

2014 CHAPTER AWARDS



South Dakota Chapter



SD ACP Early Career Physician of the Year

Jennifer L. Hsu, MD, was raised in Wildwood, Missouri, and received her medical degree from the University of Missouri School of Medicine. Following medical school, she completed her Internal Medicine residency and Infectious Disease fellowship at the University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health in Madison, Wisconsin. In 2011, Dr. Hsu started at Sanford Health as an Infectious Disease specialist.

Dr. Hsu has been an Assistant Professor at the University of South Dakota Sanford School of Medicine since 2011. She has served as the Division Chief of Infectious Disease since 2012 and became the Associate Program Director of the Internal Medicine residency program in 2013. In 2014, she was recognized for her outstanding service to the Department of Internal Medicine as a recipient of the Chair Award. She has also been acknowledged for her clinical excellence as the "Doctor of the Month" at Sanford USD Medical Center and has over 15 peer-reviewed articles, chapters, and abstract presentations. In her free time, Dr. Hsu enjoys hiking with her husband and young son.

Over just a few years with the SD ACP, Dr. Hsu has served the chapter in many roles. She has moderated and presented at two state meetings, including lead on a SEP review module in Infectious Disease. She has also represented the chapter in discussions with medical students regarding the practice of Internal Medicine and its subspecialties.

SD ACP Teacher of the Year



Jitendra R. Thakkar, MD, FACP, is currently a practicing Hospitalist with the Hospitalist Program at Sanford USD Medical Center in Sioux Falls, SD. In addition to his clinical duties, he serves as Academic Faculty with the Internal Medicine department at the Sanford USD School of Medicine, where his teaching is held in high regard by medical students and residents alike. Dr. Thakkar also makes time for teaching residents at the Veterans Administration Hospital in Sioux Falls. After residency, Dr. Thakkar joined Sanford Health as a Hospitalist.

A native of India, Dr. Thakkar received his MD from Pramukh Swami Medical College in Gujarat, India. He is active on the Diabetes and Biomedical Ethics committees at Sanford, and is a member of the Society of Hospital Medicine, the South Dakota Medical Association, and the American College of Physicians. Dr. Thakkar has been active in the state chapter, serving as the Hospitalist representative on Council and moderating at chapter meetings and presenting cases in the annual favorite "Have I Got a Case for You."

Dr. Thakkar and his wife Shraddha have 2 boys, Rikhan (9) and Shaurya (7) who enjoy playing various sports including basketball, soccer, and flag football. The boys also enjoy playing cricket with their father. The family resides in Sioux Falls and are grateful to have found such a wonderful and welcoming community to raise their children.

(Over)

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SD ACP Laureate

LuAnn M. Eidsness, MD, FACP, grew up in Sioux Falls and received her undergraduate degree in nursing from Augustana College. After working for a while as a nurse, she obtained her medical degree from the USD School of Medicine in 1987 and graduated from the Internal Medicine Residency Program at USDSM. Currently, Dr. Eidsness is Professor and Chair of the Department of Internal Medicine at the Sanford School of Medicine of The University of South Dakota. She practices Hospice and Palliative Medicine at Sanford Clinic Palliative Care. She is a member of the AMA and an active member of the SDSMA. She has authored or been a co-author of numerous articles featured in South Dakota Medicine, and she was instrumental in helping develop an upcoming special edition of the journal on end-of-life care, acting as both an author and a point of contact for other contributors.



What follows is her story, in her own words ... “The decision to become a physician wasn’t an epiphany: It was a journey – and continues to be a lifelong journey.

It all started when I was a child, taking in every word of our unusual ‘family chats’ around the dinner table. I grew up with two older brothers and working parents. My mother worked as a nurse in a surgeon’s office, and my father was a funeral director. The dinner-table conversation frequently centered on our parents’ day. I was fascinated to listen to stories of how they cared for people, both living and dead. My mother’s stories often focused on the new medicines of that day and age and the importance of proper care. In those days funeral homes also functioned as the ambulance service with very basic first aid, so my father’s stories would be about scary ambulance rides. He described them as “pick up and run” to the nearest emergency room. I see these dining-room table conversations as my first formal education in health care and the first step in my journey to becoming a physician. I also learned that caring for people was much more than the science – it was heartfelt care.

My eight years working as a nurse were very influential in my growth as a physician. I grew up in the feminist 60s and 70s, when the National Organization of Women (NOW) was at its beginning. This assertive behavior of at times being outspoken did get me in some trouble, precipitating one physician with whom I worked to complain to hospital leadership that I should be fired! Fortunately I wasn’t.

My work as a neonatal nurse clinician sparked my interest in clinical ethics, and I received my master’s degree in ethics from Augustana College. Through my interest in ethics and palliative medicine, I was involved in a statewide SDSMA task force to revise South Dakota’s advance-directive statutes and develop an out-of-hospital DNR. I am currently involved in the Sioux Falls Bioethics Network, engaging in a discussion of the ethics of triage in an event of mass casualty or panflu epidemic. My clinical practice is hospice and palliative medicine, no doubt influenced by my parents during their life and in their dying and death and my work in ethics. I realized as a physician I could help people die with dignity and with comfort and help families in their struggle to let go.

As a physician, I remain grounded by often reflecting on the words from an anonymous source in the Hopkins Postdoctoral Survival Handbook: ‘To cure sometimes, to relieve often, to comfort always – this is our work. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it – Thou shalt treat thy patient as thou wouldst thyself be treated.’”

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