



DOWNSTATE
HEALTH SCIENCES UNIVERSITY

**COLLEGE OF MEDICINE
SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES**

**CONVOCATION
and
AWARDS CEREMONY**

**MONDAY, MAY 8, 2023
3:00 PM**

**HEALTH SCIENCE EDUCATION BUILDING
ALUMNI AUDITORIUM**



GREETINGS AND INTRODUCTION

Jeffrey S. Putman, EdD
Vice President for Academic and Student Affairs
F. Charles Brunicardi, MD, FACS
Dean, College of Medicine

PRESENTATION OF AWARDS

Awards for Excellence and Acknowledgement of Honors in the School of Graduate Studies

Presented by: David Christini, PhD
Interim Dean, School of Graduate Studies
Hillary Michelson, PhD
President, The Robert F. Furchgott Society

Annual Research Day Awards

Each year at the Annual Research Day, graduate students compete for awards. Awards for the best presentation in specific categories of research are awarded each year from Graduate School resources, from the Chandler McCuskey Brooks-Gertrude Lang Fellowship, the Mildred L. Schuker Award and the May Kin Ho and David Dean Award.

Recipients: **David Havlicek, Sangmi Park, Shwetha Phatarpekar, Milena Rodriguez Alvarez, Marzia Spagnardi**

Liberalitas Award 2023

This award is for academic altruism, a central value of the School of Graduate Studies (established in 2013 in memory of Drs. Mary Makowske and Vahe Amassian). This award recognizes the graduating student who was viewed by his or her fellow graduate students as the most significant peer resource. This individual's character and generous contributions to others on the campus promises a future where they are always a highly sought-after colleague.

Recipient: **Natasha Bobrowski-Khoury**

The Robert F. Furchgott Award for Excellence in Research

The Committee of the Faculty of the School of Graduate Studies has recommended that the School of Graduate Studies honor the graduate student whose research, as represented by the thesis document, is considered most outstanding among the cohort of graduate students who have defended their thesis within the past year.

Recipient: **Sangmi Park**

College of Medicine Honor Scholarships and Achievement Awards

Presented by: F. Charles Brunicardi, MD, FACS
Dean, College of Medicine

Endowed Honor Scholarships

Awarded to students who achieve a high level of academic performance.

Recipients: **Jigar Govind, Joseph Mayer, Wen Ting (Wendy) Yang**

Jadwin Honor Scholarships

Awarded to students who achieve a high level of academic performance.

Recipients: **Arif Kodza, Kathleen Simons, Shannon Frank**

Yudkowsky Honor Scholarships

Awarded to students who achieve a high level of academic performance.

Recipients: **Gabrielle Estevez-Inoa, Andriy Kobryn, Jaewoo Shin**

American Medical Women's Association/Glasgow-Rubin Certificates of Commendation

These awards recognize the achievements of the women in the top 10% of the graduating class.

Recipients: **Gianna Cirrone, Joanna Eichler, Kyra Gassmann,
Isabella Giunta, Fradah Gold, Lauren Gruffi, Bana Hadid,
Cassandra Heaney, Nina Kumar, Saskia Naegele, Radhika Patel,
Charlotte Ruby, Tatyana Yatsenko**

Merck Awards

These awards from the pharmaceutical company acknowledge academic achievement in medical studies.

Recipients: **Isabella Giunta, Ryan Marder, Teguru Tembo,
Alexandra Belzie**

Fred H. & Sadie Sirkin Achievement Award

Awarded to a female student for academic excellence.

Recipient: **Sierrah Grigsby**

Eugene B. Feigelson, MD Scholarship

Established by former Dean Eugene B. Feigelson, MD, this merit scholarship is awarded to a medical student who has demonstrated academic excellence in pursuit of his/her career.

Recipient: **Shivani Hewitt**

Trude Perlman Award

Established by Dr. Bernard Perlman of the Class of 1955 as a living memorial to his wife. It is awarded to a student's spouse/significant other to acknowledge their sacrifice during the four years of medical school.

Honorable Mention: Hindy Herbst (Wife of Gavriel Shimonov), Tehila Lipsky (Wife of Isaac Lipsky),
Rebecca Macklis (Wife of Fernando Garcia), Gavriel Shimonov (Husband of Hindy Herbst),
Shainy Waldman (Wife of Spencer Waldman)

Recipient: **Katherine McGee (Fiancée of Jonathan Amaro-Barron)**

College of Medicine Dean's Outstanding Student Award

This award recognizes exceptional student leadership, commitment to the student body and to SUNY Downstate.

