CONGRATULATIONS TO THE 2020 APIC AWARD WINNERS!

Carole DeMille Achievement Award

Linda R. Greene, RN, MPS, CIC, FAPIC, manager, Infection Prevention, at University of Rochester, Highland Hospital, Rochester, New York, and former APIC president, has been awarded the prestigious Carol DeMille Achievement Award for her visionary leadership and significant contributions to the field of infection prevention and control (IPC).

The award is given annually to an infection preventionist (IP) who best exemplifies the ideals of Carole DeMille, a pioneer in the field.

An APIC member since 1988, Greene has been certified in infection control since 1997 and has extensive experience in IPC in the acute care, long-term care, and ambulatory surgery settings. She held leadership roles in her local APIC chapter before becoming a member of the APIC Board of Directors in 2010. She was secretary of the APIC Board in 2012-2013 and served as APIC president in 2017. Greene was also president of the board for APIC Consulting Services in 2015, and she continues to serve APIC and the IPC profession in myriad ways, including as an advisor and contributor to APIC position papers and implementation guides, APIC representative to the 2020 CDC Decennial Steering Committee, and frequent presenter at regional, national, and international conferences.

The author of dozens of peer-reviewed publications, Greene is an expert on quality improvement, antimicrobial stewardship, and healthcare-associated infections. She served on the AJIC editorial board from 2015 to 2017. In 2006, APIC recognized Greene’s contributions to IPC by naming her a Hero of Infection Prevention.

President’s Distinguished Service Award, in honor of Pat Lynch

Patricia J. Gray, RN, BA, CIC, FAPIC, is the recipient of the 2020 President’s Distinguished Service Award. The award, which honors the work of Patricia Lynch as one of APIC’s pioneering members and its first national president, is given to an individual who has made major contributions to the profession through service within APIC.

Gray is currently an on-call consultant for HonorHealth in Scottsdale, Arizona, having previously served the same health system as network director of infection prevention and control before retiring from that position in 2018. She has been an APIC member for more than 25 years. Her contributions to the association have included president and legislative leader for the APIC Grand Canyon Chapter; member, vice chair, and chair of the national Public Policy Committee; member of the Regulatory Review Panel; and APIC representative to the National Quality Forum. At both the state and national levels of government, she has advocated for IPC measures and recognition of the IP’s essential role in patient safety. For example, she has drafted APIC comments to federal agencies such as the Food and Drug Administration, Occupational Safety and Health Administration, Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention on issues including personal protective equipment, medical device reprocessing, health information technology, regulation of healthcare antiseptics, and quality reporting programs for Medicare payment across a variety of healthcare settings. Gray is a frequent presenter on public policy topics and other IPC issues and was a co-lead author on the 2010 APIC position paper “The Use of Administrative (Coding/Billing) Data for Identification of Healthcare-Associated Infections (HAIs) in US Hospitals.”
Distinguished Scientist Award

Nasia Safdar, MD, PhD, is recipient of the 2020 Distinguished Scientist Award. The honor recognizes those who have made outstanding contributions to the science of infection prevention and control. Recipients are selected by the APIC Research Committee.

Safdar is a professor in the Division of Infectious Disease within the Department of Medicine at the University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health and holds affiliate appointments in the Department of Population Health and the Division of Geriatrics, as well as the Division of Industrial and Systems Engineering. She is also vice chair for research in the Department of Medicine and the medical director of infection control at UW Hospital and Clinics.

Safdar’s research focuses on identifying, testing, and implementing novel interventions to reduce and prevent healthcare-associated infections (HAIs), such as the use of probiotics for reducing colonization by methicillin-resistant Staphylococcus aureus and Clostridioides difficile. She leads the fecal bacteriotherapy program at UW Hospital and is the principal investigator for a number of ongoing trials assessing fecal microbiota transplantation as an intervention to reduce HAIs.

Safdar has also authored more than 200 medical journal articles and is a fellow of the Infectious Diseases Society of America. Among the awards she has received in recognition of her professional accomplishments are the John Q. Sherman Award for Excellence in Patient Engagement (2014) and the President’s Early Career Award for Scientists and Engineers (2017).

