In 2011, the Faculty Advisory Committee (FAC) began a tradition of honoring our fellow faculty members for their contributions to our collective missions of excellence in education, research, diversity and inclusion, program innovation, service to the community and patient care. I am pleased that these awards have become an annual tradition that is now in its 5th year. I would like to thank those of you who nominated your colleagues for these awards as well as the members of the Faculty Advisory Committee, led this year by co-chairs Fuad Baroody, Harriet de Wit and Ron Rock.

Thank you for joining us here today to honor these 13 faculty members who continue to inspire our work in countless ways.

It is particularly meaningful that these awards are peer nominated and selected. This year, the FAC reviewed 34 nominations; the 13 award winners are highly distinguished, representing a number of departments and areas of excellence.

**Presentation of the Awards**

- As we begin the ceremony, I will ask each winner to come up when your name is called.
- Members of the FAC have agreed to help hand out the awards.
Distinguished Award for Diversity and Inclusion

This year’s **Distinguished Service and Advocacy Award** goes to:

**Nancy Schwartz**, Professor of Pediatrics and Biochemistry and Molecular Biology  
**Nominated by** Vicky Prince

- Nancy has worked tirelessly since joining the faculty in 1975 to promote a more inclusive, diverse, welcoming, and open environment for all of our students and trainees.
- She has held numerous leadership positions and currently serves as Dean for Postdoctoral Affairs.
- She serves as the BSD’s primary recruiter, traveling around the country to key schools and national meetings trying to attract diverse trainees to the BSD’s graduate programs.
- This year, as a result of her efforts and others, we will have a remarkable 18 URM graduate students matriculating (30% of our domestic students).
- Nationally, she has frequently been invited as a keynote speaker at educational meetings, consistent with her national reputation in diversity and educational leadership.
- At our own institution, she has recently developed and directed two NIH funded programs that promote diversity-
  - **Post Baccalaureate Research Education Program (PREP)** provides research opportunities for undergraduate URM students to train in the laboratories of faculty here, enabling them to develop competitive applications to graduate programs in the sciences.
  - The **Initiative for Maximizing Student Development** program which provides stipend support for first and second year underrepresented minority students along with extensive programming designed to enhance training and ensure success.
- Please join me in congratulating **Nancy Schwartz** with the **Distinguished Faculty Award for Diversity and Inclusion**
Distinguished Investigator

Next, we turn to the award that honors achievement in scientific research: the Distinguished Investigator Award.

Junior Award: Sliman Bensmaia, Assistant Professor of Organismal Biology & Anatomy,
Nominated by Robert Ho.
  • Trained as a Neurobiologist, Dr. Bensmaia studies how the sense of touch is coded and interpreted by the nervous system.
  • He developed a novel, comprehensive model for how physical signals are translated into Neuronal signals that travels to the brain where they interpret information about texture, pressure and movement.
  • He has elucidated the most complete model to date for how information is processed at the skin receptor level, making him an emerging leader in the area of somatosensation.
  • In addition to this important basic research, Sliman has applied these discoveries into new paradigms for incorporating sensory feedback onto next generation of neuro-prosthetic devices.
  • Please join me in recognizing Sliman Bensmaia with the Distinguished Investigator Award.

Senior Award: Paul Sereno, Professor of Organismal Biology & Anatomy
Nominated by Zhe-Xi Luo
  • Dr. Sereno is a distinguished paleontologist who has made numerous contributions to our scientific understanding of dinosaurs.
  • He is known worldwide as a courageous explorer and passionate science educator.
  • Since joining the University of Chicago in 1987, he has made numerous break-through discoveries which have contributed to the renaissance of studies of dinosaurs over the last 30 years.
  • In Argentina, Paul’s team discovered some of the earliest known representatives of major dinosaur clades including the new dinosaur Eoraptor.
  • He has also discovered a wide-range of morphologically disparate and distinctive dinosaurs from Africa.
  • Please join me in honoring Paul Sereno with the Distinguished Investigator Award.
The **Distinguished Clinician Award** is designed to recognize excellence in clinical care as defined by compassion and advocacy for patients, reputation for medical expertise and clinical excellence.

