AMA honors two of Emory’s pioneering physician-scientists

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Two Emory University School of Medicine professors—pioneers in the fields of medical imaging and transplantation—were honored by the AMA for their contributions to science and medicine.

Carolyn C. Meltzer, MD, chair of the Emory radiology and imaging services department, received the AMA’s Distinguished Service Award, which was established in 1938 and is issued to an AMA member for their “meritorious service in the science and art of medicine.”

Christian P. Larsen, MD, DPhil, co-director of the Emory Transplant Center, received the AMA’s Scientific Achievement Award, which was established in 1960 and is presented to a physician or nonphysician scientist for “outstanding work in scientific achievement.” Physician awardees must be AMA members.

A leader on two fronts

Dr. Meltzer’s exceptional scholarly achievement and cross-disciplinary imaging research has advanced the neurobiological understanding of the neuropsychiatric disorders such as late-life depression that disproportionately affect women.

Her functional imaging study validated the effects of normal aging on the brain’s serotonin neurotransmitter system and evaluated the role of neurochemical mechanisms in age-related neuropsychiatric disease.
“The development of innovative imaging methods by Dr. Meltzer has contributed to the science and art of medicine by advancing the assessment and treatment of age-related disorders related to brain function and chemistry,” said AMA President Gerald E. Harmon, MD. “She is a scholar and physician leader whose work in medical science and social advocacy has enhanced patient care and promoted equity and inclusion in the medical profession.”

Dr. Meltzer has been a catalyst for health equity and serves as Emory’s executive associate dean of faculty academic advancement, leadership and inclusion and chief diversity and inclusion officer.

**Discoveries led to standard of care**

Dr. Larsen was recognized for research that has reshaped medicine’s understanding of the complex balance between immune tolerance and rejection in transplant patients. His discoveries have led to treatments that are now the standard of care.

“Discovery and innovation are key drivers in transforming patient care and Dr. Larsen’s groundbreaking career has fundamentally changed contemporary transplant surgery and opened new paths for surgeons around the world to help their patients,” said Dr. Harmon, a family physician in South Carolina. “His expertise in transplant immunology have enabled patients to obtain life-saving organ transplants and prevented the long-term and life-threatening complications due to rejection.”

Dr. Larsen’s contributions include leading a research team that was instrumental in developing a new class of immunosuppressive drugs known as co-stimulation blockers, which are effective in preventing tissue rejection.

Learn more about the AMA’s awards honoring the achievements of physicians, residents and medical students.

URL: https://www.ama-assn.org/about/awards/ama-honors-two-emory-s-pioneering-physician-scientists

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