
RSNA Press Release

RSNA Honors Drs. Gottschalk, Levitt and McAfee with Gold Medals

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CHICAGO, Nov. 30, 2004 - The Radiological Society of North America (RSNA) today bestowed its highest honor, the Gold Medal Award, on Alexander Gottschalk, M.D., East Lansing, Mich.; Seymour H. Levitt, M.D., Minneapolis; and John G. McAfee, M.D., Chevy Chase, Md.

Gold Medals have been presented annually since 1919 by unanimous vote of the RSNA Board of Directors to individuals who have demonstrated unusual and exceptional service to the science of radiology.

Alexander Gottschalk, M.D.

Alexander Gottschalk, M.D., is a pioneer researcher and author who has helped shape modern medical imaging. He worked with the first clinically useful prototype Anger scintillation camera and performed the first dynamic camera studies of the brain and heart using technetium-99m. Dr. Gottschalk also made the first dynamic camera studies of the kidneys.

"Alex has made great contributions to radiology and nuclear medicine over a long career during which he has consistently published textbooks in nuclear medicine recognized for their great pedagogical value," said RSNA President Brian C. Lentle, M.D. "He was alert and recognized the coming impact of magnetic resonance imaging in the early days of that technology. As one of the principal investigators in the prospective investigation of pulmonary embolism diagnosis (PIOPED) study, Alex greatly helped in our understanding of the natural history and diagnosis of pulmonary embolism."

"It is awesome to become a Gold Medalist in this Society, a group that contains many of my own role models," said Dr. Gottschalk, who is currently the chair of the nuclear medicine working group of PIOPED II.

He began his career as a research associate at Donner Laboratory at Lawrence Radiation Lab at the University of California, Berkeley. He then spent a decade at the University of Chicago, where he helped form the university's first section of nuclear medicine.

A professor of diagnostic radiology at University of Chicago, Dr. Gottschalk made the

move to Yale University School of Medicine in New Haven, Conn., where he worked with colleagues from cardiology to establish a pioneering cardiovascular nuclear medicine operation. He was also director of the section of nuclear medicine, vice-chairman of the Department of Diagnostic Radiology, and director of the diagnostic radiology residency program. Currently, he is professor of diagnostic radiology at Michigan State University in East Lansing.

For a decade, Dr. Gottschalk was editor-in-chief of the Yearbook of Nuclear Medicine. He has served on committees for the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute, as well as national committees for the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, the National Institute of General Medicine Sciences, and the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education.

An RSNA member since 1965, Dr. Gottschalk has been an RSNA second vice-president and chairman of the nuclear medicine subcommittee of the RSNA Scientific Program Committee.

Seymour H. Levitt, M.D.

Seymour H. Levitt, M.D., D.Sc., is a distinguished radiation oncologist and researcher who leads by example with unwavering dedication.

"Seymour has always given great support to RSNA and to the role of radiation oncology in the Society," said RSNA President Brian C. Lentle, M.D. "He was quick to recognize and seize upon the increasing importance of imaging to define tumor volumes as radiation oncology became ever more precise in defining cancers and the dose and dose fractionation used to treat them."

Dr. Levitt has been very active in RSNA, serving on the RSNA Board of Directors and as 1999 RSNA president.

"This organization has been one of the most important aspects of my professional career," said Dr. Levitt, who has been an RSNA member since 1965. "The opportunity to serve the Society as an officer and member of the Board increased my involvement and made me aware of RSNA's outstanding character, commitment, and dedication to the science and practice of radiology, and to the patients it serves. To receive this medal from my colleagues and friends representing this wonderful organization is surely the seminal event of my professional career. I will truly treasure this award because of the outstanding nature of this society and the award's significance."

A Phi Beta Kappa, Dr. Levitt graduated cum laude from the University of Colorado in Boulder, where he was elected to Alpha Omega Alpha and earned his bachelor's and medical degrees. He completed his internship at Philadelphia General Hospital and his residencies in internal medicine and radiology at the University of California, San Francisco. He also was an American Cancer Society Clinical Fellow.

Dr. Levitt's long and distinguished career includes positions at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor, the University of Rochester Medical Center in New York, the University of Oklahoma Medical Center, and the Medical College of Virginia in Richmond. Since 1970, Dr. Levitt has been in Minneapolis, where he has served as head and clinical chief of the Department of Therapeutic Radiology-Radiation Oncology at the University of Minnesota and as chief of the therapeutic radiology service at the University of Minnesota Hospitals. Currently, he is a professor of therapeutic radiology-radiation oncology at the University of

Minnesota and is a foreign adjunct professor at Karolinska Institutet in Stockholm, Sweden.

An honorary fellow of the Royal College of Radiology, Dr. Levitt has been president of the American Society for Therapeutic Radiology and Oncology (ASTRO), the American Radium Society (ARS), the International Society of Radiation Oncology and the Society of Chairmen of Academic Radiation Oncology Programs. He has received gold medal awards from ASTRO and the Gilbert Fletcher Society, and the ARS Janeway Medal.

John G. McAfee, M.D.

John G. McAfee, M.D., is a retired researcher and scholar in nuclear medicine, whose groundbreaking work has led to significant medical advances, especially in blood cell labeling.

"John's commitment to research and teaching has been monumental," said RSNA President Brian C. Lentle, M.D. "Working at the State University of New York with Dr. Subramanian, John developed the first technetium-99m-labeled phosphate bone scanning agents and, while on sabbatical in Great Britain, he found other radioactive agents with Dr. Matthew Thakur, which irreversibly labeled blood cells for imaging their organ distribution. These have become among the most widely used procedures not only in nuclear medicine, but also in radiology as a whole."

"I am greatly honored to receive such a prestigious award from RSNA, an organization that I have always respected," said Dr. McAfee. "I remember attending my first RSNA meeting when I was a resident. The professionalism of the meeting and of the Society made a most favorable impression on me. I also remember the thrill of presenting my first paper at RSNA. It is a privilege to be recognized by such a prominent group."

Born and raised in Canada, Dr. McAfee received his medical degree from the University of Toronto and completed internships at Victoria Hospital and Westminster Hospital, both in London, Ontario. He completed radiology residencies at Victoria Hospital and The Johns Hopkins Hospital in Baltimore, where he also completed a fellowship.

Dr. McAfee remained at Johns Hopkins for more than a decade as a staff radiologist, becoming chief of diagnosis and, later, overseeing nuclear medicine. He then spent 25 years at the State University of New York Health Science Center at Syracuse as chair and director of radiologic sciences. During that time, Dr. McAfee and Henry N. Wagner Jr., M.D., imaged the kidneys with radiomercury-labeled chlormerodrin. This event, in 1965, is listed by the Society of Nuclear Medicine as an historic moment in nuclear medicine.

An RSNA member since 1956, Dr. McAfee has been a professor of radiology at the George Washington University Medical Center in Washington, D.C., a consultant to the National Institutes of Health (NIH) Clinical Center in nuclear medicine and, in 1993, became a full-time staff member in nuclear medicine at the NIH Clinical Center in charge of radiopharmaceutical research. He retired in 1996 at age 70.

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RSNA is an association of more than 37,000 radiologists, radiation oncologists and related scientists committed to promoting excellence in radiology through education and by fostering research, with the ultimate goal of improving patient care. The Society is based in Oak Brook, Ill.