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

It is a distinct pleasure that this year the Kansas Chapter of the ACP presents the Laureate Award to Steven W. Stites, MD, FACP. Dr. Stites is a long-standing and loyal supporter of the College, has rendered distinguished service to the Chapter, and has upheld the high ideals and professional standards for which the College is known. Dr. Stites has served as chair of the University of Kansas Medical Center’s Department of Internal Medicine since 2007. Since February 2013, he has also served as Senior Associate Dean for Clinical Affairs for the University of Kansas Medical Center, following ten months as Acting Executive Vice Chancellor.

Under Dr. Stites’ leadership, the Department of Internal Medicine has seen significant growth. Five Internal Medicine divisions – pulmonary medicine, nephrology, cardiology, oncology and gastroenterology – recently earned top 50 U.S. News and World Report rankings. The medical intensive care unit is one of the country’s best, with a Beacon Award to its name. In addition to his administrative responsibilities, Dr. Stites directs KU Medical Center’s Cystic Fibrosis Center, having founded the adult CF program in 1994. It’s now one of the larger adult programs in the U.S., with more than 150 patients. His areas of research include investigating different methods of airway clearance for adult CF patients and how these affect the distribution of inhaled medicines. He has also written at length on the ways and means of developing mission-based funding for academic departments: the Educational Value Unit (EVU) system – specifically aligning salary support for faculty with each individual’s educational responsibilities – which he published in 2005, has been adopted by several other institutions.

Stites is committed to enhancing KU Medical Center’s relationships with the surrounding community. For example, he has worked closely with the Swope Parkway Health Center to expand the footprint of federally qualified health centers (FQHC) in Kansas.

Stites is also known for emphasizing his “Five Rules,” which guide his approaches to life and learning:

1) Save the patient.
2) Do the right thing.
3) Ask questions, seek answers.
4) Be the bridge.
5) Those who laugh, last.