



Awards for Excellence in Psychiatric Education: Target Groups, Purposes, and Value

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“Silent gratitude isn’t very much use to anyone.”
—Gertrude Stein, quoted by Pfeiffer [1]

“Don’t worry when you are not recognized but strive to be worthy of recognition.”
—Abraham Lincoln [2]

Awards in psychiatric education honor those who have gone above and beyond in their work; who are committed to the missions of academic, clinical, or community psychiatry; who motivate and mentor their colleagues and students; and who embody the ideals of professionalism and selflessness. Through awards, professional organizations distinguish and celebrate their extraordinary members and inspire others in their daily efforts. Awards help professional organizations fulfill their commitments to nurture and grow the knowledge, attitudes, and skills of members, especially those who are early in their career, and to maintain professional missions and traditions of value. Rewarding individuals in psychiatric education highlights the importance of the field as a whole while promoting a culture of excellence and gratitude.

Because of the importance of awards to professional societies, we were interested in learning about psychiatric educational awards administered by some psychiatric organizations

in North America, including their target groups, purposes, and utility or value for the field of academic psychiatry. We were especially interested to learn how awards might encourage certain values such as compassion, creativity, and mentorship; how awards contribute to promotions and career trajectories; how awards contribute to educational research; and how awards promote exemplary evidence-based care to patients, families, and communities. To this end, we chose to describe educational awards administered by the sponsoring organizations of *Academic Psychiatry*, including the American Association of Chairs of Departments of Psychiatry, American Association of Directors of Psychiatric Residency Training (AADPRT), Association for Academic Psychiatry (AAP), and Association of Directors of Medical Student Education in Psychiatry (ADMSEP). Given our focus on national, as opposed to local, awards, we also describe awards by some other national organizations of interest, including the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry (AACAP), the American College of Psychiatrists (The College), the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME), the American Psychiatric Association (APA), and the Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC). We also comment on some issues pertaining to the selection of awardees and on the implications of our findings for the field of academic psychiatry.

Taken together, the analysis and commentary in this editorial aim to underscore the importance of awards in clinical and academic environments where there are many competing demands. We posit that greater appreciation of existing awards across career trajectories may help to discern any additional needs or directions.

Search Strategy

We searched the website of each of the sponsoring organizations of *Academic Psychiatry* for information about national

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educational awards [3–6]. We conducted the same search on the websites of AACAP [7], The College [8], APA [9], American Board of Psychiatry and Neurology (ABPN) [10], ACGME [11], and AAMC [12]. We categorized the retrieved information on national educational awards by the career level of potential recipients (or target groups), organizational sponsor(s), and the description and purpose(s) of the award. We also categorized the information in terms of whether the awards were competitive or based on established criterion alone, the numbers assigned, their duration, and whether any formal expectations were placed on recipients.

We then conducted a literature search for relevant articles related to educational awards. We searched the websites of *Academic Psychiatry* and other educational journals using combinations of search terms including *educational awards*, *psychiatry*, and *teaching*. We then conducted a search over several months up until December 2021 using the databases of PubMed and PsycInfo to find articles related to the utility or value of educational awards, including information on how awards might promote an academic career.

We did not consider awards that primarily provided clinical or research experiences, such as the Jeanne Spurlock Minority Medical Student Fellowship Awards sponsored by the APA or the Summer Medical Student Fellowships sponsored by AACAP, which provide primarily clinical or research experiences. Similarly, we excluded the Research Mentorship Award sponsored by the APA. We also excluded several educational awards with a strong administrative focus, such as the John Gienapp Award of the ACGME, which honors those who have dedicated themselves to graduate medical education and to the enhancement of residency education and ACGME accreditation activities, and the ABPN's senior administrative fellowship. We excluded poster awards in medical education research as well. Our selections are not intended to be fully inclusive.

Selected Awards

We selected 4 educational awards for medical students (Table 1), 13 for residents and fellows (Table 2), and 18 for faculty of varying seniority (Table 3). We also found two institutional awards (not included in the tables) targeted to support residency training programs or psychiatric education. One award, known as the Victor J. Teichner Award, is sponsored by both AADPRT and the American Academy of Psychodynamic Psychiatry and Psychoanalysis. This award enables a scholar of psychodynamic principles to visit and teach to a program lacking in psychodynamic teachers and resources. A second award, known as the Award for Creativity in Psychiatric Education, is supported by The College and is open to any creative or innovative program for psychiatric education that has been in operation for at least 2 years in the USA or Canada. The award is presented primarily to a department or university or national initiative or national training program for a course, curriculum, or fellowship.

