

University News Service

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UMDNJ Educators and Executives Receive Excellence in Medicine Awards

(NEW BRUNSWICK / PISCATAWAY) - Four individuals from the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey have been included among this year's recipients of the prestigious Edward J. Ill Excellence in Medicine Awards. Since 1939, these awards have been presented to exemplary physicians and leaders whose dedication to education, research and public service have had a significant impact on the delivery of healthcare in New Jersey. Those receiving awards from UMDNJ were:

Peter W. Rodino, Jr., Citizen's Award

Betty Gallo, of Succasunna, director of Public Outreach and Government Relations at the Dean and Betty Gallo Prostate Cancer Center at The Cancer Institute of New Jersey (CINJ), is the wife of the late Congressman Dean A. Gallo who died of prostate cancer in 1994. Her advocacy work for prostate cancer awareness includes testifying to urge the New Jersey Legislature to designate June "Prostate Cancer Awareness" month and to mandate health insurance coverage for screening tests for prostate cancer. In 1997, she approached the director of CINJ to create a prostate cancer center in her husband's memory and that center was officially dedicated in May of 1999. The Dean and Betty Gallo Prostate Cancer Center is New Jersey's only specialized prostate health resource at a National Cancer Institute designated cancer center. The Peter W. Rodino, Jr., Citizen's Award is presented each year to an individual or group for "distinguished service in advancing and promoting the health and well-being" of New Jersey residents.

Outstanding Medical Educator Award

Dr. Robert L. Trelstad, of Princeton, a professor of Pathology at the UMDNJ-Robert Wood Johnson Medical School, was recognized for his visionary leadership in advocating for the use of computers in medical education and for his instrumental work that led to the Child Health Institute of New Jersey, where he served as acting director for many years. Dr. Trelstad is also the chair of the Committee on Health Professions Advising at Princeton University.

Dr. Patricia Whitley-Williams, of Bridgewater, a professor of Pediatrics and chief of the Division of Pediatric Immunology, Allergy and Infectious Diseases at the UMDNJ-Robert Wood Johnson Medical School, has devoted more than 20 years of her life to providing medical care to HIV-infected children and their families. She has helped develop the national guidelines for the reduction or perinatal transmission of HIV and has participated in medical

missions providing specialty care in many countries, including the Ukraine, South Africa, Cuba, Jamaica and the Dominican Republic. She currently serves associate medical director of the Robert Wood Johnson AIDS Program.

Outstanding Medical Executive Award

Dr. Audrey R. Gotsch, of Basking Ridge, a professor and the dean of the UMDNJ-School of Public Health, is one of two recipients of this award, given annually to an executive in a medically related organization or field “who has demonstrated exceptional leadership in the enhancement of patient care and medical practice.” Dr. Gotsch was instrumental in the creation and accreditation of the UMDNJ-School of Public Health, serving as dean since 1999. She is a former president of the American Public Health Association, which is the largest organization of its kind in the world, and is the current president of the Council on Education for Public Health, the accrediting agency for all schools and programs of public health in the country. As dean of the UMDNJ-School of Public Health, Dr. Gotsch has been involved in the creation of the school’s award-winning environmental health sciences curriculum for high school and elementary school students and has directed regional training programs that enhanced the skills of more than 400,000 workers in environmental and occupational health content areas.

The Edward J. Ill Excellence in Medicine Awards will be officially presented at a ceremony on May 9, at the Hyatt Regency Princeton. For more information about the award recipients, or to arrange interviews, please contact Jerry Carey at (856) 566-6171.

UMDNJ is the nation's largest free-standing public health sciences university with more than 5,500 students attending the state's three medical schools, its only dental school, a graduate school of biomedical sciences, a school of health related professions, a school of nursing and its only school of public health, on five campuses. Last year, there were more than two million patient visits to UMDNJ facilities and faculty at campuses in Newark, New Brunswick/Piscataway, Scotch Plains, Camden and Stratford. UMDNJ operates University Hospital, a Level I Trauma Center in Newark, and University Behavioral HealthCare, a mental health and addiction services network.