

Parker J. Palmer Courage to Teach Award Recipients

John Frohna, MD

Pediatrics

University of Wisconsin Hospitals & Clinics, Madison, WI



Nominators had this to say:

“Good teachers possess a capacity for connectedness. They are able to weave a complex web of connections among themselves, their subjects, and their students.” (Palmer, *The Courage to Teach*, 1998) Individual mentorship is one of John’s greatest gifts and passions, and he achieves excellence in this through seamlessly weaving his use of himself as an example, both explicit in the personal conversations he has and implicit in the superb work he does; his possession of a superior knowledge and understanding of the salient features of a successful physician, educator, and leader; and his genuine investment in his mentees. One of John’s current residents states it well. When asked to comment on an impact that John is making at the *program* or *institutional* level, this resident responded:

“Dr. Frohna has a strong and obvious dedication to fostering the *individual* professional development of his residents.” This resident did not misunderstand the question. The truth is that John’s investment in individuals truly does impact the whole of the program and the institution through the forward-feeding of benefits found in the meaningful and close mentorship of those who carry out the mission of the program and the institution at multiple levels. Another resident adds: “Dr. Frohna is a champion for resident issues and education. On numerous occasions, I have spoken with him about several aspects of residency education – from elective options and conferences to philosophical ‘big picture’ discussions regarding the direction of our program. Dr. Frohna has an ability to listen – a quality that is much overlooked in educators. By doing so, he is able to structure this program and its residents into a group of well-qualified and knowledgeable pediatricians that can care for our children in the future.”