**Junior Award: Blase Polite, MD, MPP** Assistant Professor of Medicine  
**Nominated by** Dr. Walt Stadler, Philip Hoffman and Hedy Kindler.  
- Dr. Polite is an Assistant Professor in the Section of Hematology/Oncology  
- He is not only a consummate clinician, focused on the care of Gastroenterology cancer patients, but also an emerging national leader in **cancer health policy**.  
- Dr. Polite is well known as the go-to person for colorectal cancer patients and has developed a strong referral base.  
- As evidence of his dedication to training, he has been awarded the Section Fellows Teaching Award.  
- In addition to this critical clinical and educational work, he has led an important initiative at the U of Chicago to develop our ability to take on risk contracts in Oncology an important direction for the future.  
- Please join me in congratulating **Blase Polite** as we present him with the **Distinguished Clinician Award**.

**Senior Award: Aytekin Oto, MD**, Professor of Radiology & Surgery  
**Nominated by** Greg Karczmar.  
- Dr. Oto combines outstanding diagnostic skills with an active and innovative program in translational prostate cancer research.  
- At the University of Chicago, he has worked to develop new MRI methods for diagnosis and treatment of prostate cancer, and is considered a **worldwide expert in prostate cancer diagnosis**.  
- He pioneered new approaches to diffusion-weighted imaging and T2-weighted imaging of prostate cancer.  
- This work has led to new diagnostic parameters that are sensitive to Gleason score, opening up the possibility for non-invasive spatially resolved measurements of cancer grade.  
- In addition to his national reputation for clinical excellence and important research, he is also an outstanding educator who cares deeply about his students.  
- Please join me in honoring **Aytekin Oto** with the **Distinguished Clinician Award**.
Distinguished Community Service and Advocacy

The Distinguished Community Service and Advocacy Award is designed to recognize contributions that have a direct impact on the community, leveraging institutional resources and collaborations for the betterment of the community.

Jill Glick, Professor of Pediatrics
Nominated by Alisa McQueen

• This year’s awardee is being recognized for her tremendous advocacy on behalf of child abuse victims.
• When she arrived at the University of Chicago in 1988, this program did not exist and training in this area was limited. She founded the Child Protective Services Team here in 1993.
• This multi-disciplinary group is dedicated to the identification, protection and care of child abuse victims. This CPS team is now consulted on approximately 350 cases per year.
• Having demonstrated incredible leadership in this area at the University of Chicago, she expanded the scope and effectiveness of these efforts by developing a city-wide consortium of child abuse specialists in Chicago.
• This Multi-Disciplinary Pediatric Education and Evaluation Consortium is a city-wide formal collaboration among child welfare, law enforcement, criminal justice and medical professionals. The first of its kind in the nation.
• For this incredible commitment to service and advocacy for children, please join me in honoring Jill Glick with the Distinguished Community Service and Advocacy Award.
Program Innovation

Our next category is **Program Innovation**. This award is designed to recognize outstanding faculty leaders who have developed innovative programs that have improved the quality of the BSD and/or the Medical Center. I am delighted that the FAC has identified three individuals to honor in this category.

**Distinguished Leader in Program Innovation**

**Junior Award: Alexander Langerman, MD, Assistant Professor of Surgery.**
**Nominated by:** Robert Naclerio
- Dr. Langerman is an Assistant Professor in the section of Otolaryngology (Head and Neck Surgery).
- He is a busy surgeon with an active research program.
- About 2 years ago, Alex noticed inefficiencies in the functioning of the operating room including the inability to gather all data points from adverse events and later analyze those events to improve inefficiencies and reduce errors.
- To address this complex problem, he partnered with colleagues in Surgery, the Booth School of Business, and Argonne to establish the Operative Performance Research Institute (OPRI) located adjacent to the operating rooms in the Center for Care and Discovery.
- The new institute focuses on 3 areas: cost reduction, dynamic operational mapping, and the use of technology to monitor operating rooms.
- Langerman is developing an App which will allow each member of the operative team to improve his or her role in real time as the operation proceeds.
- Please join me in honoring Alexander Langerman with the Distinguished Leader in Program Innovation Award.