Recipients: **Kingsley Cruickshank, Alexandra Greenberg, Ian Winthrop**

Chancellor's Award for Student Excellence

The SUNY Chancellor's Award acknowledges graduating students who have been recognized for academic excellence, career achievement and community service and leadership.

Recipients: **Joanna Eichler, Alana Engelbrecht**

Academic Development Award for Excellence and Leadership in Teaching

Awarded in recognition of enthusiastic and continuous contributions to enhancing the academic achievements of their fellow students.

Presented by: Seth Langley, PhD

Recipients: **Maisha Ahmed, Michael Dieringer**

Dr. Warren E. Enker Award

This award was established in honor and memory of Dr. Warren E. Enker, recognizing students demonstrating a set of human qualities which are rare and highly prized in any profession, especially medicine. These qualities are, but not limited to, authenticity, integrity, and the ability to collaborate.

Presented by: Stephanie DiBrienza

Recipient: **Charlotte Ruby**

Nathan Spitzer, MD '25 Honor Achievement Award in Cardiovascular and Pulmonary Medicine

This award was established by Dr. Adrienne Siegel, daughter of Dr. Nathan Spitzer, class of 1925, in memory of her father, for a graduating medical student who exhibits excellence in cardiovascular and pulmonary medicine.

Presented by: Stephanie DiBrienza

Recipient: **Hannah Every**

Student Center Award for Lifetime Membership

Lifetime membership is awarded to those individuals who have made significant contributions to the Student Center and/or its programs throughout their tenure on campus.

Presented by: Adam Burgman and Schuyler Hooke

Recipients: **Maisha Ahmed, Mitchell Bayne, Hyuck-Jin (Daniel) Kwon, Omar Siddique**

Zahra Said Scholarship

Established by a retired Downstate faculty member in honor of his late wife who he describes as “a passionate advocate of empowerment through education for women.” It is awarded to a graduating woman who embodies these characteristics and who overcame cultural, religious or socioeconomic hardship.

Presented by: Carla Boutin-Foster, MD

Recipient: **Hindy Herbst**

Health Equity Advocacy Leadership Pathway (HEAL) Certificate of Distinction

The HEAL Pathway is designed for students who are committed to addressing health disparities by promoting health equity and tackling issues pertaining to social determinants of health. This award recognizes a graduating student who has been an outspoken champion for health equity and committed to effecting change at SUNY Downstate through outreach, research, and patient care.

Presented by: Carla Boutin-Foster, MD

Recipients: **Alexandra Greenberg, Andrea Martinez**

The Medical Educator Pathway Certificate of Merit

This award recognizes graduating students who developed and implemented a curriculum or scholarly medical education project and who demonstrated significant time and commitment to completing the pathway requirements for near peer teaching, institutional service and mentorship at the SUNY Downstate College of Medicine.

Presented by: Lee Eisner, PhD, John Kubie, PhD, Antonia Quinn, DO

Recipients: **Ju Hyung (Katie) An, Fradah Gold, Michael Goldberg, Nina Kumar, Deepti Mahajan, Heidi Sosa, Esther Yoo**

The Medical Educator Pathway Certificate of Distinction

This award recognizes graduating students who have had leadership roles in medical education and have contributed to promoting the goals of the Medical Educator Pathway at the SUNY Downstate College of Medicine. The recipient students have demonstrated significant time, commitment and

excellence in at least one of five areas: teaching, education administration, scholarship, curriculum development, assessment and/or mentorship.

Presented by: Lee Eisner, PhD, John Kubie, PhD, Antonia Quinn, DO

Recipients: **Lon Yin (Laureen) Chan, Alexandra Greenberg**

Graduates of the Clinical Neurosciences Pathway

The Clinical Neurosciences Pathway is a program of advanced academic activities in the neurosciences. Students who graduate from the program have participated on a continuous basis in all required components of the Pathway throughout their medical training at Downstate.

Presented by: Lisa R. Merlin, MD

Recipients: **Jonathan Amaro-Barron, Mitchell Bayne, Alexandra Belzie, Isabella Chirico, Emily Cowen, Michael Dieringer, Anna Fomitchova, Blake Gershon, Fradah Gold, David Havlicek, Allyson Hernandez,**

Perry Kerner, Masha Kolesnikova, Aaron Kuang, Isaac Lipsky, Raymond Noonan, Jacob Robinson, Charlotte Ruby, Menachem Shimonov, Nicholas Sullivan

Departmental Awards for Excellence

Excellence in Anesthesiology Awards

The Joseph P. Giffin Award for Clinical Excellence in Anesthesiology

Awarded to a student who exhibited clinical excellence and received honors in the anesthesia elective.

