

Parker J. Palmer Courage to Teach Award



The Parker J. Palmer Courage to Teach Award honors program directors who find innovative ways to teach residents and fellows, and to provide quality health care while remaining connected to the initial impulse to care for others in this environment. Parker J. Palmer is the author of the book *The Courage to Teach*; his promotion of the concept of “living divided no more” has proven relevant to teaching in academic health centers.



Karen J. Brasel, MD, MPH
Program Director for Surgery
Oregon Health & Science University (OHSU)
Portland, Oregon

Nominators had this to say:

“Dr. Brasel has made resident wellness a priority and frankly has been a national leader in this endeavor. From supporting residents as a director of the American Board of Surgery to supporting and monitoring general surgery programs as a member of the Review Committee for Surgery, Dr. Brasel consistently has the trainee at the forefront of all recommendations and decisions. Under her guidance, OHSU has been an active participant in both the FIRST and SECOND trials. In the face of increasing financial challenges, she has managed to rally all approximately 200 of our teaching faculty across eight institutions to support these efforts.”

“Dr. Brasel prioritizes her trainees’ personal growth. She models respect, inclusion, and teamwork. She has found a way to normalize pregnancy and parenting, and I still remember the relief I felt when she responded to my time away request with sincere congratulations. My growth as an individual has been modeled after her. She’s taught me to be intentional about teaching and to be mindful of my trainees’ goals. She’s also taught me to stand up for others and to always push for what is right. In addition, Dr. Brasel has an uncanny way of finding little acts of professionalism, respect, or humanity performed by trainees and reaching out with a brief email of gratitude. When I received a short email like this from Dr. Brasel, it emphasized how much she cared about my development not just as a surgical trainee, but as a human being.