



AUGUSTA UNIVERSITY
**MEDICAL COLLEGE
OF GEORGIA**



MCG Faculty Awards Ceremony

MCG Faculty Senate
Thursday, October 15, 2020 at Noon



Dear Colleagues:

The MCG Faculty Senate's Faculty Awards Ceremony recognizes exceptional achievement by faculty and residents in the areas of teaching, research, clinical care and service.

Today's honorees have contributed their significant skills and passion to attaining excellence and have set a high standard for us all. We gather today to thank them for their contributions to our medical school and to the dynamic present and future of medicine.

We thank as well the members of the MCG Faculty Senate Faculty Recognition Committee for their diligent efforts to make this celebration possible.

Thank you for all you do.

Most respectfully yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'David C. Hess'.

David C. Hess, MD
*Dean, Medical College of Georgia
Executive Vice President for Medical Affairs
and Integration, Augusta University
Presidential Distinguished Chair*

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Vincent Robinson'.

Vincent Robinson, MD
*President, MCG Faculty Senate
Glen E. Garrison, MD, Distinguished
Chair in Cardiovascular Medicine*

Program

Medical College of Georgia
Faculty Awards Ceremony
Thursday, October 15, 2020

Welcome.....Vincent Robinson, MD
President, MCG Faculty Senate
Glen E. Garrison, MD, Distinguished Chair and Professor in Cardiovascular Medicine

Remarks.....David Hess, MD
Dean, Medical College of Georgia
Executive Vice President for Medical Affairs and Integration, Augusta University
Presidential Distinguished Chair and Professor in Neurology

Educator of the Year Awards.....Class Presidents
Susan Brands, Class of 2021, Augusta Campus
Andrew Block, Class of 2022, Augusta University/University of Georgia Medical Partnership

Outstanding Clinical Science Teaching Award.....Susan Brands

Walter J. Moore, MD, Outstanding Housestaff Award.....Michael Hocker, MD
Senior Associate Dean for Graduate Medical Education and Designated Institutional Official
J. Harold Harrison, MD, Distinguished University Chair and Professor in Emergency Medicine

Mentoring Excellence Awards.....Lara Stepleman, PhD
Director, MCG Office for Faculty Success
Professor, Department of Psychiatry & Health Behavior

Distinguished Faculty Awards.....Vishal Arora, MD
Chair, Faculty Recognition Committee
Secretary, Faculty Senate Executive Committee
Professor, Department of Medicine, Division of Cardiology

Institutional Service Award.....Dr. Arora

Outstanding Faculty Award.....Dr. Stepleman

Lifetime Achievement Awards.....Dr. Arora

Spirit of MCG Award.....Drs. Arora and Robinson

Recognition of Retirees.....Dr. Arora

Recognition of Faculty Senate Executive Committee and Faculty Senate President.....Dr. Hess

Closing Remarks.....Dr. Robinson

Honorees:

Educators of the Year

Lisa Leggio, MD

Professor, Department of Pediatrics

Presented By:

Susan Brands, President, Class of 2021

Patricia Schoenlein, PhD

Associate Professor, Department of Cellular Biology and Anatomy

Presented By:

Susan Brands, President, Class of 2021, on behalf of the Class of 2023

Mary Bond, MD

Assistant Professor, Department of Medicine, AU/UGA Medical Partnership

Presented By:

Andrew Block, President, Class of 2022, AU/UGA Medical Partnership, on behalf of the Class of 2021

Carrie Kelly, MD

Assistant Professor, Department of Pediatrics, AU/UGA Medical Partnership

Presented By:

Andrew Block, President, Class of 2022, AU/UGA Medical Partnership, on behalf of the Class of 2020

Donald Scott, MD

Associate Professor, Department of Medicine, AU/UGA Medical Partnership

Presented By:

Andrew Block, President, Class of 2022

DeLoris Hesse, PhD

Associate Professor, Department of Anatomy and Embryology, AU/UGA Medical Partnership

Presented By:

Andrew Block, President, Class of 2022, AU/UGA Medical Partnership, on behalf of the Class of 2023

Outstanding Clinical Science Teaching Award

Department of Pediatrics

Valera Hudson, MD

Presented By:

Susan Brands, President, Class of 2021, on behalf of the Class of 2020

Mentoring Excellence Awards

Anna C. Edmondson, PhD



Dr. Anna C. Edmondson is a professor in the Department of Cellular Biology and Anatomy and serves as one of the primary gross anatomy teaching faculty for the medical school, as well as the College of Allied Health Sciences and The Graduate School. Her research interests are focused on medical education and curriculum design, and she is interested in developing and determining the effectiveness of innovative instructional designs, learning tools and assessments that promote self-directed learning and critical thinking in medical education.