Healthcare Administrator Award

S. Gail Thurmond, MD, MBA, CSSBB, CPHQ, is the recipient of the 2020 Healthcare Administrator Award. The award recognizes the pivotal role that healthcare leaders play in establishing an organizational culture that enables and supports infection prevention and control.

Thurmond is senior vice president, clinical effectiveness, and chief quality and patient safety officer for Methodist Le Bonheur Healthcare in Memphis. She believes that healthcare providers at all levels—including physicians, nursing, ancillary teams, vendors, and frontline associates—must make patient safety a top priority. For this reason, she advocates tirelessly for IPC-related funding, training, technology, and regulatory compliance and carefully monitors the efficacy of clinical and quality improvement projects.

As the executive leader of the healthcare system’s efforts to be a high-reliability organization, Thurmond has supported system-wide mandatory annual influenza vaccination, resulting in 98% compliance; championed appropriate IPC staffing and the CIC* certification; initiated aggressive and innovative campaigns to reduce HAIs, including infections from methicillin-resistant Staphylococcus aureus and Clostridioides difficile; and helped implement policies requiring provider ownership of central venous catheters with required daily documentation of necessity. During her tenure, the organization has substantially reduced HAI risks related to C. difficile, immediate-use steam sterilization, catheter-associated urinary tract infection, and central line-associated bloodstream infection.

2020 BLUE RIBBON ABSTRACT AWARDS

Nicole Russo, BSN, RN, CIC
Portland VA Healthcare System
Portland, OR
Rapid multidisciplinary infection control approach after identification of a hospital-acquired mucormycosis infection

Jingjing Shang, PhD, RN, OCN
Columbia University School of Nursing
New York, NY
State of infection prevention and control in home healthcare agencies

Michal Stachura, RN, MSc(A)
Montreal Children’s Hospital
McGill University Health Centre
Montreal, Quebec
Epidemiologic investigation of an outbreak of vancomycin-resistant Enterococcus in a tertiary care neonatal intensive care unit
2020 IMPLEMENTATION SCIENCE ABSTRACT AWARD
Jennifer D. Burrell, MHS, CIC
OrthoColorado Hospital
Lakewood, CO
A multidisciplinary approach to leveraging data and implementing change: A reduction in emergency department foley catheter insertions

2020 NEW INVESTIGATOR ABSTRACT AWARD
Randall Collins, BSN, RN
Carilion Clinic
Roanoke, VA
Using carbon dioxide as a tracer gas to determine air changes per hour in ambulances

2020 BEST INTERNATIONAL ABSTRACT AWARD
Carly Rebelo, MSc, CIC
University Health Network
Toronto, Ontario
Central line-associated bloodstream infection incidence and outcomes in a large autologous and allogeneic bone marrow transplant cohort

HEROES OF INFECTION PREVENTION AWARDS
Brenda Ehler, BS, MT(ASCP), MBA, CIC
Ascension Healthcare Wisconsin
Oshkosh, WI
Category: Leadership
IPAC Team, Northside Hospital Gwinnett-Duluth
Lawrenceville, GA
Category: Quality Improvement
Infection Prevention Team, Emory University Hospital Midtown
Atlanta, GA
Category: Quality Improvement
Infection Prevention Team, Regions Hospital
St. Paul, MN
Category: Quality Improvement
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Infection Prevention Team, Westchester Medical Center
Valhalla, NY
Category: IPC Operations
Kelly West, MS, RN, CIC
Children’s Hospital Colorado
Aurora, CO
and
Craig Gilliam, BSMT, CIC, FAPIC
St Jude Children’s Research Hospital
Memphis, TN
Category: IPC Operations

CHAPTER EXCELLENCE AWARDS
Member Support
Intermountain Chapter
Clinical and Professional Practice
Dallas-Fort Worth Chapter
Education, Communication, and Information Resources
Memphis Chapter
Synergistic Alliances
Minnesota Chapter
West Virginia Chapter