

THE AWARD OF MERIT: A LOOK BACK

Announcement of the 2020 & 2021 Award of Merit Recipients

Co-authored by AOS Past Presidents

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In April 1948, at the 81st annual business meeting of the American Otological Society, the Council formally approved the motion of Dr. Bernard McMahon to establish an Award of Merit, the purpose of which was to recognize, “...*outstanding accomplishment and distinguished service in the field of otology.*” The proposal gave broad specification to the candidacy for the Award, noting that, “*Any individual working in the field of Otology may be a candidate for the Award. One single scientific contribution of peculiar and far-reaching import; or many smaller contributions whose sum be-comes of especial significance; or outstanding leadership in surgery or teaching or research in this field-any or all of these attributes in a candidate may find him worthy of consideration by the Committee.*”



“The Homestead” in Hot Springs, Virginia (c. 1890)
Site of the 81st meeting of the American Otological Society

While the minutes of this and subsequent meetings document the deliberations regarding the selection committee, the value of the award, and even the metal to be used in the accompanying medal, there is little in their words to indicate why, after 81 years, the Society moved to establish such an Award. Its recognition of impact cannot be understated, as one of the early recipients, Georg von Békésy, would go on to win the Nobel Prize for demonstrating the wave-like motion of the basilar membrane. However, we may perhaps glean some insights into the thoughts of our forebears from their historical milieu. Developments in medicine throughout and following the Second World War threatened to undermine the very basis of otolaryngology as a specialty. The introduction and rapid spread of sulfa antibiotics and penicillin suddenly reduced the risks of septic and intracranial complications of acute and chronic otitis media. There was talk of otology being a “dying specialty.”

The leaders of the Society could see new opportunities, however. The fenestration operation pioneered by Julius Lempert would lead to an explosion of interest in temporal bone studies of otosclerosis. The introduction of the operating microscope would soon see fenestration procedures displaced by stapes mobilization and, ultimately, stapedectomy surgery, and helped usher in a new era of chronic ear surgery. The Award of Merit was thus born, and some of its early recipients played key roles in these paradigm-shifting advances. Besides von Békésy (1957), other giants of auditory physiology were recognized, including Wever (1959), Davis (1960) and Lawrence (1967). Early recognition also went to pioneers in temporal bone histology and pathology, including Anson and Bast (1951) and Guild (1954).

Over the ensuing decades, the Award of Merit has continued to bestow the Society’s highest honor on the leaders of otologic surgery, teaching, research and service.

THE AMERICAN OTOLOGICAL SOCIETY



THE AWARD OF MERIT

2020

This Award of Merit recipient was born on Long Island, New York and shortly thereafter was whisked away to sunny California where he would grow up and get his early education. His family moved between San Diego and San Jose. His early interests were golf, boy scouting (yes, he was an Eagle Scout), baseball, and musical theater.



He went on to the University of California at Santa Barbara for his undergraduate education, where his interests broadened to include coeds. There he met his wife, Diane, the first week of his sophomore year. They were married in 1978, a year after beginning medical school.



The university of Pennsylvania medical school suited him well—with his wire rim glasses, his dark hair, and lack of a California tan, he fit right in. In 1981, their first child, Ben, was born during his internship year, and their daughter, Rachel was born 3 1/2 years later.

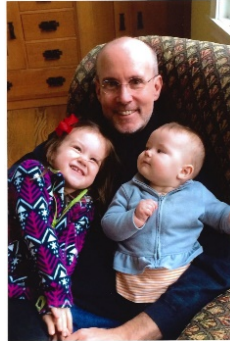


They initially thought they would remain in Philadelphia for the long-term, having also undertaken Internship and Residency at University of Pennsylvania, but following completion of his Neurotology Fellowship at the University of Michigan, he was recruited to join their faculty where he has remained with his family for 34 years. Dr. Steve Telian currently serves as the John L. Kemink Professor of Neurotology and the Neurotology Fellowship Program Director. Over his academic career successfully secured 34 research grants, published 128 peer reviewed papers and authored/coauthored 44 book chapters.

