

Parker J. Palmer Courage to Lead Award



The Parker J. Palmer Courage to Lead Award honors designated institutional officials (DIOs) who have demonstrated excellence in overseeing residency and fellowship programs at their Sponsoring Institutions. DIOs have authority and responsibility for all graduate medical education (GME) programs in a teaching hospital, community hospital, or other type of institution that sponsors GME programs. 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.



Susan E. Kirk, MD
Designated Institutional Official
University of Virginia (UVA)
Charlottesville, Virginia

Nominators had this to say:

“Under Dr. Kirk’s leadership, the GME Office established a website for trainee well-being that provides a myriad of resources supporting trainees’ financial, physical, and emotional well-being along with parental resources to help trainees find affordable childcare, babysitters, or schools. A fierce advocate for trainee parents, she enacted a liberal parental leave policy before state employee mandates and established a Trainee Parent/Caregiver Advocacy

group to curate childcare resources and support parents.”

“Woven into the fabric of our institution and our community, the 2017 ‘Alt Right’ rally in Charlottesville both shocked and inspired us. Dr. Kirk has dedicated herself to DEI so that all trainees feel safe, valued, included, and heard. She founded the Housestaff Council for Diversity and Inclusion (HCDI) empowering our under-represented minority (URM) trainees to develop educational programs, social events, even a regional conference. She introduced scholarships for visiting URM students to participate in UVA rotations and interdisciplinary programming directed toward life after medical school, life after training, and healthcare disparities. Our recruitment of URM trainees has doubled since that 2017 rally - from 9.9% in 2018 to 18.9% in 2022, a true testament to her leadership values not only in DEI but also in strategic resource management.”