

Harvard Ophthalmology Lifetime Achievement in Mentoring Award

The Mentoring Oversight Board created the **Harvard Ophthalmology Excellence in Mentoring Award** in 2019 to recognize and honor excellence in mentoring in our department. Mentees are asked to provide a 200-250 word summary indicating why the mentor deserves this award, specifically addressing his/her skills and qualities.

Glowing nominations have been received for mentors across academic ranks, a testament to the success of our mentoring program. One question emerged, however: whether to recognize junior or senior faculty. Since one of the purposes in creating the Excellence in Mentoring Award was to inspire faculty to go out of their way to help others, the Board realized that junior faculty may consider the award out of reach for them if a senior faculty member receives it. The Board concluded that the Excellence in Mentoring Award best serves to recognize rising stars in mentoring.

Nonetheless, the Board feels that senior faculty deserve to be acknowledged for their consistent, high-quality mentoring of students, trainees, and junior faculty. It has therefore created the **Harvard Ophthalmology Lifetime Achievement in Mentoring Award**. This award will be periodically given at the discretion of the Board. It will not involve the solicitation of nominations, except insofar as senior faculty are nominated for the Excellence in Mentoring Award. The Board will consider those letters as well as feedback from mentees given to the Manager of Faculty Affairs and/or to Board members themselves.

The Board will look for a career-long commitment to mentoring through the fostering of multiple generations of students, trainees, and faculty to enable them to attain their full potential. The recipient will have provided valuable support, encouragement, and sponsorship, as well as a commitment to diversity and inclusion, all of which have led to the meaningful career and personal development of those at the start of or earlier on in their careers than the mentor. This mentor will exemplify “the highest and best form of listening [which] comes in playing the same role for the other person that a trampoline plays for a child. It gives energy, acceleration, height and amplification.”¹ S/he will “consistently and skillfully offer affirmation, challenge, feedback and insider information, networking, visibility, intentional role-modeling, professional socialization, advocacy, and increasing mutuality and collegiality.” Finally, this mentor will demonstrate “integrity, good judgment around boundaries and confidentiality, and an inclination toward caring and acting with [the] mentee’s best interest at heart.”²

The Mentoring Oversight Board

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¹ <https://hbr.org/2016/07/what-great-listeners-actually-do>

² <https://hbr.org/2020/07/why-your-mentorship-program-isnt-working>