Previous Winners

1988  Tom Sheehy, MD, FACP
1989  Basil I. Hirschowitz, MD, FACP
1990  Henry M. Gewin, MD, FACP
1990  Stanley S. Kahn, MD, FACP
1991  Jack J. Kirschenfeld, MD, FACP
1991  John M. Packard, MD, FACP
1992  John F. Burnum, MD, FACP
1992  S. Richardson Hill Jr., MD, FACP
1993  Samuel Eichold II, MD, FACP
1993  William W. Winternitz, MD
1994  H. Hamilton Hutchinson, MD, FACP
1994  James A. Pittman Jr., MD, MACP
1995  Dick D. Briggs Jr., MD, FACP
1995  Irving A. Koffler, MD, FACP
1996  Alan M. Siegal, MD, FACP
1996  Robert H. Lokey, MD, FACP
1997  J. Claude Bennet, MD, MACP
1997  John McDuffie McGehee, MD, FACP
1998  Wilmer J. Coggins, MD, FACP
1998  Richard H. Esham, MD, FACP
1999  Charles G. Cobbs, MD, FACP
1999  Richard O. Russell Jr., MD, FACP
2000  John B. Bass Jr., MD, MACP
2000  Peter W. Morris, MD, FACP
2001  Max Michael III, MD, FACP
2001  Keehn W. Berry Jr., MD, FACP
2002  William A. Curry, MD, FACP
2002  Arthur L. Ennis, MD, FACP
2003  William E. Dismukes, MD, MACP
2003  Pink L. Fulmar, MD, FACP
2004  Paul W. Burleson, MD, FACP
2004  Edwin A. Rutsky, MD, FACP
2005  Ben V. Branscomb, MD, FACP
2005  John M. McMahon, MD, FACP
2006  Roy F. Roddam, MD, FACP
2006  Frank D. Sutton Jr., MD, FACP
2007  James R. Bonner, MD, FACP
2007  Stephen Alvin Davis, MD, FACP
2008  Dennis G. Delgado, MD, FACP
2008  Billy Willard Boyd, MD, FACP
2009  Wickliffe J. Many Jr., MD, FACP
2009  Robert M. Centor, MD, FACP
2010  Maryella D. Sirmon, MD, FACP
2011  Gustavo Heudebert, MD, FACP
2012  William J. Koopman, MD, MACP
2013  Ross Vaughn, MD, FACP
2014  Anupam Agarwal, MD
2015  Lourdes C. Cormen, MD, FACP, FACR
2016  Charles Seth Landefeld, MD, FACP
2017  Charles Michael Soppe, MD, FACP
2018  Bernard H. Eichold II, MD, DrPH, FACP
2019  Vera Bittner, MD, MSPH, FACP

2020 Laureate Award

ACP
Alabama Chapter
American College of Physicians
Leading Internal Medicine, Improving Lives
Alabama Chapter 2020 Laureate Award
Jefferson Underwood III, MD, FACP

With great admiration and appreciation, the 2020 Laureate Award is presented to Jefferson Underwood III, MD, from Montgomery, Alabama. Dr. Underwood was born in 1955 to the late Jefferson Underwood II, MD, and his wife, Olean Underwood. His high school education was obtained from the St. Jude Educational Institute, where he graduated with honors. Dr. Underwood received his bachelor's degree from Alabama State University in 1977, where he graduated summa cum laude, and his medical degree from Meharry Medical College in Nashville. He did his internship and residency in internal medicine at the District of Columbia General Hospital/Georgetown University in Washington, DC. He has practiced internal medicine in Montgomery since 1984 and has given of himself to his community and his profession during his entire career. He was awarded the Douglas L. Cannon Award by the Medical Association of the State of Alabama (MASA) in 1985 for his radio shows “Lifeline” and “For Your Health.” He received the Alabama Young Democrats Achievement Award for Community Service in 1995, and he was recognized as Montgomery’s Top Doctor by the International Association of Internal Medicine in 2015. In addition, he was selected as Physician of the Year by the Montgomery County Medical Society in 2018.

Dr. Underwood served on the Board of the Alabama Chapter of the American College of Physicians during the 1990s and achieved Fellowship in 1999. He is a member of the American Medical Association; National Medical Association; American College of Physicians; Capital City Medical Society; Medical Society of Montgomery County, where he served as President from 2007 to 2008; and MASA.

A member of the Alabama Medical P&T Committee from 2000 to 2004, Dr. Underwood served as chairman from 2002 to 2004. He was Assistant Medical Director for Palliative Care at Baptist Medical Center South from 2008 to 2013. His civic activities include an appointment as Adjunct Professor in Biology Science at Alabama State University from 1996 to 1998. Dr. Underwood has served his community as a member of the board of directors for a number of organizations, including the Montgomery Area United Way, the Alliance for Responsible Individual Choices for AIDS/HIV, the Montgomery County Health Department Hunt Diabetic Clinic, Oxford Home Health, Central Alabama Home Health, and Father Walters Center for Gifted Children. He has also served on the Board for Habitat for Humanity and as Health Editor for the Montgomery Advertiser.

He served as Secretary-Treasurer for MASA from 2014 to 2015; Vice President from 2016 to 2017; President-elect from 2017 to 2018; and President from 2018 to 2019, becoming the first male African American President of this organization. His service in MASA has been distinguished by his leadership, empathy, and courage, particularly in view of his progressive disability of amyotrophic lateral sclerosis. Despite the weakness and weight loss from this disease, he has served the Association with passion and optimism. He continues to see his devoted patients in his office.

Dr. Underwood is admired for his career-long dedication to his practice, organized medicine, and his community but claims that his greatest achievement was marrying the former Sara Elizabeth Wallace of Tuskegee and being the proud father of three sons, Slayton, Blake, and Zachary. Tragically, his middle son Blake passed away in November 2018 while a freshman at the University of Alabama. Dr. and Mrs. Underwood have endowed a scholarship in his name for a minority student from Montgomery attending the University of Alabama.

At the April 2019 Annual Session of MASA, the Underwood Minority Scholarship Award was announced in his name to assist with the financial burden of medical school for African American students attending Alabama medical schools. Mark Jackson, Executive Director of MASA, noted, “Naming the scholarship in honor of Dr. Jefferson Underwood for his service to the Association, his patients, and his colleagues seemed only fitting.”

The Alabama Chapter is pleased to add Dr. Underwood to the list of Laureate awardees since 1988. His professionalism and service make the Chapter proud to honor him as a colleague, a friend, and an example of the best of the American College of Physicians.