

Parker J. Palmer Courage to Teach Award



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



Michael Aylward, MD, FACP, FAAP

Internal Medicine and Pediatrics
University of Minnesota
Minneapolis, Minnesota

Nominators Had This to Say:

“Dr. Aylward’s track record of community engagement, service, and social justice work spans his work as a program director, a clinician, and as an advocate for those less advantaged. Providing care for an underserved community at the Community University Health Care Center (CUHCC) allows Dr. Aylward to role model and mentor future clinicians in areas of health equity and advocacy. Residents at CUHCC, over their four years, become fully integrated in all aspects of the patient care model and regularly see how social determinants of health affect patient outcomes. The health equity and advocacy leadership track he developed adds an explicit curriculum to address the root societal causes of health disparities at the system, community, and legislative levels.”

“The policies and procedures that Dr. Aylward promotes facilitate an effective learning environment through a focus on resident well-being. This includes a flexible PTO policy, resident professional development/advocacy days, transparent and predictable resident scheduling, and regular resident virtual check-in meetings. He also developed a Med-Peds peer coverage system that allows residents to more easily attend curricular and programmatic events regardless of rotation, and created an annual program improvement survey to identify specific resident needs.”

“Dr. Aylward recognizes that improving health equity requires an interprofessional approach. Clinic residents work and spend time with pharmacists, social workers, mental health professionals, and dental professionals as part of the Block Experience in Continuity Clinic, and as part of their regular continuity clinic experience. Learners from pharmacy and nursing are invited and attend the continuity clinic educational sessions, which include an advocacy component as well as a practical discussion of how to facilitate culturally and socially relevant care.

Additionally, the Med-Peds program has monthly education sessions that regularly include social workers, mental health professionals, and outreach workers. For example, a recent meeting included HIV case managers and nurses working with victims of Commercial Sexual Exploitation and runaway youth.”