I came to learn more about Steve when I was serving on a panel discussion regarding intraoperative monitoring and he arose to comment on my advocacy of selective use of facial nerve monitoring for otologic surgery. He offered support by stating that he is the facial nerve monitor during resident performed ear surgery. At that moment, I said to myself, this is a guy I would like to know better. I was fortunate to be elected to the AOS Council and during the seven years of service on that body worked closely with Steve and came to know and appreciate him even more.

He served faithfully as the Secretary-Treasurer of the AOS Council during a critical transition from one accounting firm to another and provided valuable leadership and wise guidance during challenging times for the organization and his family.

He still loves golf, UofM sports in all their varieties, and family vacation time along the Lake Michigan shoreline. He gives of his time serving as an elder in their local Presbyterian church, teaching many different Bible classes—always a teacher wherever he goes.



And he adores his two granddaughters who live nearby in Ann Arbor—Hannah, now age 7, and Eleanor, now age 5. Both have held a golf club already thanks to their grandpa.

The Award of Merit Citation for Dr. Steven A. Telian, MD reads:

In recognition of your varied research interests/publications spanning the fields of Otology & Neurotology,
your steadfast leadership within the AOS, selfless dedication to your patients, trainees
and most importantly your family.



With admiration and affection,
Roberto A. Cueva, MD, FACS
Past President
American Otological Society

THE AMERICAN OTOLOGICAL SOCIETY



THE AWARD OF MERIT

2021

It is a great pleasure and privilege to recognize a colleague for outstanding contributions to our specialty and have her join the illustrious group of giants in the field of Otolaryngology.

Dr. Redleaf was born and raised in Chicago Illinois by the poet Sara Prince Anastaplo and George Anastaplo, law professor and Greek scholar. Her childhood was remarkable for spending several summers in Greece with her mother and siblings, as her father led historical and cultural tours. She continued her liberal arts education graduating from St. John's College and working on Wall Street prior to returning to Chicago. She graduated with honors from the University Of Chicago Medical School and completed her residency and Neurotology fellowship at the University of Iowa. As the Louis J. Mayer Professor of Otolaryngology and Neurotology at the University of Illinois in Chicago, she established an educational and financial support system for children with cochlear implants through the project Happy Ears on Taylor Street. She now is Professor of Otolaryngology and Neurosurgery at the University of New Mexico.

Her service to our specialty is extensive and diverse. She currently is the President of the Otolaryngology & Neurotology Board of Directors. She has extensively published innovative surgical techniques and original clinical observations. She collated and digitized images from Dr. Richard Buckingham's extensive collection to teach students tympanic membrane pathology, available as the free interactive Buckingham Virtual Tympanum iPhone app.

Dr. Redleaf's remarkable work with the Ethio- American Hearing Project is a model of perseverance and generosity in sustainable medical impact. The project's goal is to improve communication through education and to assist in the growth of Ethiopia's ear and hearing services. To this end, Dr. Redleaf developed, staffs and supports multiple training sites in Ethiopia that provide otologic care. She has established a 2 year otology fellowship program and is the co-director of the fellowship in Addis Ababa and Mekelle, Ethiopia. She has meticulously developed an educational curriculum and an ambitious schedule of supervised otologic surgeries conducted throughout the year. Always with an eye to efficiency and efficacy, she developed a telementoring program to augment surgical experience. She is a devoted mentor, teaching her fellows the skills necessary for clinical research and publication. The Ethiopian fellowship program has graduated 3 diplomates who are recognized as registered otologists by the Ethiopian Minister of Health and four are in training. In addition to developing surgical expertise, she envisioned a cued speech training program to augment the communication needs of the deaf and hard of hearing. She worked with speech pathologists and linguists to develop visual Amharic which is now taught to deaf children and their parents in training programs held twice a year since 2014. Surgical training alone would not fully address the hearing healthcare needs, and so she developed a hearing technician training program. Twentynine students have been enrolled and will graduate this year. She has organized the Annual International Ethiopian Otolaryngology Guba-e, a three day conference of lectures and live surgeries performed with her colleague Professor V. Honnurappa in Bangalore, India. Dr. Redleaf's impact of bringing sustainable hearing health care to a country of 102 million people served by only 25 otolaryngologists and 1 registered audiologist cannot be overestimated.

