

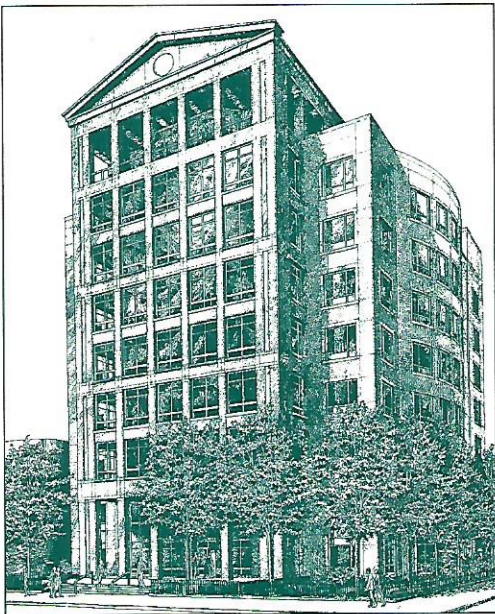
Alabama Chapter

American College of Physicians

Alabama Laureate Award

June 12, 1998

Perdido Beach Resort
Orange Beach, Alabama



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Alabama Chapter Laureate Award American College of Physicians

The Laureate Award honors those Fellows and Masters of the American College of Physicians who have demonstrated by their example and conduct an abiding commitment to excellence in medical care, education, research, and service to their community, their Chapter, and the American College of Physicians.

Recipients of this award shall bear the title Laureate of the Alabama Chapter.

Awards shall be made at the Annual Scientific Meeting. The awardee should accept this recognition in person, unless excused by the Governor. The awardee is to be nominated by a process that may originate from the Awards Committee or any member of the Chapter. The nomination must document the attributes and accomplishments of the nominee.

Awardees generally are senior physicians and Fellows or Masters of long-standing, with acknowledged excellence and peer approval in the field of internal medicine. In addition, awardees should have served their chapter with distinction. Exceptional circumstances may modify these requirements.

It is with distinct pleasure that the Alabama Chapter is pleased to honor Fellows and Masters of the American College of Physicians. These Physicians are long-standing and loyal supporters of the College, have rendered distinguished service to their Chapter, and have upheld the high ideals and professional standards for which the American College of Physicians is known.

We salute and honor them on this occasion and we wish them well in the future.

John B. Bass, MD, FACP
ACP Governor, Alabama Chapter

In honor of their service to internal medicine, the 1998 Alabama Laureate Award is presented to:

Richard H. Esham, MD, FACP
Wilmer J. Coggins, MD, FACP



WILMER J. COGGINS, MD, FACP

Dr. Coggins was born and reared Madison, Florida. After graduating from Georgia Military Academy in College Park, he entered Duke University as a pre-medical student. His undergraduate education was interrupted by military service in World War II. He was assigned to the 11th Airborne Division based in Sapporo, Japan. After a year of service in that unit, he was released from active duty to return to Duke and to enter medical school. The strong influence of Dr. Eugene Stead and his small cadre of clinician researchers influenced Dr. Coggins to choose internal medicine and academic medicine as his goals. He began his internship and residency at Georgetown University Medical Center. Illness interrupted his training. He returned to Florida and began a private practice with his wife, Dr. Deborah Coggins. After seven years of practice he joined the house staff of Florida's new medical school at the University of Florida in Gainesville.

After completing his residency training he joined the faculty to become Director of the General Medical Clinic. He later became Director of the University Health Service, which provided inpatient and outpatient services to the rapidly expanding student body. The opportunity to serve a large, defined population where there were no financial barriers to utilization of the services led Dr. Coggins and his colleagues to a number of studies of diagnosis, treatment, and prevention of common infectious diseases, to similar programs in the areas of mental health, suicide prevention, and prevention of substance abuse. National concern about marijuana use among college students

led Dr. Coggins and selected faculty colleagues to a major study of long-term heavy users of marijuana in which medical and psychosocial studies of heavy users were compared with a matched central group.

