

## 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.



**John W. Engstrom, MD**  
Program Director for Neurology  
University of California, San Francisco  
San Francisco, California

### **Nominators had this to say:**

“John possesses an uncommon humility that makes him extremely approachable. His demeanor exemplifies compassion and dignity for his patients and their families, and in his every action he is the clinician we all aspire to be. He has counseled and guided our residents for almost three decades, helping with often difficult career choices and directions. On a personal level, I owe a tremendous amount of my own career to John, who has been incredibly supportive of my path as an educator and a clinician who focuses on quality and safety. In addition, John has served as a role model for many other faculty [members] here and many neurology program directors nationally.”

“Dr. Engstrom is known for creating or supporting sustainable education programs that support the career development of neurology [residents] or educators. His success is evident in the residency program’s recruitment and growth, flexible residency program, R25 research and research training program, and the education division in neurology. Approximately half of our adult neurology [residents] pursue a flexible residency option, including some that focus on global health and education research.”

“Dr. Engstrom approaches all patient interaction with humility, and this may be why he is a role model for someone who desires to never stop learning. It is no coincidence that the attending who shows residents and medical students that it is ok to say “I don’t know” is also the one who seems to have the most detailed and nuanced knowledge of the neuraxis and practice of neurology. His humility gives us comfort and space to ask questions, admit our knowledge gaps, and truly focus on learning.”