
Minority Digestive Health Care Award

This ACG achievement award recognizes an ACG Member or Fellow whose work in the areas of clinical investigation or clinical practice has improved the digestive health of minorities or other underserved populations of the United States. These efforts can be shown by community outreach activities through clinical or educational programs, or research in an area of digestive disease that negatively impacts minority populations such as colorectal cancer, hepatitis B and C, cirrhosis and other GI cancers.

2017 Recipient

Darwin L. Conwell, MD, MS



Darwin L. Conwell, MD, MS, is a physician-scientist in gastroenterology specializing in pancreas disorders. Dr. Conwell received a Bachelor of Science in Chemistry with Honors from Ohio University, Medical Degree from the University of Cincinnati College of Medicine and a Master's Degree in Clinical Research from the University of Michigan. Dr. Conwell completed internship and residency at The Christ Hospital in Cincinnati, Ohio and gastroenterology fellowship at the Cleveland Clinic Foundation. Dr. Conwell served as faculty at Cleveland Clinic for 15 years and pioneered the pancreas program. He later served on staff at Brigham and Women's Hospital in Boston as an Associate Professor of Medicine at Harvard Medical School.

Dr. Conwell is currently Professor of Medicine at The Ohio State University College of Medicine where he serves as Director of the Division of Gastroenterology, Hepatology and Nutrition at The Ohio State Wexner Medical Center. He is former holder of the Charles Austin Doan Chair in Medicine and currently is the Floyd Beman Endowed Chair in Gastroenterology. Dr. Conwell is active in numerous gastrointestinal societies and is currently President-Elect of The American Pancreatic Association. He has served on several committees at the American College of Gastroenterology (ACG) including the Abstract Review Committee, Research Committee and Patient Care Committee. He has also been an organizer of numerous clinical and research symposium at the annual meetings of the ACG, PancreasFest, Digestive Disease Week and American Pancreatic Association. He is a national and international invited lecturer on pancreatic diseases and has spoken at numerous medical centers, digestive disease conferences and post-graduate courses. As an educator he has won numerous medical student and GI fellowship teaching awards and has trained numerous gastroenterology fellows who have gone on to careers in both the private and academic sector.

Dr. Conwell is an NIH-funded physician-scientist with over 100 peer reviewed publications. He is currently the Principle Investigator of The Ohio State Pancreas Disorders Network, a member of the NIDDK/NCI U01 Chronic Pancreatitis, Diabetes and

Pancreas Cancer (CPDPC) Consortium. Dr. Conwell has several contributions to science including: 1) development of the endoscopic pancreas function test, 2) senior investigator in the randomized controlled trial reporting the beneficial effects of lactated ringers in acute pancreatitis resuscitation, 3) published the largest study on the association between chronic pancreatitis and metabolic bone disease, 4) lead author on the American Pancreatic Association Diagnostic Guidelines in Chronic Pancreatitis and 5) senior author of the NIH white paper entitled: "Chronic Pancreatitis in the 21st Century - Research Challenges and Opportunities: Summary of a National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases Workshop."

Dr. Conwell has been an advocate to the medically underserved communities throughout his medical school training and academic career. While in medical school he was the President of the Student National Medical Association which was very active in health care advocacy for underrepresented groups. He has served at soup kitchens, homeless shelters, participated in minority health events, church health fairs and volunteered at inner city medical clinics. Dr. Conwell has continued these efforts since arriving in Columbus in 2013. Under his leadership the division is focusing major efforts to build the gastrointestinal service line at Ohio State University East Hospital. This hospital serves a predominately underrepresented minority and immigrant population in the inner city of Columbus, Ohio. Dr. Conwell believes that diversity needs to be a strategy and the division has worked very hard at the recruitment and retention of underrepresented minority medical faculty to further impact healthcare for the underserved.

The division has also developed a Section for Community Engagement and Equity in Digestive Health under the leadership of Dr. Darrell Gray, which has received local and national recognition for its efforts to lessen the gastrointestinal healthcare disparities and inequities in colon cancer screening and was awarded the first ACG Grand SCOPY Award. This program has developed free / low cost colonoscopy screening and participates in a Channel 10 TV News telephone bank during March Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month. Dr. Conwell volunteers monthly at Physicians Care Connect to provide gastrointestinal care to underinsured and uninsured populations. He also volunteers at Victory Ministries to supply food to persons in need. In collaboration with The James Comprehensive Cancer Center the Division sponsors an Annual Cancer Disparities Conference that has had participation from locally and nationally known cancer research investigators.

Dr. Conwell is honored to receive the 2017 Minority Health Care Award from the American College of Gastroenterology and wishes to thank his parents, family, friends, mentors, trainees and medical students who have supported his medical career.

Past Minority Digestive Health Care Award Recipients

2016	Maria T. Abreu, MD
2014	Fritz Francois, MD, MSc, FACG
2013	Frank A. Hamilton, MD, MPH, FACG
2008	Abbasi J. Akhtar, MD, FACG
2007	LaSalle D. Leffall, Jr., MD, FACG