Pathologists Honored with Top Awards in Medical and Graduate Teaching (See Comment)

Two outstanding Pathology educators won special honors from their students in the graduate and medical schools this year, walking away with three of Emory’s highest awards for teaching.

Assistant Professor Douglas Parker, D.D.S., M.D., was not only elected as the honorary faculty member in this year’s graduating medical class, but also was named as the 2011 recipient of the Evangeline Papageorge Distinguished Teaching Award. Considered among the most prestigious faculty awards offered by Emory and the School of Medicine, the Papageorge Award is bestowed each year on a medical faculty member “whose intellectual luminosity has generated the greatest excitement about learning among student and colleagues.” The award honors the legacy of Dr. Papageorge, who taught biochemistry at Emory from 1929 to 1956, was the first woman appointed to the School’s full-time faculty, and later became its first Dean of Students. Dr. Parker, a dermatopathologist who practices at Emory University Hospital and Grady who is also the longtime co-Director of Medical Education in Pathology, received the Award during School of Medicine commencement exercises on May 9th. In so doing, he became the third Pathology faculty to claim this award in its 19-year history, joining Drs Whit Sewell (1994) and Bhagirath Majmudar (2005).

At an earlier ceremony, on February 21st, Associate Professor James Zimring, M.D., Ph.D., was handed the 2011 Crystal Apple Award for Excellence in Graduate School Education from Emory’s Laney Graduate School. The Award is given annually to honor a faculty member who goes “above and beyond in the search for knowledge and involvement in the Emory community.” As a clinician-investigator who specializes in the immunology of blood transfusion, Dr Zimring was recognized for inspiring and supporting the students and fellows in his own laboratory, and also for being a role model for trainees in Emory’s graduate program in Immunology and Molecular Pathogenesis, of which he has been a member since 2002 and Director of Graduate Education since 2010. In addition to lecturing regularly in other graduate courses, Dr Zimring launched a highly regarded graduate seminar on Critical Thinking in Immunology in 2002, which he has taught single-handedly most years since.

Comment: Great teaching comes from the heart. These prizes are just a small example of the personal rewards it can bring as it shapes the future of science, medicine, and society. Congratulations to our Pathology colleagues who do it so extraordinarily well.
Assistant Professor Adeboye Osunkoya, M.D., has taken on new responsibilities as coordinator of our Grand Rounds series, which features six to eight distinguished lecturers each year on diagnostic or investigative pathology and related topics. Dr. Osunkoya is a specialist in genitourinary pathology who divides his service time between Emory University Hospital and the VA.

Assistant Professor Gabriel Sica, M.D., Ph.D., has been named a Distinguished Cancer Clinician and Scientist by the Georgia Cancer Coalition (GCC), which invests funds from the state’s tobacco settlement to advance cancer care and research. Dr. Sica, who specializes in pulmonary pathology and oversees tissue-banking programs with the Winship Cancer Institute, will receive five years of GCC support, joining two other current and two prior GCC Scholars in our Department.

Two Pathology faculty members have been selected to join the Master of Science in Clinical Research degree program this fall, with full tuition support from the NIH-sponsored Atlanta Clinical and Translational Science Institute (ACTSI). Assistant Professor Colleen Kraft, M.D., (our Assistant Medical Director of Microbiology) and Anne Winkler, M.D., (currently a Transfusion Medicine fellow, who joins our faculty in July) will pursue a two-year course of didactic and mentored practical training designed to enhance their preparation for successful careers in clinical investigation. Dr. Kraft was also awarded two years of salary support from the ACTSI for her mentored research project, which will employ deep sequencing to illuminate the genetics of vancomycin resistance in Staphylococcus infections.

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