoing role in advancing pediatric education, serving as a preceptor for UCSD medical students and pediatric residents and participating as a Professor Rounds panelist at Rady Children's Hospital teaching conferences. Dr. Dern's dedication to service extends internationally. In 2018, she joined the Loloma Foundation as a medical volunteer in the Solomon Islands, bringing pediatric expertise to underserved communities abroad.

Outside of medicine, Dr. Dern enjoys hiking, vegan cooking, reading, theater, and pickleball. Her career reflects not only professional achievement and leadership but also a deep passion for education, advocacy, and improving the well-being of children and families. Congratulations to Dr. Dern on attaining the AAP-CA3 2024 Bronwen Anders Pediatrician of the Year!