After a sabbatical year at the University of Maryland, Dr. Coggins returned to Gainesville to join a new medical school project in rural health sponsored by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. This program shifted the location of outpatient training for medical students to a network of rural clinics in a three-county area near the medical school where no other acute care facilities were available. Medical students were supervised and taught by resident physicians from the departments of medicine, family medicine, and pediatrics, with regular faculty visits to each site.

Dr. Coggins became Dean of the College of Community Health Sciences and Associate Dean of the Tuscaloosa Program, University of Alabama School of Medicine in 1980. The commitment of the Tuscaloosa campus to address the issue of medical manpower in rural areas while building an excellent general clinical experience for medical students and a large Family Medicine Residency Program was an exciting challenge. At that time, there was also a need to sharpen the focus of the medical curriculum to fit in with the broader goals of the University of Alabama School of Medicine.

Student enrollment at the Tuscaloosa campus increased as confidence in the stability of the program grew. At the same time, graduates of the program were choosing residencies in primary care specialties at rates above the national average, and for family medicine at twice the national average.

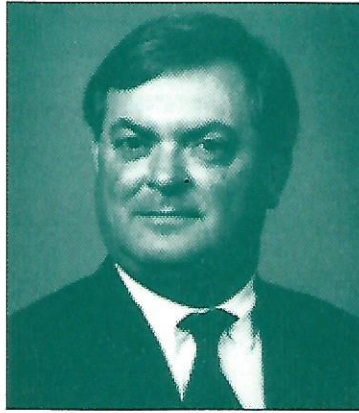
Dr. Coggins instituted the faculty practice plan for the Tuscaloosa Program and served as its president during his tenure as dean.

Dr. Coggins retired from the deanship of the college in 1991. He then found outside support to begin a modified curriculum for medical students in Problem Based Learning and the use of the Objective Structured Clinical Evaluation (OSCE). These techniques are now in use on the main campus in Birmingham, as well as the Tuscaloosa and Huntsville campuses.

Dr. Coggins was active in the Florida Medical Association, chairing committees on Student Health, Rural Health, and Public Health. He was awarded membership in Florida Blue Key, an honorary society for students, alumni, and faculty of the University of Florida. He was President of the American College Health Association and received that organization's Ruth Boynton Award for distinguished service. He has been a consultant to the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and the Health Resources and Services Administration, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, and a member of the Council of the Alabama ACP Chapter.

Dr. Coggins has been designated as Dean Emeritus of the College of Community Health Sciences and Professor Emeritus of the College of Medicine. Currently, he serves as President of the Lister Hill Society, the support group for the College.

Dr. Coggins is married to Dr. Deborah Coggins. They have five children.



RICHARD H. ESHAM, MD, FACP

Dr. Esham is the eldest of four children born to Dr. Elwood Esham and Mrs. Ruth Opfer Esham of the rural northeastern Kentucky community of Vanceburg, into which his family migrated from Maryland in 1805. During his early years, he accompanied his father, one of only two physicians in the county, on home-call rounds throughout this impoverished area, learning firsthand the social, cultural, and economic limitations of modern medicine. During his grammar and high school years he became a skilled baseball pitcher, devoting many hours to the national pastime. Despite the lure of baseball, including college scholarship and professional offers, he entered Andrews University in 1960 to begin his pre-med studies. In 1963, having completed most of his college requirements in three years, he was accepted into the entering class at the University of Louisville School of Medicine, his father's alma mater. He returned to Berrien Springs, Michigan in the summer between medical school class years to complete his Bachelor of Arts degree in Zoology and graduated with honors in 1965. He completed medical school in 1967 and was accepted as a straight medicine intern at the University of Alabama in Birmingham. He served his internal medicine residency at UAB from 1968 to 1971. With the assistance of Dr. Thomas Sheehy he obtained a one-year military deferment to serve as Chief Medical Resident and Instructor in the Department of Medicine at UAB for Dr. T. Joseph Reeves,

Chairman. Following completion of his chief residency in 1972 he entered military service with the United States Army at Moncrief Army Hospital, Fort Jackson, South Carolina, where he served as chief of the internal medicine service. He received an honorable discharge in the summer of 1974 and was awarded the Army Commendation Medal.