She earned her doctoral degree in Pathology from the University of Tennessee Health Science Center in Memphis.

Tasha Wyatt, PhD



Dr. Tasha Wyatt is an educational researcher in the MCG Educational Innovation Institute and assistant professor in the Department of Psychiatry and Health Behavior. Her interests include assisting students in developing patient ownership, developing educational researchers and leveraging the cultural assets of faculty and students. More generally, her research interests include the application of post-colonial educational models to mainstream education. Her skill set includes program development, instructional coaching, program evaluation and educational research.

She earned a master's in educational administration from New Mexico State University and a doctoral degree in educational psychology from the University of Hawaii.

Distinguished Faculty Awards

Basic Science Teaching Barbara Russell, EdD



Dr. Barbara Russell is Assistant Dean for Curriculum: Advanced Foundations of Medicine, leading the second phase of pre-clinical training for MCG students. She also is an associate professor in the Department of Pathology.

Her clinical and research interests include hematology, microbiology, evidence-based practice and education.

She earned a bachelor of science degree in medical technology and a master's degree in Health Education from Augusta University. She completed her doctoral degree in education at Georgia Southern University.

Clinical Science Teaching

Natasha Savage, MD



Dr. Natasha Savage is the Department of Pathology's vice chair for academic affairs. She also is chief of staff elect at the medical school's teaching hospitals, Augusta University Health.

In addition to leading the Department of Pathology Residency Program, she is the health system's medical director of hematology and hematopathology, overseeing the hematology, bone marrow, flow cytometry and hemostasis labs at AU Medical Center and the Children's Hospital of Georgia.

She was an honor graduate of the University of Georgia, where she earned her bachelor's degree in biology. She earned her medical degree in 2007 and completed an anatomic and clinical pathology residency in 2011, both at MCG. She completed a fellowship in hematopathology at Stanford University Hospitals and Clinics before returning to the faculty of her alma mater in 2012.

Basic Science Research

Yuqing Huo, MD, PhD



Dr. Yuqing Huo is director of the Vascular Inflammation Program in the MCG Vascular Biology Center and a professor in the Department of Cellular Biology & Anatomy.

His research interests are focused on the study of metabolic aspects of human diseases in animal models. These studies include examination of metabolic effect on leukocyte recruitment and activation, fibroblast activation, activation and proliferation of vascular cells in animal models of atherosclerosis, thrombosis, diabetes/obesity, pulmonary hypertension, retinopathy, cardiac hypertrophy and renal fibrosis. Dr. Huo's laboratory has developed in-vitro, ex-vivo, and in-vivo models and various engineered mice.

He earned his medical degree from Qingdao University, Qingdao, P.R. China.

Clinical Science Research

Satish Rao, MD, PhD



Dr. Satish Rao is the J. Harold Harrison, MD, Distinguished University Chair in Gastroenterology. He came to the Medical College of Georgia in 2011 and is founding director of the Augusta University Health System Digestive Health Center.

Dr. Rao is a professor of medicine whose clinical research interests are focused on motility, anorectal disorders, colonic manometry, biofeedback therapy and digestive health disorders. He is principal investigator on a \$4.2 million NIH grant looking at translumbosacral neuromodulation therapy and its potential to treat fecal incontinence.

He completed medical school at Osmania Medical College in India. He completed his residency at Newcastle, Sunderland and York Hospitals in the United Kingdom.

Patient Care
Anand Jillella, MD



Dr. Anand P. Jillella returned to the Medical College of Georgia in July 2017 as the J. Harold Harrison, MD, Distinguished University Chair in Medical Oncology. He is chief of the Division of Hematology/Oncology in the Department of Medicine and serves as the associate director of Medical Oncology Services at the Georgia Cancer Center. Dr. Jillella is the founding director of the Georgia Cancer Center's adult stem cell and bone marrow transplant program.

