

Parker J. Palmer Courage to Lead Award



The Parker J. Palmer Courage to Lead Award honors designated institutional officials (DIOs) who have demonstrated excellence in overseeing residency/fellowship programs at their sponsoring institutions. DIOs have authority and responsibility for all graduate medical education programs in a teaching hospital, community hospital, or other type of institution that sponsors such programs. The ACGME congratulates the recipients of the 2015 Courage to Lead Award.



Thomas A. Blackwell, MD, FACP

Designated Institutional Official
University of Texas Medical Branch at Galveston
Galveston, TX

Nominators had this to say:

“Dr. Blackwell is a tireless leader of graduate medical education and has many accomplishments; however, his single greatest achievement came in UTMB's darkest days. On September 11, 2008, Hurricane Ike hit Galveston Island, flooding the campus and forcing the closure of our hospitals for four months. Dr. Blackwell worked tirelessly to ensure that appropriate training continued for our residents while UTMB rebuilt. During this time, he personally oversaw the relocation of 60 graduate medical education programs and 603 residents to programs around the State of Texas and beyond to assure that their training continued uninterrupted. UTMB residents who trained in those programs during that time have commented on the tremendous work Dr. Blackwell did to assure they had access to quality educational experiences.”

“Beginning in 2012, he was the Course Creator and Lead Facilitator of our UTMB GME Teaching Empathy Workshop. This training program encompassed 408 residents in 19 GME Core Programs. In 2013, he released Phase II (as Course Creator and Lead Facilitator of our UTMB GME Interpersonal Skills and Communication through Empathy Workshop). To date, the training has been presented to 232 residents in 19 of our GME Core Programs. These workshops resulted in two oral abstract presentations, and a presentation at the AAMC Group on Resident Affairs Spring Meeting in 2013.”