In July of 1974, he joined Dr. C. Adrien Bodet, Jr. and Dr. Lloyd F. Pennington, Jr. at Internal Medicine Associates in Mobile, Alabama in the private practice of internal medicine. This group subsequently grew to six. In 1982 Dr. Esham, along with Dr. James L. Walker and Dr. Neil E. Wimberley, formed Mobile Diagnostic Center, which has become the largest multispecialty internal medicine group in Mobile. In May of 1990, he moved his practice and accepted a full-time faculty appointment as Professor of Medicine at the University of South Alabama to form and develop the new Division of General Internal Medicine and Geriatrics. Soon thereafter he obtained a three-year Federal General Internal Medicine residency training grant and began the Primary Care Track within the USA internal medicine residency program. As a part of this effort, he developed a Community-Based Preceptor Network of practicing internists in south Alabama to participate in the training of third-year medical students and internal medicine residents. He currently is Vice-Chairman of the Department of Internal Medicine, Director of the Division of General Internal Medicine and Geriatrics, Medical Director of the USA Student Health Services, and Medical Director of the Physician's Assistant Training Program.

In 1984, Dr. Esham was elected as a statewide member of the Medical Association of The State of Alabama's Board of Censors. As a result of that election he also became a member of the Alabama Board of Medical Examiners and the State Committee of Public Health of the Alabama Department of Public Health. He served two five-year terms in this capacity. In 1991, he was elected Vice-Chairman of the three Boards, and in 1992 he was elected Chairman, a position he held until rotating off the Boards in

1994. Among the accomplishments during these years was a statewide health care reform effort, the hiring of Dr. Donald Williamson as State Health Officer, and a collaborative attempt to define the role of physician extenders in Alabama.

Dr. Esham has long been active in the internal medicine community. He was certified by the American Board of Internal Medicine in 1971 and received the Added Qualifications in Geriatric Medicine in 1992. He became a member of the American College of Physicians in 1972 and was inducted as a Fellow in 1975. He has been a member of the Alabama ACP Council since 1984, as well as a member of the credentials committee, and liaison to MASA for legislative and government affairs. He has also been a longstanding member of the American Society of Internal Medicine and its Alabama Chapter, where he has been a member of the executive committee, secretary/treasurer, and is currently President-Elect. He has served as a member of the ASIM medical education committee since 1996 and represents the society on the General Internal Medicine Generalist Education Leadership Task Force, which recently received a four-year Federal grant for Community-Based Ambulatory Faculty Development.

Dr. Esham is or has been a member of the board of the following: The State of Alabama Health Planning Agency, the State of Alabama Board of Medical Scholarship Awards, the Physician Advisory Committee to UAB, the Blue Cross/Blue Shield of Alabama PMD Physicians Advisory Committee, the Alabama Rural Health Association, the USMLE Step III Item Development Committee, and the Mobile Area Chamber of Commerce. He is an Associate Councilor for the Southern Medical Association and on the Editorial Board of the SMA Journal. He has served as the Principal Investigator on several clinical trials and authored a variety of medical articles.

Dr. Esham's awards and honors include: Alpha Omega Alpha, 1993 Alabama State Nurses Association Outstanding Nonmember Award, Alabama Department of Public Health's Citation of

Meritorious Service, State of Alabama House of Representatives-House Joint Resolution of Commendation, MASA Recognition of Service Award, and 1994 ASIM Alabama Chapter Internist of the Year.

Dr. Esham's brothers, Bill, a urologist, and George, an internist, both practice in Portsmouth, Ohio. His sister, Faith, an internationally acclaimed opera singer, lives in New York City. He is married to Tamela Edwards Esham, a nurse-attorney, who is employed by the law firm of Armbrrecht, Jackson, Demouy, Crowe, Holmes, & Reeves, and specializes in medical malpractice defense. He is the father of three children: Ashley Ruth Esham, Richard Henry Esham II, and Clay Hamlet Esham.