All awards were competitive, almost all at national levels, and none was criterion-based. Three were competitive within training programs, including the Resident Recognition Award (Table 2) and the Roeske and Irma Bland awards (Table 3). The number of award participants was limited only by the number of training programs. Several awards were competitive both at the level of the training program or medical school and nationally, including the Resident Psychiatric Educator, George Ginsberg, and Laughlin Fellowship awards (Table 2), and the Early Career Development and Robert J. Glaser awards (Table 3).

Follow-up expectations of awardees were generally very limited. Three awards imposed substantial academic requirements on recipients: the Nyapati Rao and Francis Lu International Medical Graduate Fellowship and the PRITE

Table 1 Characteristics of selected psychiatry educational awards for medical students

Award type	Target group	Sponsoring organization	Description and primary purpose	Numbers awarded annually	Duration	Post-award expectations
Essay	USA or Canada	AAP	Honors outstanding academic promise determined by an unpublished essay	1	N/A	Poster presentation at AAP meeting
Life members mentorship grant	USA	AACAP	Enables attendance and mentorship at an AACAP meeting	Contingent on funding	N/A	Follow-up report
Summer Mentoring Program	Racial or ethnic minorities	APA	Exposure to a setting when working closely with a psychiatrist mentor	8	1 month	N/A
Travel Scholarship	USA	APA	Attendance and mentorship at an APA meeting	10	N/A	N/A

Legend: AAP Association for Academic Psychiatry, AACAP American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, APA American Psychiatric Association, N/A not applicable

Table 2 Characteristics of selected educational awards for psychiatry residents

Award type	Target group	Sponsoring organization	Description and primary purpose	Numbers awarded annually	Duration	Post-award expectations
Resident Psychiatric Educator	Residents	AAP	Honoring merit of those “with particular promise as educators and scholars”	8	2 years	Presentation at AAP meeting
George Ginsberg	Residents	AADPRT	Acknowledges excellence and accomplishments of outstanding residents interested in education and teaching	5	N/A	Pursuit of a career as a clinician-educator
Peter Henderson Memorial	General or child and adolescent psychiatry resident	AADPRT	Best unpublished work in child and adolescent psychiatry	1	N/A	N/A
Nyapati Rao and Francis Lu International Medical Graduate Fellowship	International medical graduate with leadership potential and interest in residency education	AADPRT	Promotes professional growth	5	1 year or more	Scholarly project
David Leach	Residents and Fellows or Resident and Fellow teams	ACGME	Recognizes innovation and improvements in residency programs	5	1 year	N/A
PRITE Fellowship	General (year 2, 3) or child and adolescent psychiatry resident (Year 1)	The College	Provides a resident perspective to the exam and builds question-writing skills	Not specified	1 year with renewal possible	Participation in question writing, editing, and referencing exam items
Laughlin Fellowship	3 rd -, 4 th -, and 5 th -year residents or fellows	The College	Recognizes those who are deemed likely to make a significant contribution to the field of psychiatry	12	N/A	Participation in annual meeting educational functions
Resident Recognition	Residents or fellows	APA	Member-in-training who exemplifies one or more APA values	1 per program	N/A	N/A
Alexandra Symonds and Martin Fellowship	Women residents	Association of Women Psychiatrists	Developing women as psychiatrist leaders	1	1 year	Engagement in association activities
Rappeport Fellowship	3 rd - and 4 th -year residents	AAPL	Outstanding residents with interests in psychiatry and the law	6	1 year	Attend annual meeting Forensic Psychiatry Review Course
Sheldon Miller Early Career Award	3 rd -year psychiatry residents	AAAP	Honors residents demonstrating an interest and promise in addiction psychiatry	Not specified	2 years	N/A
Award for Excellence in Psychotherapy	Residents	Austen Riggs Center	Honors residents with an interest in and talent for the practice of psychotherapy	10	1 year	N/A
Trainee Editorial Fellow	Residents and fellows	Academic Psychiatry	Develops academic psychiatry leaders	2	1 year	Editorial functions at <i>Academic Psychiatry</i>

Legend: AAP Association for Academic Psychiatry, AADPRT American Association for Directors of Psychiatric Residency Training, ACGME Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education, PRITE Psychiatry Resident-In-Training Examination, The College American College of Psychiatrists, APA American Psychiatric Association, AAPL American Academy of Psychiatry and the Law, AAAP American Academy of Addiction Psychiatry, N/A not applicable