Presented by: Dennis Dimaculangan, MD

Recipient: **Matthew Becker**

The Gerald L. Wolf Award for Research in Anesthesiology

Awarded to a student who has demonstrated outstanding research acumen in anesthesiology.

Presented by: Dennis Dimaculangan, MD

Recipient: **Shivani Hewitt**

Cell Biology Awards for Academic Excellence

The Cell Biology Awards recognize excellence in anatomy, histology/cell biology and neuroscience.

Jacqueline S. Jakway, PhD Award for Excellence in the Anatomic Sciences

Presented by: John Kubie, PhD

Recipient: **Nina Kumar**

Jacqueline S. Jakway, PhD Award for Excellence in Anatomic Science Education

Presented by: Samuel Marquez, PhD

Recipient: **Nina Kumar**

Excellence in Dermatology Awards

Elizabeth M. Carr, MD Award for Excellence in Clinical Dermatology

Dr. Elizabeth Carr was a former resident, chief resident and faculty member of the Department of Dermatology. During her time with us, she was a constant source of collegiality, enthusiasm and humor. Her intense attention to detail and absolute refusal to complete a task without doing it perfectly is legendary. She loved the practice of Dermatology, as well as teaching students and residents. She was devoted to the care of her patients and giving back to the community.

Presented by: Sharon Glick, MD

Recipient: **Ariana Moreno**

Alan R. Shalita, MD Award for Excellence in Dermatological Research

Dr. Shalita was a distinguished Professor and the former Chairman of the Department of Dermatology for nearly 40 years. He was a pioneer and internationally known for his expertise in the treatment of acne. Dr. Shalita was best recognized for his skills as a clinician, a researcher and educator. His research contributions were groundbreaking work on the treatment of acne, which impacted and benefited the lives of millions of patients worldwide. Dr. Shalita was revered by all the doctors he mentored and trained and beloved by all who knew him.

Presented by: Sharon Glick, MD

Recipient: **Christopher George**

Society for Academic Emergency Medicine 2023 Excellence in Emergency Medicine Award

This award recognizes a senior medical student who has demonstrated excellence in the specialty of emergency medicine.

Presented by: Linda Fan, MD, MEd

Recipient: **Jason Truong**

Hyman Merenstein, MD Excellence in Family Medicine Award

This award is in remembrance of a wonderful family physician, epidemiologist, and devoted teacher of medical students in Family Medicine at Downstate. He was a dedicated and humane doctor, and voluntary faculty member in Family Medicine from 1970-1998. This award recognizes “clinical excellence, dedicated service and devotion to the interest and promotion of Family Medicine”

Presented by: Crystal Marquez, MD

Recipient: **Alexandra Greenberg**

The Robert F. Furchgott Medical Student Research Award

The late Dr. Furchgott is the 1998 co-winner of the Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine. His major research advance came in 1980, when he discovered a substance produced by endothelial cells (the thin layer of flattened cells lining the inner surface of blood vessels) that cause relaxation of the vascular smooth muscle. He called this substance endothelium derived relaxing factor (EDRF). This substance was later identified as nitric oxide (NO). This award is given to a student who demonstrated excellence in research.

Presented by: Hillary Michelson, PhD

Honorable Mention: **Vivienne Au, Takisha Morancy**

Recipient: **Teguru Tembo**

Excellence in Medicine Awards

The Eli A. Friedman Award of Distinction in Internal Medicine

Distinguished Teaching Professor of Medicine, Dr. Eli A. Friedman obtained his MD degree from SUNY Downstate Medical Center, became the first “Nephrology fellow” in the USA at Harvard, set up the first federally funded hemodialysis program in the United States in 1963 and invented the ‘Suitcase kidney’ for portable dialysis. Widely cited, his publications include 10 books and over 530 Peer-reviewed scientific papers. He is known as one of the master teachers of medicine of our time.

Presented by: Moro Salifu, MD, MPH, MBA, MACP

Recipients: **Nicole Bogdan, Joanna Eichler, Alexander Imas, Dov Vachss**

Excellence in Neurology Awards

The Abraham Max Rabiner Award for Excellence in Neurology

Abraham Max Rabiner, MD (1892-1980) was the first director of neurology at Kings County Hospital from 1954 to 1958. He had been a neurologist at the Long Island College of Medicine from 1937 to 1954. He was interested in and published in all aspects of neurology. He was known as a brilliant and charismatic teacher of students throughout his career.