Dr. Redleaf is a devoted spouse and parent. She and Hanna Goldschmidt were married in 2013 and together nurtured and raised four children, Isaac, Zenebesh, Sahai and Hanna. Miriam's personal accomplishments are also wide-ranging. She is fluent in Spanish and also speaks German, French, Amharic and Greek and is an excellent cook. She has a life-long interest in the arts and continues to paint, sculpt and draw in her spare time. I believe her daughter Hanna was correct when she told me her mother can bend time!

2021 Award of Merit presented by Carol A. Bauer, MD, AOS Past President



Dr. Miriam I. Redleaf

In recognition of your innovation, service and dedication to bringing expert training and otologic health care to the people of Ethiopia.

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Award of Merit recipients 1949-2021

At the 88th AOS meeting in Hollywood, Florida on March 1955, members voted to change regulations pertaining to the Award of Merit. These regulations provided that hereafter the Award would consist of
"a suitable scroll and a gold medal for outstanding accomplishment and distinguished service in the field of Otology."

1949 George M. Coates, MD
 1950 Barry J. Anson, PhD
 1951 Theodore H. Bast, PhD
 1952 Edmund P. Fowler, Sr., MD
 1953 Julius Lempert, MD
 1954 Stacy Guild, PhD
 1957 Georg von Bekesy, PhD
 1959 Ernest Glen Wever, PhD
 1960 Hallowell Davis, MD
 1961 John R. Lindsay, MD
 1962 William J. McNally, MD
 1965 Anderson C. Hilding, MD
 1966 Gordon D. Hoople, MD
 1967 Merle Lawrence, PhD
 1968 Lawrence R. Boles, MD
 1969 Sir Terence Cawthorne
 1970 Sen. Joseph A. Sullivan, MD
 1971 Samuel Rosen, MD
 1972 Howard P. House, MD
 1973 Moses H. Lurie, MD
 1974 George E. Shambaugh, Jr., MD
 1975 Catherine A. Smith, PhD
 1976 Harry Rosenwasser, MD
 1977 Frank Lathrop, MD
 1978 Juergen Tonndorf, MD
 1979 John Bordley, MD

1980 Ben H. Senturia, MD
 1981 J. Brown Farrior, MD
 1982 William F. House, MD
 1983 Victor Goodhill, MD
 1984 Harold F. Schuknecht, MD
 1985 Wesley H. Bradley, MD
 1986 John J. Shea, Jr., MD
 1987 Jack V. Hough, MD



1988 George D. Nager, MD
 1989 Brian F. McCabe, MD
 1990 Eugene L. Derlacki, MD
 1991 Richard R. Gacek, MD
 1992 James L. Sheehy, MD
 1993 James A. Donaldson, MD
 1994 Fred H. Linthicum, Jr., MD
 1995 D. Thane Cody, MD
 1996 F. Blair Simmons, MD
 1997 Michael E. Glasscock, III, MD

1998 Michael M. Paparella, MD
 1999 Mansfield F. W. Smith, MD
 2000 Robert A. Jahrsdoerfer, MD
 2001 Derald E. Brackmann, MD
 2002 Gregory J. Matz, MD
 2003 James B. Snow, Jr., MD
 2004 Robert J. Ruben, MD
 2005 David J. Lim, MD
 2006 Herbert Silverstein, MD
 2007 Richard A. Chole, MD, PhD
 2008 Malcolm D. Graham, MD
 2009 William H. Lippy, MD
 2010 George Gates, MD
 2011 Sam E. Kinney, MD
 2012 Joseph B. Nadol, Jr., MD
 2013 Bruce J. Gantz, MD
 2014 Richard T. Miyamoto, MD
 2015 Jeffrey P. Harris, MD, PhD
 2016 Charles M. Luetje, MD
 2017 Clough Shelton, MD
 2018 Paul R. Lambert, MD
 2019 John W. House, MD
 2020 Steven A. Telian, MD
 2021 Miriam I. Redleaf, MD