Table 3 Characteristics of selected educational awards for psychiatry faculty

Award type	Target group	Sponsoring organization	Description and primary purpose	Numbers awarded annually	Duration	Post-award expectations
Early Career Development	Instructor or assistant professor	AAP	Facilitate career development and recognize promising junior faculty	8	N/A	Network, mentoring, learning, and sharing teaching techniques, skills, and innovations
Roberts	Any level	AAP	Honoring educators and specifically mentors who have modeled academic careers and fostered others through mentorship	1	N/A	N/A
Psychiatric Educator	Associate professor or above	AAP	Honoring excellence in a senior educator with a long-term, sustained impact and national or international reputation further exemplified by an outstanding educational program	1	N/A	Presentation at AAP meeting
Lifetime Achievement	National or international leader	AAP	Recognizes long-term contributions to education, specifically to AAP	1	N/A	N/A
Lifetime Service	AADPRT member	AADPRT	Acknowledges a psychiatrist who has provided significant service to AADPRT, including having had an impact on psychiatry residency education nationally	1	N/A	N/A
Junior Faculty Teaching – Devnell Vaidya	Early career ADMSEP member	ADMSEP	Recognizes the demonstration of excellence in teaching, mentoring, and curricular innovations for medical students	1 or more	N/A	N/A
Innovations MedEdPORTAL	ADMSEP member	ADMSEP	Recognizes an outstanding project or program in medical student education	1	N/A	N/A
Publication	ADMSEP member	ADMSEP	Recognizes dissemination of educational scholarship or research	1	N/A	N/A
Scholarly Publication	ADMSEP member	ADMSEP	Recognizes publication of a peer-reviewed educational scholarly manuscript	1	N/A	N/A
Fred Sierles	Senior ADMSEP member	ADMSEP	Recognizes leadership and excellence in psychiatric education	1	N/A	N/A
Faculty Innovation in Education	ABPN certified	ABPN	Advances innovative approaches to education and assessment	2	1 year	N/A
Parker Courage to Teach	Any specialty Program Directors	ACGME	Honors innovative ways to teach residents	9 (in 2018)	N/A	N/A
Roeske	APA member	APA	Outstanding and sustaining contributions to medical student education	1 per program	N/A	N/A
Irma Bland	APA member	APA	Recognizes outstanding and sustaining contributions to resident education	1 per program	N/A	N/A
Vestermark Gold Humanism Scholar	Senior educator Any discipline health profession educators	APA/NIMH Gold Foundation	Recognizes excellence, leadership, and creativity in education Supports health profession educators on projects focused on achieving humanistic care	1	N/A	Presentation at APA
Arnold Gold Humanism in Medicine	Any specialty medical student mentor	Gold Foundation and AAMC	Honors a caring and compassionate mentor for medical students	1	N/A	Development and presentation of an educational project
Robert J. Glaser	Any specialty clinical teacher (USA and Canada)	Alpha Omega Alpha Honor Medical Society and AAMC	Provides national recognition to faculty who have distinguished themselves in medical student education	2	N/A	N/A

Fellowship (Table 2) and the Gold Humanism Scholar Award (Table 3). Each of these awards required an additional year of work on a project. Four of the selected awards were open to disciplines other than psychiatry, including the Parker Courage to Teach Award, the Gold Humanism Scholar Award, the Arnold Gold Humanism in Medicine Award, and the Robert J. Glaser Award. As can be seen in Tables 1, 2, and 3, awards commonly honor outstanding academic promise or achievements or promote academic and professional growth.

Related Literature

We found four articles that formally evaluated the utility of educational awards in psychiatry [13–16]. Two of these concerned a teaching award in one psychiatry department [13, 14], and two were national surveys of recipients of national fellowship awards [15, 16]. In the single departmental surveys [13, 14], most respondents supported teaching awards, although a majority of respondents also reported that they would not make any teaching changes because of an award.

In the two national surveys, recipients of national fellowship awards perceived that the award was beneficial to their professional development [15, 16]. A majority of responding award recipients from five professional organizations over a 22-year period (response rate 25%; $N=182$) valued meeting colleagues, leaders, mentors, or experts in the field; the prestige associated with the award; and networking and learning about academic and organizational psychiatry [15]. The second national survey [16] evaluated the perceptions of prior recipients of The College's Laughlin and Psychiatry Resident-In-Training Examination (PRITE) awards (response rate 30%). Respondents endorsed fellowships as having helped in overall professional development, building a network of colleagues, and advancing scholarly work and other aspects of professional work. Most respondents also assumed a leadership role in professional organizations, although the findings were limited by the absence of a control or comparison group.

Discussion

Professional organizations in psychiatry are heavily committed to rewarding educational potential and achievements. The awards described here represent many areas of educational activity and all career levels. All awards selected by our search strategy were competitive but not standard- or criterion-based, and all recognized achievements or potential. Our focus was on educational awards, although these overlap with leadership, clinical innovation, community benefit, and advocacy. Education is not simply defined as teaching or mentoring but

incorporates education into the clinical, community, and other wider contexts.

