

AGA announces prestigious recognition award recipients

EurekaAlert

Each year, the American Gastroenterological Association (AGA) honors several individuals for their outstanding contributions and achievements in gastroenterology through its prestigious recognition awards.

"The AGA recognition award recipients are individuals who have been nominated by their colleagues for achieving the highest level of esteem and confidence from their peers," said Ian L. Taylor, MD, PhD, AGAF, president of the AGA Institute. "The AGA is honored to have members who are the leaders of our field and who have made truly remarkable contributions to the AGA and society. These individuals are just a few of the distinguished and talented members who help make AGA such an accomplished organization."

The AGA congratulates the 2011 awardees and thanks them for their exemplary service to the field of gastroenterology.

Julius Friedenwald Medal

AGA's highest honor is awarded to David A. Peura, MD, AGAF, Emeritus professor of medicine at the University of Virginia School of Medicine. The Julius Friedenwald Medal, presented annually since 1941, recognizes a physician for lifelong contributions to the field of gastroenterology. Dr. Peura has contributed significantly to the AGA throughout his career, including as president of the organization in 2005 and as vice chair of the AGA Foundation for Digestive Health and Nutrition (FDHN) from 2006 to 2009. He received AGA's Distinguished Educator Award in 2002 and is a founding member of the AGA Research Foundation's (formerly FDHN) Legacy Society, in which he continues to be heavily involved.

Distinguished Achievement Award

The AGA awards the 2011 Distinguished Achievement Award to Sidney J. Winawer, MD, AGAF, the Paul Sherlock chair in medicine at Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center. This award honors an individual who has made a major specific accomplishment in clinical or basic research in gastroenterology or an allied field that advances gastroenterology. Dr. Winawer is recognized for his landmark contributions to colorectal cancer (CRC) prevention and colon polyp management. His work has been the scientific basis for the growth of colonoscopy that has transformed gastroenterological practice and CRC prevention.

Distinguished Mentor Award

The AGA honors Chung Owyang, MD, chief of the gastroenterology division of the

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University of Michigan, with its Distinguished Mentor Award, which recognizes an individual for his or her achievements as an outstanding mentor over a lifelong career. Dr. Owyang has been an active member of the AGA, including serving as chair of the International Committee and being awarded the AGA Joseph B. Kirsner Award for Clinical Research in Gastroenterology. Dr. Owyang has also brought the AGA closer to Asia through a series of joint international meetings between AGA and several Asian countries.

Distinguished Educator Award

The AGA presents its Distinguished Educator Award to Helen Shields, MD, AGAF, for her achievements as an outstanding educator over a lifelong career. Dr. Shields has won national and international acclaim for her teaching and mentoring, and has an outstanding reputation in faculty development at the local, national and international levels. An active member of the AGA, she is the education and training councillor on the AGA Institute Governing Board. Dr. Shields is a professor of medicine at Harvard Medical School and a physician in the department of medicine, division of gastroenterology at Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center.

Research Service Award

The AGA Research Service Award for 2011 is presented to James Everhart, MD, MPH. This award recognizes an individual who has significantly advanced gastroenterological science and research. Dr. Everhart is the chief of the epidemiology and clinical trials branch in the division of digestive diseases and nutrition at the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases. As a nationally and internationally recognized expert on the epidemiology of digestive diseases, he continues to contribute to the understanding of a broad range of gastroenterological diseases.

Distinguished Clinician Awards

The Distinguished Clinician Award acknowledges exemplary leadership and excellence in the practice of gastroenterology. The AGA is proud to be awarding this honor to two deserving individuals.

Ioannis Danielides, MD, is a private practitioner and a consultant in gastroenterology to the Hygeia Hospital in Athens, Greece. As a result of his interest in gastrointestinal motility disorders, Dr. Danielides established one of the first motility units at the Hygeia Hospital. As chief of gastroenterology, he supervises a modern endoscopy unit and had contributed to the introduction of modern governance with impartial credential and review procedures.

William J. Tremaine, MD, AGAF, is a consultant, internal medicine and gastroenterology, at the Mayo Clinic Medical School and Foundation, the director of the Mayo Foundation Office of Human Research Protection, and a professor of medicine at the Mayo Clinic College of Medicine. Dr. Tremaine is a consummate physician who is widely respected for his ability to solve the most complex issues in patients with inflammatory bowel diseases.

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Outstanding Service Award

The AGA presents Carla H. Ginsburg, MD, AGAF, with the AGA Outstanding Service Award in recognition of her contributions and dedication to supporting programs to further AGA's commitment to public service. As chair of the social conscience task force, Dr. Ginsburg developed and organized the Massachusetts Free Colonoscopy Day in March 2009, followed by the AGA's first National Colorectal Cancer Screening and Awareness Day in 2010 and 2011, with plans to expand the program in 2012. Dr. Ginsburg is the chair-elect of the AGA Public Affairs and Advocacy Committee and is an assistant clinical professor of medicine at Harvard Medical School, and an attending physician in private practice at Newton-Wellesley Hospital.

The awardees, announced during Digestive Disease Week[®] (DDW), are nominated by their peers and undergo a rigorous review process. Nominations can be made by the AGA Institute Governing Board, council section chairs, committee chairs, task force chairs and membership-at-large; deans of U.S. medical schools and academic-based chiefs of medicine; chiefs of surgery and pediatrics; GI division chiefs and training directors of major academic institutions; and trainee members of the AGA. Applications are reviewed by the AGA Research Policy Committee and confirmed by the AGA Selection Committee.

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