His current research, funded by the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society, is a novel induction therapy for acute promyelocytic leukemia, a cancer of the white blood cells, which dramatically reduces mortality rates. His clinical focus is bone marrow transplantation for leukemia, multiple myeloma and other blood-related malignancies.

Outstanding Young Basic Science Faculty Award

Waaqo Daddacha, PhD



Dr. Waaqo Daddacha is an assistant professor in the Department of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology.

Since joining MCG in 2019, he has actively mentored graduate students, research assistants and volunteer scientists and was recently selected to apply for a competitive Pew Scholars Program Grant, which accepts only one applicant per institute.

His current research focus, supported by a K01 Award from the National Institutes of Health and the National Cancer Institute, is understanding the role of the cellular enzyme SAMHD1 in repairing DNA damage and its potential therapeutic benefit in malignant glioma.

He earned his bachelor's degree in microbiology/human biology from Minnesota State University and his PhD in microbiology from the University of Rochester.

Outstanding Young Clinical Science Faculty Award

Amol Sharma, MD



Dr. Amol Sharma is an associate professor of gastroenterology in the MCG Department of Medicine. His research interests are focused on neurogastroenterology and GI motility. During his fellowship training, he researched foregut motility disorders and was recognized as a top young investigator by the American Neurogastroenterology & Motility Society.

He earned bachelor's and master's degrees in biomedical engineering from Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland, Ohio, and his medical degree from the Medical College of Virginia at Virginia Commonwealth University in Richmond. He completed his internal medicine residency at Temple University in Philadelphia and a gastroenterology fellowship at Penn State University in Hershey.

Institutional Service Award

Michael W. Brands, PhD



Dr. Michael Brands is a Regents' Professor and director of Medical Physiology in the MCG Department of Physiology.

His research interests include cardiovascular-renal integrative physiology and hypertension. He has a long-standing interest in renal and hormonal mechanisms for chronic blood pressure and circulatory system control in states of insulin resistance, hyperinsulinemia and diabetes.

He earned his doctoral degree in physiology at the University of Missouri-Columbia and completed his postdoctoral fellowship at the University of Mississippi Medical Center in Jackson.

Outstanding Faculty Award

David W. Stepp, PhD



Dr. David Stepp is the Leon Henri Charbonnier Endowed Chair in Physiology and a professor in the MCG Department of Physiology and Vascular Biology Center. An instinctive collaborator, he created, and for many years led, the VBC's Metabolic Vascular Disease Work Group, a team of researchers with vast research foci but with the common goal of better understanding disease process and prevention and developing new treatments for cardiovascular disease.

He directs the Vascular Biology Center's Graduate Program and has advised more than 20 graduate students and several doctoral students, who have all gone on to receive their own research awards and have been supported by training grants from the National Institutes of Health and American Heart Association.

His work has been instrumental in determining which specific aspects of obesity-induced metabolic disorders lead to vascular problems, an important step in developing new therapeutics. He is a co-principal investigator on two multi-million dollar grants from the NIH focused on the impact of obesity on the vasculature.

Lifetime Achievement Awards

Gregory Harshfield, PhD



Dr. Gregory Harshfield, a psychologist, physiologist and longtime director of the Georgia Prevention Institute, has made extraordinary contributions to MCG, the medical community and to science.

His research focused on the identification of factors related to impaired functioning of the renal body-fluid system and blood pressure in African-Americans and obese individuals and how it relates to damage to the heart, kidneys and vasculature.

His major contributions include the development of the 24-hour ambulatory blood pressure monitoring system, which established protocols that are still in use today. He was part of the team of scientists that first recognized that some African-Americans' blood pressure did not dip at night, a risk factor for future cardiovascular disease, and is a pioneer of the concept of stress-induced sodium retention in humans and its implication on blood pressure.

Dr. Harshfield's projects have received nearly \$30 million in grant funding and he has 124 publications, 248 presented abstracts and 16 book chapters to his credit.

