

Gold Medalist Tribute • Laurie L. Fajardo, MD, MBA

Introduction by Bruce J. Hillman, MD

Amazingly, I actually recall when Laurie L. Fajardo, MD, MBA, applied to the University of Arizona for a residency in 1984. It sticks so well in my mind because, in contrast to the usual situation, she interviewed me. In those pre-Internet days, she somehow had gotten a copy of my CV, reviewed it, and quizzed me on its contents. It was a portent. Within a week of her 1985 arrival in Tucson, she was back in my office seriously discussing with me her research agenda. Even then, I could tell that Laurie had that almost impossible combination of drive, talent, skill in dealing with others, addiction to hard work, and tenacity that would ensure her early and continuing success. She has never let up.

Of course, much of how Laurie became the person she is today is unknowable—a random entanglement of genetics and happenstance—but some can be explained. Laurie grew up in modest circumstances in St Louis, Missouri, the oldest of six children of Iberian immigrants. She was a talented athlete, winning state championships in the all-around for gymnastics as a high school student and playing semipro softball. Her education almost ended with the awarding of her RN degree, but serendipitously for radiology, she caught on as a research nurse in cardiology at Washington University (St Louis). The experience inspired her. She received her bachelor of arts degree from Washington University and her MD degree from the University of Chicago prior to our felicitous meeting in Arizona. Laurie's early experiences in research encouraged her to take a year out from her clinical radiology training to acquire the research skills she would need to fuel her future career. It was a year well spent. She emerged from residency with 22 peer-reviewed publications and a subspecialization in breast imaging, which remains her research and clinical interest.

Laurie has held faculty appointments and important administrative positions at the University of Arizona, the University of Virginia, and Johns Hopkins University—from which she also received her MBA degree. Since 2002, she has been very successful as professor and chair of radiology at the University of Iowa (Iowa City). She has achieved independent grant funding, has served an important role in the founding and growth of the American College of Radiology Imaging Network (ACRIN) as chair of its Media and Publications Committee, and has authored more than 150 scientific articles and book chapters. She is much sought after as a lecturer in the United States and internationally.



Laurie L. Fajardo, MD, MBA

Laurie has filled important roles for nearly every imaginable radiological organization, has been selected for National Cancer Institute committees and breast consensus conferences, and has worked on the editorial boards of five journals. AUR rightfully honors her service to this organization, as she has served in every imaginable capacity, including President for 1999–2000 and deputy editor of both *Academic Radiology* and its predecessor, *Investigative Radiology*, and she continues on the AUR Board of Directors and as president of the AUR Research and Education Fund's Board of Directors.

Most significant of all, Laurie is a warm, sincere, and engaging person who, in addition to all of her professional accomplishments, is an exemplary mother to her two children and a loyal friend to many of us. She has represented with great honor her university, her community, and her profession. The Association of University Radiologists honors itself in awarding Laurie L. Fajardo, MD, MBA, its Gold Medal.