

VCU School of Medicine WISDM Professional Achievement Award

Lenore M. Buckley, M.D., M.P.H.



If you've been in the School of Medicine for a while, there's a good chance you have been at a committee meeting, a grand rounds, a case conference. During the session, as people start to think about their duties after the meeting, and glance at their Blackberries, a woman, sitting towards the back of the room if possible, will raise her hand to make a comment. As people recognize her calm, familiar voice, they turn - and listen. They listen because they know that Dr. Lenore Buckley, Professor of Pediatrics and Elam C. Toone, Jr., Professor of Internal Medicine, this year's WISDM Professional Achievement Award honoree, will have something insightful to say that will enrich the conversation.

In the same steadfast and forthright manner, Dr. Buckley has worked for changes that have improved the professional environment for all School of Medicine faculty.

"Throughout her some 18 years at the VCU School of Medicine, Dr. Buckley has advocated for and promoted the professional development of women faculty, bringing key issues to the forefront and helping to change the culture to better support and promote women faculty," states Carol Hampton, retired Associate Dean for Faculty and Instructional Development, School of Medicine (SOM).

As colleague Betty Anne Johnson, M.D., Ph.D, Professor of Medicine, explains, "In former days, we used to refer to "triple threat" faculty members who excelled in research, teaching, and clinical activity. Dr. Buckley merits classification as a "quadruple threat" faculty member as she not only excels as a researcher, teacher, and clinician, but as an administrator."

Dr. Buckley served as Vice-President of the MCV/VCU Women in Medicine Faculty Organization from 1996-1998, as President from 1998-2000, on the Executive Committee from 1994-2005, and a member of the SOM Committee on the Status of Women and Minorities (COSOWAM). During this time, Dr. Buckley led the research conducted in the 1997 SOM Faculty Survey on Needs for Career Development and Mentoring. The survey results led to many changes including annual evaluations of chairs by faculty, salary equity review and adjustments by the Dean, and greater recognition of the importance of mentors. It turned out that what women faculty wanted for career development was similar to what younger male colleagues wanted, and thus Dr. Buckley's efforts supported them as well. The survey results were published in major journals describing career development needs of women faculty and barriers to success and provided data to help others drive change.

Dr. Buckley was integrally involved in the development of the VCU SOM Faculty Mentoring Guide, a guide that continues to be used annually by our SOM and has been nationally recognized and used by institutions around the country.

During her WIM leadership, Dr. Buckley was the first woman appointed to the MCV Hospital Authority Board, where she served for 8 years assisting the medical center leadership and advocating for faculty.

She continues her advocacy in her current position as a member of the MCV Physicians Board. In 2008-09, Dr. Buckley chaired the SOM Promotion and Tenure Policy Revision Committee. Her leadership there facilitated the policy, effective April 2009, that includes recognition of clinical service toward promotion.

The lasting impact of these contributions alone would be the highlight of a productive professional career, but for Dr. Buckley, this is only one area where she has achieved excellence. She is one of only a few

rheumatologists board certified in both adult and pediatric rheumatology, which allows her to see patients from childhood through adulthood. As Wendy Klein, MD, Associate Professor Emeritus of Internal medicine, Obstetrics and Gynecology, and Senior Deputy Director Emeritus, VCU Institute for Women's Health states, "She is an outstanding diagnostician, highly skilled in the fields of rheumatology and pediatric rheumatology. She is compassionate and caring in meeting the needs of patients and families whose disorders often present complex, multi-organ challenges. She is kind, caring, attentive and humble, with a calm demeanor that puts everyone at ease."

A tireless patient advocate, Dr. Buckley is active in patient advocacy organizations at the local and national levels including the Arthritis Foundation and The Lupus Foundation of America. In 2007 she was awarded the Robert S. Irby Award for Volunteer Leadership from the Virginia Chapter of the Arthritis Foundation. Dr. Buckley is recognized in "Richmond's Top Doctors" and "Best Doctors in America" listings year after year. In 2006 she received the MCV Physicians Clinician of the Year Award, the highest award given for clinical expertise at VCU.

Dr. Buckley has focused her research efforts in the effects of inflammatory arthritis and its treatment on bone health and ways to identify high-risk lupus patients for early preventive treatment. Dr. Buckley has been active in clinical trials, survey research, and cost-effectiveness studies. She has 30 peer-reviewed publications and has served on numerous national committees in the area of drug safety. She recently served as a reviewer for the Institute of Medicine report on Calcium and Vitamin D intake.

As a teacher, Dr. Buckley has been honored for excellence at every stage of her career. She is sought after for "sidewalk consults" as well as in more formal learning settings. She has served as Medical Director of the Rheumatology Teaching Clinic for 16 years and has been honored four times with the Teaching in Excellence Award from the Department of Internal Medicine. In 2009 she was also awarded the Internal Medicine Grand Rounds Clinicopathological Conference (CPC) Award.

It is a rare individual who can achieve this level of success in so many areas and still be an accessible and effective mentor, but Dr. Buckley is highly valued by colleagues at all levels for her wisdom and thoughtful guidance. Florina Constantinescu, M.D., M.S., Ph.D., F.A.C.R., a former mentee of Dr. Buckley's and now Director, Rheumatology Resident Education, Washington (DC) Hospital Center, recalls, "She taught me how to disentangle and manage the very busy life of an academic career, the balance of a medical practice, teaching, research, self-education, and the dedication to family. She is unique in that, rather than molding her mentees to be adjuncts of her, she dedicates herself to helping them become the best version of themselves that they can possibly be." Beth Rubinstein, M.D., Assistant Professor in Internal Medicine/Rheumatology, another mentee, referred to Dr. Buckley as "guide" and "professional mother" throughout her residency, fellowship and as a faculty member.

As friend and colleague Joann Bodurtha, M.D., M.P.H., Professor of Human and Molecular Genetics, Pediatrics, Obstetrics and Gynecology, and Epidemiology and Community Health observes, "Lenore works to make all of us be more effective and have a sense of opportunity on a daily basis." Dr. Betty Anne Johnson states, "Simply put, she does the right thing for the right reason." Join us in recognizing the exceptional leadership and contributions of Dr. Lenore Buckley, contributions that continue to improve knowledge, clinical care, and faculty life in the School of Medicine.