He came to MCG in 1997 and in 2005 was named director of the GPI, a role he served in until his retirement earlier this year.

Fenwick T. Nichols III, MD



Dr. Fenwick Nichols has been integral to the Department of Neurology for more than 30 years.

He graduated from the Medical College of Georgia in 1976 and completed an internal medicine residency at the University of South Alabama in Mobile before returning to MCG for a second residency in neurology. After finishing a fellowship in cerebrovascular disease at Columbia University, he joined the faculty of his medical school in 1985.

An expert in neurosonology, Dr. Nichols oversaw the transcranial Doppler training for the National Institutes of Health STOP and STOP2 grants in the 1990s and early 2000s. Those trials established the benefit of transfusion therapy for children with sickle cell disease who were identified, with transcranial Doppler, as being at high risk for strokes.

An honored educator, he received the medical school's Exemplary Teaching Award continuously from 2009-19. The Department of Neurology's Resident Teaching Award is named in his honor. As director of the department's Vascular Neurology Fellowship, he has trained 14 stroke fellows, including current Department of Neurology Chair Dr. Jeffrey Switzer and MCG Dean Dr. David Hess.

Spirit of MCG Award

David C. Hess, MD



Dr. David Hess, a stroke specialist, honored educator and biotech entrepreneur, is the 27th Dean of the Medical College of Georgia and Executive Vice President for Medical Affairs and Integration at Augusta University. Dr. Hess also serves as Presidential Distinguished Chair and Professor in the MCG Department of Neurology.

He is a graduate of Johns Hopkins University and the University of Maryland School of Medicine and completed his neurology residency and vascular neurology/stroke fellowship at MCG and AU Health System.

A prolific physician-scientist whose focus is improving stroke treatment and recovery, he has more than 170 peer-reviewed publications and has been involved in basic, pre-clinical and clinical stroke research. Dr. Hess helped develop the REACH telestroke network in rural Georgia that now numbers 30 hospitals.

Dr. Hess is board certified in internal medicine, neurology and vascular neurology and has been named to America's Top Doctors and Best Doctors in America since 2000.

Retiree Recognition

Jatinder Bhatia, MBBS

Professor and Chief, Department of Pediatrics, Division of Neonatology

Paul W. Biddinger, MD

Professor and Chief, Department of Pathology, Section of Anatomic Pathology

Manuel Castresana, MD

Professor, Department of Anesthesiology and Perioperative Medicine

Gregory Harshfield, PhD

Director, Georgia Prevention Institute, Department of Medicine

Joseph Hobbs, MD

Professor and Chair, Department of Family Medicine

Bruce D. Janiak, MD

Professor, Department of Emergency Medicine

Walter F. Kuhn, MD

Professor, Department of Emergency Medicine

P. Alex Mabe, PhD

Professor and Chief, Department of Psychiatry and Health Behavior, Section of Psychology

Chitra S. Mani, MD

Professor, Department of Pediatrics, Section of Pediatric Hospital Medicine and Infectious Diseases

Stanley Nahman Jr., MD

Professor, Department of Medicine, Section of Nephrology

Julian Nussbaum, MD

Professor, Department of Ophthalmology

Robert Pendergrast, MD

Professor, Department of Pediatrics, Division of General Pediatrics and Adolescent Medicine

Niranjini Reddy, MBBS

Assistant Professor, Department of Psychiatry and Health Behavior

Arthur M. Smith, MD

Professor, Department of Surgery, Section of Urology

MCG Faculty Senate Executive Committee 2019 – 2020

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Thad Wilkins, MD, President-Elect
Julie Dahl-Smith, DO, Vice President
Vishal Arora, MD, Secretary
Renuka Mehta, MBBS, Immediate Past President

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Ravindra Kolhe, MD, PhD
Eric Lewkowiez, MD
Laura Mulloy, DO
Rebecca Pierce, MD
Brett Szymik, PhD
Almira Vazdarjanova, PhD

MCG Faculty Senate Faculty Recognition Committee

Vishal Arora, MD, Chair
Julie Dahl-Smith, DO
Yisang Yoon, PhD
Zachary Klaassen, MD
Vincent Robinson, MD

Acknowledgements

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