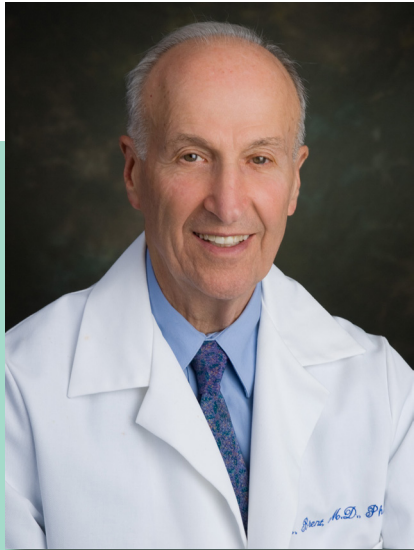


The Gustav O. Lienhard Award

2015 Honoree



Robert L. Brent, MD, PhD

Louis and Bess Stein Professor of Pediatrics, Sidney Kimmel College of Medicine, Thomas Jefferson University
Head of the Developmental Biology Laboratory, Nemours/Alfred I. duPont Hospital for Children

Robert L. Brent receives the 2015 Gustav O. Lienhard Award for his decades of foundational research into environmental risk factors for birth defects and cancer, and for his career-long dedication to free, compassionate counseling for expectant mothers.

Dr. Brent began his career at the age of 15 when he was accepted to the University of Rochester and obtained part-time employment in the embryology and genetics divisions of the Manhattan Project of the University of Rochester. In his 11 years at the university, he eventually became head of the embryology division while he was a graduate and medical student. After graduating from the University of Rochester Medical School in 1953, he interned at the Massachusetts General Hospital. Subsequently, he became Chief of Radiation Biology at Walter Reed Army Institute of Research before moving to Thomas Jefferson Medical College, where he has taught and performed research since 1957. At Jefferson, he specializes in the effects of environmental factors like radiation, drugs, and chemicals on the unborn child. He was chairman of the Department of Pediatrics for 30 years, during which time his research was continuously funded by the National Institutes of Health.

Dr. Brent's research with animal models has demonstrated that birth defects, growth retardation, mental retardation, and miscarriage are all threshold effects of radiation exposure, and that the vast majority of diagnostic radiological tests (exposure below 0.1 Gy) do not pose an additional measurable risk to the unborn child. These findings have been important for advising women about the risks of cancer treatment or diagnostic radiological procedures during pregnancy. Other significant research contributions include the discovery that although very young embryos are extremely vulnerable to radiation, those that survive are not at increased risk for congenital malformations (a finding called the "all or none" phenomenon); and the development of a systematic methodology for evaluating the risk of reproductive toxicants.

Throughout his career, first by letter and telephone and finally through the Internet, Dr. Brent has offered free risk counseling to expectant mothers worldwide. He has written and lectured extensively on the importance of training physicians to counsel pregnant women and their families with patience and compassion—and with a focus on education and empowerment.

Dr. Brent is a member of the National Academy of Medicine and has received 29 national and international awards, including the John Scott Award "for being the foremost authority in the world on the effects of radiation on the human embryo and in the causes and prevention of congenital malformations"; the William Liley Medal; the Taylor prize (the highest award of the National Council on Radiation Protection and Measurements); the Robley D. Evans Commemorative Medal of the Health Physics Society for lifelong contributions to the field of radiation biology and embryology; and the Distinguished Professor Award of Thomas Jefferson University. Only three people have received this award in the 175-year history of the medical school.

The Gustav O. Lienhard Award, established in 1986 by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF), honors outstanding achievement in improving personal health care services in the United States. The award is named after Gustav O. Lienhard, who served as chair of RWJF's board of trustees from 1971 to 1986—a period in which RWJF emerged as a national leader of philanthropy in health care. During his tenure, grants totaling two-thirds of a billion dollars were made to improve the health of the American people.

Each year, a selection committee appointed by the National Academy of Medicine selects an honoree whose work reflects the ideals and commitment of Mr. Lienhard and RWJF. Nominees are judged on the innovation of their achievements, the impact of their work, and their success in overcoming barriers to change in the health care system. The award is accompanied by a medal and \$40,000.

Past Recipients

2014

Linda Aiken, PhD, RN
University of Pennsylvania School of Nursing

2013

Steven A. Schroeder, MD
University of California, San Francisco

2012

Donald M. Berwick, MD
Institute for Healthcare Improvement

2011

Jerold F. Lucey, MD
University of Vermont College of Medicine

2010

Joseph A. Califano, Jr., LLB
Columbia University

2009

Thomas E. Starzl, MD, PhD
University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine

2008

John E. Wennberg, MD, MPH
Dartmouth Institute for Health Policy and Clinical Practice

2007

Howard H. Hiatt, MD
Harvard Medical School

2006

Aaron T. Beck, MD
Beck Institute for Cognitive Therapy and Research

2005

Robert H. Brook, MD, ScD
University of California, Los Angeles

2004

Kenneth W. Kizer, MD, MPH
National Quality Forum

2003

B. Jaye Anno, PhD
and
Bernard P. Harrison, JD
National Commission on Correctional Health Care

2002

Kathryn E. Barnard, PhD, RN
University of Washington
and

T. Berry Brazelton, MD
Brazelton Foundation, Inc.

2001

Ruth Watson Lubic, RN, CNM, EdD
District of Columbia Developing Families Center

2000

Philip R. Lee, MD
University of California, San Francisco

1999

Elma L. Holder, MSPH
National Citizens' Coalition for Nursing Home Reform

1998

H. Jack Geiger, MD
City University of New York Medical School

1997

Lester Breslow, MD, MPH
University of California, Los Angeles

1996

Robert N. Butler, MD
Mount Sinai School of Medicine
and

T. Franklin Williams, MD
University of Rochester School of Medicine

1995

Lawrence L. Weed, MD
University of Vermont

1994

Byllye Y. Avery
National Black Women's Health Project

1993

David E. Rogers, MD
Cornell University Medical College

1992

C. Everett Loop, MD, ScD
Dartmouth Medical School
and

Faye G. Abdellah, EdD, ScD, RN
Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences

1991

Robert M. Ball, MA
National Academy of Social Insurance

1990

Henry K. Silver, MD
University of Colorado Health Sciences Center
and

Loretta C. Ford, EdD, RN
University of Rochester

1989

Robert J. Haggerty, MD
William T. Grant Foundation

1988

Marie-Louis Ansak
On Lok Senior Health Services

1987

Ernest W. Saward, MD
University of Rochester Medical Center

1986

Julius B. Richmond, MD
Harvard University



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