

Parker J. Palmer Courage to Teach Award
for Program Director Excellence



The Parker J. Palmer Courage to Teach Award honors program directors who find innovative ways to teach residents/fellows and to provide quality health care while remaining connected to the initial impulse to care for others in this environment. The ACGME congratulates the 2017 recipients of the Courage to Teach Award.



Vicki Shanker, MD

Program Director for Neurology
Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai Downtown
New York, NY

Nominators had this to say:

“Dr. Shanker has consistently and independently sought out every avenue to train and improve herself as an educator and program director. She [told me] about the Academy's resources for program directors and her need to study how others trained; despite her many other responsibilities, she attended yearly (or more) meetings and networked with other directors as well as our own GME office to learn as much as she could. She then creatively applied her growing knowledge to the

exigencies of our small program as it grew from two to three to four residents per year. How does a program with only five or six residents and relatively inexperienced faculty not overwhelm with duties and also provide a full spectrum, rich educational experience? Faculty development was key, and she established lectures, many given by herself; these included highly creative approaches to teaching faculty how to be improve their skills as teachers in both formal and bedside settings; how to provide feedback; how to mentor; how to detect resident stress and fatigue; and how to assess resident progress along their three year journey with us. We also needed to learn how to interview applicants and in the process we discussed and discovered, under her guidance, what we most valued as critical personal attributes needed to be a successful house officer, team player, and knowledgeable and compassionate professional. Her mission was not only to train residents, but also to train all of us, the faculty and me included. Some cajoling is not beneath her.”