**Senior Award: Ken Nunes, MD, Associate Professor of Surgery.**
**Nominated by** Ernst Lengyel
- Dr. Nunes is being honored for his work as the Executive Medical Director of the Women’s Care Center.
- Within 5 years, Dr. Nunes has transformed the UCM labor and delivery to a unit that delivers superior care.
- When Dr. Nunes arrived in 2010, he developed a series of creative strategies to improve patient outcomes and patient satisfaction.
- He did this through forming and leading multi-disciplinary teams that identified areas for quality improvement through incident reporting and root cause analysis and then worked to create standardized practices and protocols to improve care.
- Dr. Nunes also helped design our new Labor and Delivery Unity scheduled to open in Comer in June 2016 that includes innovative approaches to patient and provider flow
• Please join me in honoring Ken Nunes with the Distinguished Leader in Program Innovation Award.

Senior Award: Mohan Gundeti, MD, Associate Professor of Surgery, Obstetrics & Gynecology and Pediatrics

Nominated by Arieh Shalhav
• Over the course of his 7 years here, Dr. Gundeti founded a minimally invasive robotic pediatric urology program here and established the University of Chicago as a world leader in this field.
• In December 2007 shortly after joining the faculty, Dr. Gundeti performed the first pediatric robotic surgery at the University of Chicago.
• Several months later, he performed the world’s first successful complete intracorporeal bladder reconstructive surgery.
• According to the recent PHIS database, the University of Chicago is 5th in North American for pediatric robotic surgery volume; this was achieved by a single surgeon comparted to multiple surgeons in competing programs.
• In 2010 he established the world’s first Pediatric Robotic Urology didactic and hands on CME course.
• He attracts national and international interest in learning his techniques. This July he will lead the 6th annual Pediatric Urologic Robotic surgery course at the University of Chicago.
• Please join me in honoring Mohan Gundeti with the Distinguished Leader in Program Innovation Award.
Distinguished Educator/Mentor

The Distinguished Educator/Mentor Award is designed to honor members of our faculty for excellence in teaching and mentorship across our missions including: undergraduate, graduate and medical students, house staff, clinical fellows, and postdoctoral scholars. In addition to the letter of nomination from a faculty member, a letter of support from a student or trainee was also required. This year, the faculty advisory committee has identified 3 individuals to honor with this award.

Junior Award for Excellence in Clinical Education: Keme Carter, Assistant Professor of Medicine
Nominated by Christine Babcock
• Dr. Carter came to the University of Chicago as a resident in Emergency Medicine in 2005. She established herself as a skilled educator and gifted teacher of junior house staff which led to her recognition as Chief Resident and then promotion to the faculty.
• In 2012 she took over as Clerkship Director of Emergency Medicine and Director of Student programs in the section.
• She has implemented several important changes including a revision of the didactics and simulation experience.
• As a result, the Emergency Medicine clerkship is recognized as one of the highest rated required clerkships at the Pritzker School of Medicine.
• Dr. Carter personally meets with every student in the middle and end of the rotation to provide individualized feedback. Her positive student comments are reflective of her personal commitment to training.
• In addition to her role as clerkship director, she is an active teacher, serving as course director for the Pritzker Introduction to Emergency Medicine Elective Course, and she has been recognized with numerous awards from the Pritzker School of Medicine.
• Please join me in honoring Keme Carter with the Distinguished Educator Mentor Award for Clinical Education.