Presented by: Brian Anziska, MB, ChB

Recipient: **Ethan Kidde**

American Academy of Neurology Medical Student Prize for Excellence

This recognition is awarded to up to three graduating medical students who have demonstrated outstanding achievement and clinical acumen in neurology and/or neuroscience, and who have decided to pursue a career in neurology, pediatric neurology, or neurosurgery.

Presented by: Nuri Jacoby, MD, Lisa Merlin, MD

Recipients: **David Havlicek, Isaac Lipsky, Raymond Noonan**

Excellence in Obstetrics & Gynecology Awards

Morris Glass Prize

Dr. Glass was a Downstate graduate who became the first Chairman of the Obstetrics and Gynecology Department at Albert Einstein in 1955. The award is given to the student who was the most outstanding clinically during the third year OB/GYN rotation.

Presented by: Melanie Peters, MD

Recipient: **Giovanna Castillo**

Abraham J. Rongy Prize

This award is given to the student who is most likely to succeed in the field of Obstetrics and Gynecology.

Presented by: Melanie Peters, MD

Recipient: **Gayatri Venkataraman**

Excellence in Ophthalmology Award

Awarded to the medical student who exemplifies admirable and ideal qualities as a future ophthalmologist.

Presented by: Inci Dersu, MD

Recipient: **Gabriel Kabarriti**

The Christopher Pavlides, MD Memorial Award

Dr. Pavlides received his medical degree from SUNY Downstate, and later went on to teach orthopaedic surgery at Downstate in the 1970's and 1980's. In his honor, graduating medical students entering orthopaedic surgery are selected to receive recognition for their efforts.

Presented by: William Urban, MD

Recipient: **Juhayer Alam**

Outstanding Medical Student Performance in Otolaryngology

This award is presented to the student who does the most outstanding work in inpatient care, outpatient care, operating room experience and presentation at departmental grand rounds.

Presented by: Nicole Fraser, MPH, MS

Recipient: **Vivienne Au**

Richard L. Day, MD Award for Outstanding Performance in Pediatrics

This award is presented to a graduating student who, with evidence of scholarship, in the opinion of the faculty and residents, demonstrates the most outstanding clinical performance in pediatrics.

Presented by: Stephen Wadowski, MD

Recipient: **Nina Kumar**

The Soon M. Rho, MD Memorial Award in Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation

Dr. Rho completed his residency training at Rusk Rehabilitation at NYU and joined Downstate in 1976. He continued to train PM&R residents at Downstate until 2014. In his honor, this award is presented to a graduating medical student who has demonstrated a passion for Physiatry and is expected to make substantive contributions to the field.

Presented by: Sanjeev Agarwal, MD, MS

Recipient: **Lon Yin (Laureen) Chan**

Outstanding Achievement in Psychiatry Award

This award recognizes the graduating student who has demonstrated outstanding achievement in psychiatry and shows exceptional promise in the field.

Presented by: Jeffrey Feola, MD

Recipient: **Antia Gomez**

The Lucy Frank Squire, MD Award for Excellence in Radiology

*This award is presented to the member of the graduating class embarking on a career in Radiology who had the best performance in the Diagnostic Radiology course in the Advanced Clinical Year. Dr. Squire was a pioneer in developing Radiology education for medical students. She joined the Downstate faculty full-time in 1972 and was recognized nationwide for her innovations in teaching. Her influence is still felt around the world, as the textbook she authored, *Fundamentals of Radiology*, is now in its seventh edition and has been translated into seven languages.*

Presented by: Steven Ostrow, MD

Recipient: **Blake Gershon**

Excellence in Surgery Awards

The Clarence Dennis Award for Surgical Scholarship

Dr. Dennis was the Chairman of the Department of Surgery from 1951-1972. He established himself as a leader in cardiopulmonary bypass physiology, and was instrumental in the invention of the heart-lung machine. He performed the first successful open-heart surgery in New York State, using a bypass machine he built and used the machines as the first "assist device" in cardiac surgery of the failing left ventricle. A gifted educator, he trained scores of surgeons in New York, affecting the lives of countless people around the world. His residents established the Clarence Dennis Society in his honor.

