

Parker J. Palmer Courage to Teach Award
for Program Director Excellence



The Parker J. Palmer Courage to Teach Award honors program directors who find innovative ways to teach residents/fellows and to provide quality health care while remaining connected to the initial impulse to care for others in this environment. The ACGME congratulates the 2016 recipients of the Courage to Teach Award.



Michael F. O'Connor, MD, FCCM
Program Director for Anesthesia and Critical Care
University of Chicago
Chicago, IL

Nominators had this to say:

“Regardless of time constraints or how busy our cardiothoracic intensive care unit was, he always made time to teach. Dr. O'Connor possesses extraordinary skills in holding our interest and encourages innovative thinking. Furthermore our didactics are primarily practice based learning allowing us to apply our independent reading into clinically useful situations. In addition Dr. O'Connor is a highly compassionate physician, setting an excellent example for how a physician should behave at the bedside.”

“Rounding with Dr. O'Connor was a unique experience. At 5:30am Dr. O'Connor would be examining patients while the rest of the team was just beginning to arrive. He listened intently to house-staff presentations, gave individualized attention to each patient, and personally spoke with family members. When a patient was coding, Dr. O'Connor was in the room, fixing the situation rather than observing or just powering through with rounds. He always stops to fix the situation.”

“When I joined the anesthesia liver transplant team, Dr. O'Connor mentored me providing anesthetics for 10 liver transplant recipients. He came in from home at 2am to start cases with me and stayed 12-18 hours until the end, sometimes teaching in the operating room, other times sitting right outside the OR until I could build the knowledge and confidence to take care of this subset of complicated patients myself.”