

7 physicians honored for their contributions to medicine

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Andis Robeznieks

Senior News Writer

Physicians are known for their volunteerism, community engagement, leadership and dedication to the care of underserved populations. Those who stand out for their activities and represent these values have done something truly special.

As recipients of the 2020 Excellence in Medicine Awards, awarded by the AMA Foundation, seven physicians were honored for putting forth such efforts in an online ceremony Sunday night at the June 2021 AMA Special Meeting, held virtually due to the pandemic.



Top row (left to right): Drs. Chay, Weitzer, Sweeney, Eiting. Bottom row (left to right): Drs. Stanford, Grimley, Creary.

The seven honorees were:

- | M. Monica Sweeney, MD, MPH.
- | Fatima Cody Stanford, MD, MPH, MPA.
- | Ludlow B. Creary, MD.
- | Christopher H. Chay, MD.
- | Erick Eiting, MD, MPH.
- | Danielle Weitzer, DO.
- | Sarah Grimley, MD.

About the recipients

Dr. Sweeney: Awarded the Dr. Debasish Mridha Spirit of Medicine Award for working with distressed or marginalized populations, Dr. Sweeney has served as a primary care physician for more than 40 years. The majority of her career has been spent caring for patients at the Bedford Stuyvesant Health Center in Brooklyn, where she has been passionate about public health messaging concerning HIV testing, immunizations, and access and equity in health care for marginalized populations.

Dr. Stanford: The Dr. Edmond and Rima Cabbabe Dedication to the Profession Award is presented to a physician who demonstrates productive improvement to the profession through community service—something Dr. Stanford has done time and time again.

As an obesity medicine physician-scientist, Dr. Stanford has worked tirelessly to care for, and promote the care of, patients with obesity around the world. Dr. Stanford practices and teaches at Massachusetts General Hospital and Harvard Medical School. She has served as a health communications fellow at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and as a behavioral sciences intern at the American Cancer Society.

Dr. Creary: The Jack B. McConnell, MD, Award for Excellence in Volunteerism recognizes the work of senior physicians who provide treatment to patients who lack access to health care. Dr. Creary worked to serve minority residents of Greater Los Angeles for more than 50 years. He was involved in the creation of the Martin Luther King Jr. Community Hospital, where he chaired of the family medicine department for more than two decades. He also led efforts to open the historic West Adams Hospital in the South Los Angeles Community.

Dr. Chay: The Pride in the Profession Award honors a physician who encompasses the true spirit of being a medical professional through the delivery of extraordinary patient care. Dr. Chay has embodied that spirit in his work to provide the highest quality compassionate care to patients in Western North Carolina, where he has expanded clinics in rural communities, promoted patient-centered care, conducted clinical trials and managed the largest center for medical oncology care in the area.

Dr. Eiting: The Excellence in LGBTQ Health Awards honor physicians, residents or fellows, and final-year medical students who have demonstrated outstanding work, innovation and leadership in LGBTQ policy, advocacy, patient care, academics, workforce diversity, or health care administration.

Dr. Eiting, the physician honoree, has been a tireless advocate for the care of underserved and vulnerable populations, particularly in the LGBTQ+ community in New York City where he serves as the vice chair of operations for emergency medicine at Mount Sinai. He has also served as the vice chair for the AMA Advisory Committee on LGBTQ Issues and helped establish the LGBTQ Honor Fund at the AMA Foundation.

Dr. Weitzer: The resident physician honoree of the LGBTQ Health Award, Dr. Weitzer is in her third year of training as a psychiatrist at the Rowan University School of Osteopathic Medicine. She is pursuing a career in medicine to help increase the resources and care available to minority and diverse populations, in particular the LGBTQ+ population.

Dr. Grimley: The medical student recipient of the LGBTQ Health Award, Dr. Grimley is a recent graduate of the University of Nevada at Las Vegas School of Medicine. While there, she founded the Nevada Gender Affirming Healthcare Program, chaired its board of directors and served as chief operational officer. Dr. Grimley is now in training with the Santa Rosa Family Medicine residency, a University of California, San Francisco-affiliated community-based training program.