Several of the awards had built-in education components or requirements for ongoing mentor-supported academic activities. For example, the PRITE fellowship not only helps advance psychiatric knowledge but also instructs residents on evaluation instruments and the metrics of assessment and question writing. The Nyapati Rao and Francis Lu International Medical Graduate Fellowship connects an awardee to a faculty mentor of the awardee's choice over the course of the year in order to seek solutions to professional and acculturation needs and to complete a scholarly project. Our own newly established Trainee Editorial Fellowship at *Academic Psychiatry* promotes skills related to editorial functions with the anticipation and hope that fellows will eventually take on more senior editorial roles.

We note that few awards supported by the sponsoring organizations of *Academic Psychiatry* specifically target educational research or scholarship. Those that do target educational research or scholarship include AAP's essay award for medical students and ADMSEP's MedEdPORTAL Publication and Scholarly Publication awards. Several other awards, such as the Vestermark and Robert J. Glaser awards, have educational research productivity built into their criteria for selection. We excluded poster awards given by professional organizations in this analysis, although the APA, for example, provides certificates for the best posters by medical students or residents at its annual meeting, some of which will have an educational theme. None of the selected awards applied directly to scholarly or educational research work completed by psychiatry residents, although residency is an opportune time to begin working in these areas.

We also found few awards directed toward the recognition of exceptional women in academic psychiatry. Two of the awards sponsored by the Association of Women Psychiatrists are of interest, however, and may serve as model examples for new awards specifically for women: the Leah Dickstein Medical Student Award, recognizing a medical student who best exemplifies a spirit of creativity, energy, and leadership, and the Marian Butterfield Early Career Psychiatrist Award, recognizing women psychiatrists who have established significant early professional careers [17]. Evidence drawn from past studies suggests that women are less likely to remain in academic medicine than men and are less likely to have a senior leadership role even when accounting for academic activity [18]. In addition, in some medical specialty societies, women may be underrepresented as award recipients [19, 20].

There were few awards honoring members who identify as belonging to underrepresented minority groups. The summer mentoring program of the APA benefits individuals who identify as a racial minority, and the Nyapati Rao and Francis Lu International Medical Graduate Fellowship is for international medical graduates. Although we did not assess the

characteristics of award recipients sponsored by the psychiatric organizations included here, awards directly oriented to women and/or to individuals from minority groups underrepresented in medicine may provide additional support and encouragement to those pursuing an academic career. We advocate for our organizations to look for additional opportunities to create awards for women and individuals who identify as belonging to minority groups. We also advocate for clear criteria for judging potential and merit to reduce the possibility of bias in decisions. Given that all awards provide an opportunity to address inequities in academic psychiatry and academic medicine, we suggest that gender and minority status should be considered in deliberations on who merits recognition. This suggestion is in line with our recommendation to consider gender in decisions about which qualified candidates should be provided editorial leadership opportunities at *Academic Psychiatry* [21].

No awards explicitly recognized contributions of individuals with especially non-normative career progressions and/or intersectional backgrounds, such as those who joined the field of psychiatry later in life. These individuals often bring unique experience and insight into the field and expand our model of professionalism to include non-normative careers. We suggest that awards should be extended to such groups to elevate their exemplary contributions and to rationally expand the set of models and behaviors the field associates with professionalism.

Although we excluded single medical school and departmental awards from consideration, limited evidence suggests that these awards have a positive impact on psychiatrists [15, 16]. Departmental awards in other specialty areas also contribute to promotion and inspire teaching [22]. Evidence that pertains to the impact of receiving an institutional award on teaching and students' learning outcomes is limited [23]. We also did not describe methods of recognition, whether by certificates or plaques, monetary gifts or travel funds, or other means. We also did not describe the procedures of the selection of award recipients. Potential selection biases might be reduced by specific training for those on the selection panel. For one example, the AAMC aims to reduce the potential for bias and subjectivity in decision-making by requiring the Robert J. Glaser Award adjudicatory panel to review relevant materials [24–26] and undergo training.

In conclusion, we found a rich and wide variety of educational awards available across career levels in psychiatry sponsored by professional organizations. Clear areas for expansion, especially in light of the composition of the field of psychiatry, include specifically strengthening the approach to awards for women, individuals who identify as belonging to minority groups, and those with non-normative career paths; directly rewarding educational research or scholarship; and fostering longer term mentoring relationships and educational projects. We also see a need to support further research

on the potential academic impacts of awards, especially by utilizing longitudinal designs and incorporating control or matched comparison groups of non-recipients. Educational awards also need to be evaluated in terms of their context, not necessarily only in the classroom, but including the promotion of knowledge and evidence-based practices in communities and for the public.

Recognizing excellence, advancing equity, honoring outstanding role models, fostering academic growth and attainments, and maintaining the missions of our professional organizations are critically important components of the work of academic psychiatry. Educational awards and their processes, representativeness, and purposes, taken together, are an expression of our profession, and this analysis suggests considerable work is to be done with respect to equity in recognition of achievement in our field. Education awards, for many reasons, deserve our very close attention.

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