Senior Award for Clinical Education: Kevin Roggin, Professor of Surgery
Nominated by Mitchell Posner and Jeff Matthews
• Dr. Roggin is being honored for his impressive commitment to teaching Pritzker students, surgery residents and surgical oncology fellows.
• Kevin is an Associate Professor of Surgery and Director of the General Surgery Residency Program where he is a tremendous advocate for the trainees.
• Under Kevin’s leadership, the stature of the program has risen, and we attract high quality applicants.
• For the 14th year in a row, we have received full accreditation by the ACGME and commendations for the excellence of the program which is a direct result of Kevin’s leadership.
• He also developed and implemented an educational program designed to improve the clinical and operative experience of our trainees by increasing trainee autonomy.
• In addition to this, he has been honored with numerous awards from Pritzker students, and students he has mentored have often been placed in high profile residency programs.
• For all of these contributions to clinical education, please join me in honoring Kevin Roggin with the Distinguished Educator Award for Clinical Education.

Senior Award for Excellence in Basic Science Education: Phoebe Rice, Professor of Biochemistry & Molecular Biology
Nominated by Keith Moffatt
• Dr. Rice is being honored for her impressive track record of teaching in the college and graduate programs and mentorship in her laboratory since joining the faculty in 1997.
• Together with Ben Glick, she has successfully directed an NIH training Grant that supports 18 graduate students, developing innovative new approaches to training that led to the grant’s renewal.
• She developed a research in progress monthly talk series where students are given constructive feedback on the delivery of scientific presentations.
• She has also demonstrated a longstanding dedication to the recruitment of minority students through serving on the Gradate Minority Affairs and Graduate Education Committees and through her personal efforts off campus to recruit a diverse cohort of students.
• Phoebe employs creative approaches to teaching. Her students in particular remember her hand-sewn, stuffed plasmid that she used to illustrate the complexities of DNA topology and Topoisomerase / gyrase mechanisms.
• Please join me in honoring Phoebe Rice with the Distinguished Educator Award for Basic Science Education.
Distinguished Faculty Award for Leadership and Good Citizenship in the Biological Sciences Division

We end this year’s award ceremony on a particularly high note. This year, there was unanimous agreement from the Faculty Advisory Committee to award Michelle Le Beau a Distinguished Faculty Award for Leadership and Good Citizenship in the Biological Sciences Division.

Dr. Le Beau was nominated by Walter Stadler in another category, but the committee felt strongly that just one of these categories did not capture the outstanding contributions she has made to our institution over many years. I am delighted that they chose to honor Michelle with this new award.

- Michelle Le Beau is the Arthur and Marian Edelstein Professor of Medicine, and the Director of the University of Chicago Medicine Comprehensive Cancer Center.
- She is an internationally recognized investigator who has made many significant contributions to the field of leukemia research as evidenced by her more than 400 peer-reviewed publications.
- She has provided truly exceptional leadership at the University of Chicago in the Cancer Center.
- Dr. Le Beau assumed Directorship of the Cancer Center just over a decade ago in 2004.
- She has since transformed the cancer research and clinical landscape at the University through outstanding leadership, tireless dedication and exceptional strategic vision.
- She has created a dynamic and innovative structure to advance cancer research at the University of Chicago, bringing together scientists from the basic research, through to clinical trials, epidemiology and behavioral studies.
- She has earned the highest respect of the faculty for her excellent judgment, good humor, energy and organizational excellence.
- A couple of achievements deserve specific mention. Under her direction, the Cancer Center earned “comprehensive” status in 2008, making it one of only 41 NCI-designated comprehensive centers.
- During its 2012 review, the Comprehensive Cancer Center received the highest score in its 38-year history.

Please join me in honoring Michelle Le Beau with the Faculty Award for Leadership and Good Citizenship in the Biological Sciences Division.

This concludes our award ceremony. Thank you for coming today to honor all of these deserving faculty. You are all invited to stay and enjoy the reception.