Presented by: Panagiotis Kougiaris, MD

Recipient: **Nissim Hazkour**

The Samuel L. Kountz Award for Clinical Excellence in Surgery

Dr. Kountz was Chairman of the Department of Surgery from 1972-1977. He was the ultimate academic surgeon – a Fulbright Scholar and innovator in organ transplantation. He developed the kidney perfusion machine used for organ preservation, performed the first kidney transplant between non-identical twins and established the role of methylprednisolone in combating acute rejection. One of the first African-American department chairs in surgery, Dr. Kountz created the Transplantation Division here at Downstate.

Presented by: Panagiotis Kougias, MD

Recipient: **Kimanthi Gicovi**

The John G. Kral Award for Outstanding Surgical Research

Before Dr. Kral came to Downstate in 1988, he had established himself as an international expert in the fields of surgical metabolism and obesity surgery. In 1983 he co-founded the American Society for Bariatric Surgery. He authored over 50 book chapters and over 60 peer-reviewed papers, many in high impact journals such as NEJM, BMJ, and Pediatrics. He continued his research in metabolic studies at SUNY Downstate up to his death in 2019. Born and trained in Sweden, he never lost his Scandinavian work ethic and open mindedness. His office was a sanctum where students and residents could discuss shortcomings and aspirations, in addition to their research projects.

Presented by: Panagiotis Kougias, MD

Recipients: **Lindsay Haefner, Michelle Ki**

Award for Excellence in Clinical and Research Urology

This award is presented to a graduating student for outstanding clinical and research performance.

Presented by: Jeffrey Weiss, MD, PhD, FACS

Recipient: **Karl-Ray Jeune**

Faculty and Staff Awards

Outstanding Educator in the Foundations of Medicine

This award is determined by the results of course evaluations completed by the second year class and reviewed by a Dean's committee. It recognizes outstanding teaching in the Foundation Years.

Presented by: Riccardo Bianchi, PhD

Recipient: **John Kubie, PhD**

Outstanding Educator in the Clinical Years

This award is determined by the results of course evaluations completed during the clinical years and reviewed by a Dean's committee. It recognizes outstanding teaching in the Clinical Years.

Presented by: Elka Jacobson-Dickman, MD

Recipient: **Michael Reinhardt, MD**

Outstanding Educator of the Year from a Clinical Affiliate Faculty

This award recognizes a teacher of excellence from among faculty at affiliate sites.

Presented by: Elka Jacobson-Dickman, MD

Recipient: **Lita Aeder, MD**

Hugh J. Carroll, MD Award for Clinical Excellence

There are two major attributes of a skilled clinical teacher of medicine – the science of medicine (communicating to students the knowledge essential for the diagnosis of disease and the treatment of patients) and the art of medicine (intimate compassion for patients, the cultivation of humanistic attitudes among one's students).

Presented by: Elka Jacobson-Dickman, MD

Recipient: **Francisca Velcek, MD**

Excellence in Professionalism Award

This award is determined by student input and recognizes an exemplar of professionalism and enhancement of the learning environment.

Presented by: Elka Jacobson-Dickman, MD

Recipient: **Faculty - Ellen Berkowitz, MD**

Presented by: Jason Lazar, MD, MPH

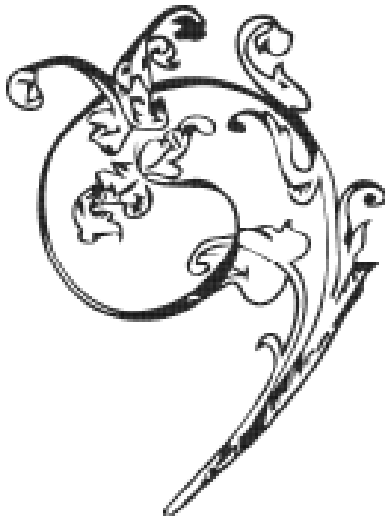
Recipient: **Administrator - Ms. Sandra Mingo**

Special Recognition from The Class of 2023

Recipients: **Nigel Andrews, MA, Adam Burgman, MEd, Betty Jung, RN, and the Staff of the Student Center**



**Good Luck
and
Best Wishes
to the
Class of 2023**



**Reception to follow in the
Health Science Education Building Atrium**



SUNY Downstate Health Sciences University is one of the largest academic health centers in the United States and one of four health science centers within the 64-unit State University of New York system. SUNY Downstate includes the College of Medicine, the School of Graduate Studies, the College of Nursing, the School of Health Professions, the School of Public Health, a major research center, and the University Hospital of Brooklyn.

This Convocation Ceremony was made possible by the following departments whose faculty and staff generously gave of their time - College of Medicine, Office of the Dean, Office of Student Affairs, Office of the Registrar, School of Graduate Studies and the Department of Student Life.



