

ASHG Honors Its Own

The American Society of Human Genetics (ASHG) has a rich history of honoring outstanding leaders in the science of human genetics through its awards program. The 2006 Awards Committee, chaired by David Valle, convened in May and reviewed nominations submitted from the membership. Each year, we seek to better engage ASHG members in this process. Other members of the Committee are Maureen Bocian; Michael Boehnke; Charis Eng; Jane Gitschier; Robert Nussbaum, ad hoc; and Stephen Warren, ex officio. They are pleased to announce the following winners.

Allan Award

The Allan Award, the most prestigious award given by the ASHG, was established in 1961 in memory of William Allan (1881–1943), one of the first American physicians to conduct extensive research in human genetics. The Allan Award is presented annually to recognize substantial and far-reaching scientific contributions to human genetics, performed over a sustained period of scientific inquiry and productivity. This award will be presented to **Dr. Dorothy Warburton** at the 2006 ASHG Annual Meeting in New Orleans on Friday, October 13, in the Ernest Morial Convention Center. Dr. Warburton has made many contributions to cytogenetics, particularly in the epidemiology of cytogenetic abnormalities in spontaneous abortions, prenatal diagnosis, and birth defects. Among many other achievements, her research has provided risk figures used widely in genetic counseling for chromosome abnormalities found at prenatal diagnosis. She was also involved in the early days of human gene mapping and the Human Genome Project. Her recent research focuses on investigating the association between indicators of ovarian age and the frequency of aneuploidy. She is also investigating the role of small genomic copy-number changes detectable by high-resolution microarray as a cause of congenital malformations. In addition to her research activities, Dr. Warburton was the Director of the Cytogenetics Laboratory at the Columbia University Medical Center for 35 years and has been active in teaching genetics and cytogenetics to medical students and residents, graduate students, and genetic counseling students. She is currently Professor, Department of Genetics and Development, Columbia University College of Physicians and Surgeons.

Award for Excellence in Human Genetics Education

With the recognition that many members of ASHG have contributed enormously to human genetics education, an award was born of the Information and Education Committee in 1995—the Award for Excellence in Human Genetics Education. Nominees for this award must have made a nationally or internationally recognized contribution of exceptional quality and great importance to human genetics education. This award will be presented to **Dr. Roberta “Bonnie” Pagon** in New Orleans, for her tireless work in the development of the GeneTests database, which includes *GeneReviews*. These resources are indispensable educational tools for geneticists and genetics counselors wishing to learn about the practical aspects of caring for patients with genetic diseases. The

information is available for free on the Web and plays a major role in the education of our genetics fellows, counseling students, and clinicians. Dr. Pagon is Professor of Pediatrics at the University of Washington, Seattle.

Curt Stern Award

The Curt Stern Award was created during Dr. Huntington Willard's presidency in 2001 and honors outstanding scientific achievements in human genetics made in the past 10 years. The work may be a single major discovery or a series of contributions on a similar or related topic. The 2006 award will be presented in New Orleans to **Dr. Harry Dietz**, Victor McKusick Professor of Medicine and Genetics; Investigator, Howard Hughes Medical Institute; and Professor of Pediatrics, Institute of Genetic Medicine, Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine. Dr. Dietz has made substantial advances in problems related to basic molecular genetics, disease mechanisms, and innovative approaches to treatment and is an outstanding example of a clinician-scientist who has made significant contributions over the past decade. His work is highly translational, combining acute clinical observation with highly innovative experimental work, as is demonstrated in his recent studies on the pathophysiological mechanism of Marfan syndrome.

ASHG Leadership Award

The Society's newest award, the ASHG Leadership Award, will be presented for the first time to **Dr. David Rimoin**, Professor of Pediatrics, Medicine, and Human Genetics, David Geffen School of Medicine at UCLA, and Steven Spielberg Chair and Director of the Medical Genetics Institute, Cedars-Sinai Medical Center. In addition to his many well-recognized research achievements, particularly in the area of skeletal dysplasias, he served as the founding president of the American Board of Medical Genetics, which established the educational standards for certification of medical geneticists and the accreditation of training programs throughout the nation. Dr. Rimoin was also the founding president of the American College of Medical Genetics and then president of its Foundation, whose primary goal is to foster education in medical genetics for the practitioner, as well as for the public. He was responsible for establishing the annual meetings of the American College of Medical Genetics, in conjunction with the March of Dimes, to provide an educational forum for clinical geneticists and other individuals who provide genetic services. His professional achievements have fostered and enriched the development of various human genetics disciplines. He has the enduring leadership and vision required to ensure that the field of human genetics will flourish and successfully assimilate into the broader context of science, medicine, and health.

Please join us in congratulating these worthy recipients.

JOANN A. BOUGHMAN
Executive Vice President
American Society of Human Genetics