

Letters to the UMB Community

Founders Week Award Winners Announced

To the UMB Community:

Every fall, we dedicate one week to commemorating UMB's rich history and to celebrating the future we're building together. Among the highlights of Founders Week is recognizing the extraordinary work of our faculty and staff. Four awards are given every year, each signifying outstanding accomplishment in one facet of our mission. I'm delighted to announce the recipients of our 2018 Founders Week Awards.

Entrepreneurs of the Year

MARS Team

Steven I. Hanish, MD

Thomas M. Scalea, MD, FACS, FCCM

Deborah M. Stein, MD, MPH, FACS, FCCM

School of Medicine

R Adams Cowley Shock Trauma Center

University of Maryland Medical Center

Liver failure is a devastating disease that affects around 1,600 patients in the U.S. each year. Modern medicine has developed a variety of devices to support failing organs - ventilators for the lungs, ventricular assist devices for the heart, dialysis for the kidneys. Until recently, there was nothing for the failing liver.

Thanks to these three outstanding physician-scientists and their innovative application of the Molecular Adsorbent Recirculating System (MARS) now there is hope. This "dialysis machine for the liver" can remove toxins, improve clotting, and reduce brain swelling. MARS can be used to buy time for the liver to recover. In some cases where recovery is not possible, MARS is a bridge to liver transplant.

The first use of MARS was at the R Adams Cowley Shock Trauma Center, where Dr. Scalea is physician-in-chief, Dr. Stein is chief of trauma, and Dr. Hanish is a liver transplant surgeon. A patient suffered gunshot wounds with irreparable liver damage. This provided the impetus to expand indications to other causes of acute severe liver failure, a new indication for the device.

Drs. Hanish, Scalea, and Stein have published the results of their life-saving work with the MARS in one of the largest studies to date, paving the way for other clinicians to use this device and affect countless lives. Their results using MARS as a bridge to recovery and/or transplant also could serve as an important first step in gaining FDA approval for liver transplant recipients.

Public Servant of the Year

Valli Meeks, DDS, MS, RDH

School of Dentistry

Clinical associate professor, Department of Oncology and Diagnostic Sciences

Dr. Meeks has made outstanding contributions to advancing oral health and public service both nationally and internationally in her 29 years at the School of Dentistry. Her accomplishments include pioneering innovations in the care of Marylanders living with HIV as well as raising oral health awareness and education in Rwanda.

In 1989, Dr. Meeks founded the PLUS Clinic at the School of Dentistry, the only dental clinic in Maryland to provide comprehensive oral health services to uninsured and underinsured people living with HIV/AIDS consistently for nearly 30 years. Through city and state funding secured by Dr. Meeks, almost 98 percent of PLUS Clinic patients receive care at no cost.

In 2013, Dr. Meeks partnered with the School of Medicine's Institute of Human Virology's JACQUES Initiative to reduce the number of new HIV infections by providing HIV testing in School of Dentistry clinics. In 2017, 293 HIV rapid tests were administered at the PLUS Clinic, a 165 percent increase from 2016.

Dr. Meeks' service goes beyond the Baltimore community. In Rwanda, she has helped address the country's oral health care crisis through the creation of a dental program at the University of Rwanda College of Medicine and Health Sciences. She continues to visit Rwanda to assist with the dental school's curriculum and bring donated dental equipment that she procures from suppliers and alumni.

Researcher of the Year

Karen L. Kotloff, MD

School of Medicine

Professor, Department of Pediatrics

Head, Division of Infectious Disease and Tropical Pediatrics

Associate Director, Clinical Studies, Center for Vaccine Development and Global Health

Dr. Kotloff's research focuses on the epidemiology of infectious diseases and their prevention with the use of vaccines in both the U.S. and developing countries. She is principal investigator of the Vaccine Treatment and Evaluation Unit at the School of Medicine's Center for Vaccine Development and Global Health (CVD).

She has been instrumental in advancing the understanding of infectious pathogens and preventive and therapeutic interventions for children around the globe.

She is best known for her research on diarrheal disease, and in particular *shigellosis*. Using a unique case-control design, Dr. Kotloff showed *Shigella* species to be a leading cause of diarrhea morbidity and mortality in children. Globally, diarrheal diseases are the second leading cause of death among children under 5.

CVD Director Kathleen Neuzil, MD, MPH, calls Dr. Kotloff the world's leading authority in human controlled infection models for *shigellosis*, and says she has performed more *Shigella* challenge studies than anyone in the world. She also has studied cholera, typhoid, and respiratory diseases like pneumonia.

Dr. Kotloff, who has spent her entire faculty career at the School of Medicine, starting in 1986, serves as an advisor to the World Health Organization, the Gates Foundation, the Food and Drug Administration, and others. She also is a proud mentor of fellows and junior faculty members, including several who have now developed their own independent successful research careers at the school.

Teacher of the Year

Geoffrey L. Greif, PhD, MSW
Professor, School of Social Work

Dr. Greif has made extraordinary contributions to education at the School of Social Work in his 34 years on the faculty. He is a distinguished scholar - author of 14 books and more than 125 journal articles and book chapters - but what he loves most is to teach and inspire the next generation of social workers.

He routinely wins the dean's teaching award (given when 95 percent of students rate faculty 15 on a 15-point scale). He teaches complicated clinical methods such as family therapy and group work. Yet he clearly succeeds. Students routinely rave about him.

Dr. Greif's upbeat and engaged manner in the classroom transmits to his students, who respond with similar engagement. He is notably sensitive to issues of difference, such as gender, race, and sexual orientation, and models for students how such differences can be broached in social work practice.

Chair of the SSW faculty for six years, Dr. Greif has served on many other committees at the school and University. He mentors junior faculty. He was associate dean from 1996 to 2007. Outside of campus, he is a member of community-based boards and led a fathering group for federal detainees at the Chesapeake Detention Center from 2011 to 2016.

In recent years, Dr. Greif has explored horizontal relationships with his books *Buddy System: Understanding Male Friendships*, *Two Plus Two: Couples and Their Couple Friendships*, and *Adult Sibling Relationships*.

I'm so grateful we have Founders Week to showcase these remarkable colleagues and their remarkable achievements. I offer each winner my heartfelt thanks and congratulations.

For more on the Founders Week events, including the awards presentation at the Founders Gala on Saturday, Oct. 13, visit *The Elm* and Founders Week websites in the weeks to come.

Sincerely,

Jay A. Perman, MD

President