The 2012 Robert J. Glaser Distinguished Teachers. Left to right:
AAMC Board of Directors Chair Mark R. Laret; Richard B. Gunderman, MD, PhD; Bruce F. Giffin, PhD, MS;
Amy L. Wilson-Delfosse, PhD;
Brian D. Hodges, MD, PhD; AΩA Executive Director Richard L. Byyny, MD; AAMC President Darrell G. Kirch, MD.

Each year since 1988, Alpha Omega Alpha, in cooperation with the Association of American Medical Colleges, presents four AΩA Distinguished Teacher Awards to faculty members in American medical schools. Two awards are for accomplishments in teaching the basic sciences and two are for inspired teaching in the clinical sciences. In 1997, AΩA named the award to honor its retiring executive secretary Robert J. Glaser, MD, who died in June. Nominations for the award are submitted to the AAMC each spring by the deans of medical schools.

Nominations were reviewed by a committee chosen by AΩA and the AAMC. This year’s committee members were prior award recipients Gerald D. Abrams, MD; Gary L. Dunnington, MD; Duane E. Haines, PhD; John (Jack) Nolte, PhD; Dennis H. Novack, MD; Mark T. O’Connell, MD; John W. Pelley, PhD; Kelley M. Skeff, MD; James R. Stallworth, MD; LuAnn Wilkerson, EdD.

Winners of the award receive $10,000, their schools receive $2,500, and active AΩA chapters at those schools receive $1,000. Schools nominating candidates for the award receive a plaque with the name of the nominee.

Brief summaries of the accomplishments in medical education of the 2012 award recipients follow.

Richard L. Byyny, MD
Executive Director

Below, please find the summaries of two of the 2012 award-winners, Case SOM faculty member, Dr. Amy Wilson-Delfosse and our Alpha of Omega Chapter’s 2013 Visiting Professor and spring lecturer, Dr. Richard B. Gunderman:

Amy Leigh Wilson-Delfosse, PhD (Basic)
Associate Professor, Department of Pharmacology, Case Western Reserve University School of Medicine

Professor Wilson-Delfosse received her PhD in Pharmacology from Vanderbilt University in 1991. She became an assistant professor in the Department of Pharmacology at Case Western Reserve University School of Medicine in 1998 and is currently the assistant dean for Basic Science Education and associate professor in the Department of Pharmacology there.

In recognition for her contributions to teaching and education, Professor Wilson-Delfosse received the Case Western Reserve School of Medicine Department of Pharmacology Excellence in Teaching Award in 2000. She was a Harvard Macy Scholar in 2005. She received the Outstanding Presentation Award of the International Association of Medical Science Educators in 2006. In 2010, she received the Scholarship in Teaching Award from the Case Western Reserve School of Medicine, and this year was elected president of the International Association of Medical Science Educators.

In the words of Case Western Reserve’s Dean Pamela B. Davis, Professor Wilson-Delfosse has “a passion for curriculum development, refinement, and faculty coaching. Seeing students respond to new curriculum approaches inspires her. . . . She recognizes that the most important thing faculty can do in this era of evolving information is to promote lifelong learning and train students to ask questions. . . . She also keenly recognizes that, as a basic science instructor, she has an opportunity, in her eyes even an obligation, to impart teamwork skills while teaching basic science content. She sees classroom students as the clinical team members they soon will be, and prepares them with opportunities to absorb knowledge through applicable team approaches.”
Richard B. Gunderman, MD, PhD (Clinical)
(AΩA, University of Chicago, 1992)
Professor of Radiology, Pediatrics, Medical Education, Philosophy, Liberal Arts, Philanthropy, and in the Honor College,
Indiana University School of Medicine

Dr. Gunderman received his PhD at the University of Chicago in 1989, his MD with honors at the University of Chicago Pritzker School of Medicine in 1992, and his MPH at Indiana University School of Medicine in August 2002. He joined Indiana University School of Medicine in 1997 as a fellow in Pediatric Radiology and is now Vice Chair of the Department of Radiology and a Professor of Radiology and Pediatrics there.

Dr. Gunderman has been the councilor of the AΩA chapter at Indiana University since 2009 and is currently a councilor director on the AΩA board of directors.

Dr. Gunderman has received numerous awards for teaching excellence, including an honorary Doctor of Humane Letters from Northwestern University's Garret Theological Seminary in 2012 for his “distinguished career of educational and scholarly excellence,” the 2012 Distinguished Educator of the American Roentgen Ray Society, and the 2008 Radiological Society of North America Outstanding Educator. He has been the Alpha Omega Alpha Visiting Professor at the University of Virginia School of Medicine, the University of Texas Medical School at Houston, and Boston University School of Medicine in 2012. At Indiana University, he has received the Trustees Teaching Award nine times, as well as the Robert Shellhamer Outstanding Educator Award, the Chancellor's Award for Excellence in Teaching, and the Lieber All-University Award for Distinguished Teaching.

Concerning Dr. Gunderman’s teaching, one fourth-year student writes, “Dr. Gunderman is the best teacher with whom I have interacted. As many of my classmates have stated, he is the most thought-provoking educator at our school. He exemplifies the Socratic Method by enabling students to find answers with seemingly minor direction on his part. He inspires us to think. Another writes, “One day I mentioned to Dr. Gunderman how dissatisfied a lot of physicians seem. ‘Why do you think that is?’ he asked. That sparked an amazing conversation and research project on professional fulfillment. I left feeling like my brain was on fire. We later published a paper in Academic Medicine. Dr. Gunderman challenges students to look inside themselves, encouraging them to bring up questions and then working fervently alongside them until they find answers. He is passionate, dedicated, kind, and brilliant. He is the most dynamic and engaging teacher I have ever known.”