

Parker J. Palmer Courage to Lead Award



The Parker J. Palmer Courage to Lead Award honors designated institutional officials (DIOs) who have demonstrated excellence in overseeing residency and fellowship programs at their Sponsoring Institutions. DIOs have authority and responsibility for all graduate medical education (GME) programs in a teaching hospital, community hospital, or other type of institution that sponsors GME programs. Parker J. Palmer is the author of the book *The Courage to Teach*; his promotion of the concept of “living divided no more” has proven relevant to teaching in academic health centers.



John B. Waits, MD, CPE, FAAFP

Designated Institutional Official
Cahaba Medical Care
Centreville, Alabama

Nominators had this to say:

“Dr. Waits has a passion for rural/underserved medicine and believes in [educating and] training our residents and fellows in a learning environment that mirrors their future practice. To that end, he worked to establish an innovative longitudinal block diagram for our program designed to immerse residents in a real-life, highly mentored experience that equips them to “hit the ground running” after graduation. This experience takes residents out of the traditional block experiences dedicated to a single curricular experience and instead places them in a weekly and monthly schedule that better reflects the schedule of a full-spectrum family physician.”

“In 2013, when faced with the challenge of funding a newly accredited rural family medicine residency program, knowing that traditional Medicare GME funding would be difficult to secure, Dr. Waits led the charge to write a successful HRSA THCGME grant. Since that time, he secured two additional THCGME grants for expanded slots and is known at the federal level for being an expert in THCGME and residency funding. This ongoing grant funding has allowed CMC, even in the midst of resource-poor communities, to grow our residency education footprint.”

“In his dual role as CEO and DIO, Dr. Waits emphasizes the creation of an interdisciplinary team at each resident clinic. Our residents work alongside Advanced Practice Providers in a myriad of clinical experiences where the APP acts as a learner, colleague, or instructor. He ensures that our team of ancillary staff members (social workers, dietitians, nurses, medical assistants, ultrasound technicians, behavioral health counselors) collaborates with residents as part of their rotational experiences.”