



The Pennsylvania Geriatrics Society – Western Division

Promoting geriatric education to all healthcare professionals

2017 GERIATRICS TEACHER OF THE YEAR AWARD

The Society is pleased to announce the recipients of the Geriatrics Teacher of the Year Award.

The award is presented to outstanding teachers for their dedication and commitment to geriatrics education. Each exemplifies geriatrics teaching excellence and has made significant contributions to the education and training of learners in geriatrics and to the progress of geriatrics education across the health professions.

Debra K. Weiner, MD, FACP

Dr. Weiner currently serves as program director, Geriatric Medicine Fellowship Training Program, and professor, Medicine, Psychiatry, and Anesthesiology at the University of Pittsburgh. She is on staff at the Geriatric Research Education and Clinical Center at the VA Pittsburgh Healthcare System and serves on many of its committees.

“Dr. Weiner’s teaching style is highly developed and fine turned. She opens the eyes of trainees to what high quality assessment and management can be --- and the trainees respond with enthusiasm for the rewarding techniques she teaches.” (Excerpt from nomination submittal.)



Pamela E. Toto, PhD, OTR/L, BCG, FAOTA

Dr. Toto has served as assistant professor, Department of Occupational Therapy, School of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences, University of Pittsburgh since 2011 and has been the program director for the Clinical Science Doctorate in Occupational Therapy Program since 2015. Dr. Toto is also a geriatric clinical consultant, UPMC Centers for Rehab Services in McKeesport.

“Dr. Toto’s enthusiasm for the field of geriatrics is truly contagious. She was the first occupational therapist in the United States to become Board Certified in Gerontology by the AOTA (2000). Since that distinction, she has mentored peers to pursue this distinguished certification and has become a role model in the field of geriatrics for the now 27 board certified practitioners.” (Excerpt from nomination submittal.)



Vincent M. Balestrino, MD

Dr. Balestrino is Director of Geriatric Services at UPMC St. Margaret, expanding their service line to include a Geriatric Care Center in Oakmont. He was a pioneer in establishing palliative care services at UPMC St. Margaret Hospital, and has held leadership roles at Gateway Hospice and Family Hospice and Palliative Care. In April 2015, he took on a new role as Senior Medical Director of Presbyterian SeniorCare.

“His commitment to both learners and the geriatric community is second to none. He has been for many years excellent at and well respected for what he does by patients and colleagues. He has been a champion of nursing home and end-of-life care and has brought those areas to the forefront in Western Pennsylvania.

Dr. Balestrino has always been an inspiring leader to not only me, but all of the other trainees whom he has taught.” (Excerpt from nomination submittal.)

