

## Gold Medalist Tribute • James H. Thrall, MD

Introduction by Theresa C. McLoud, MD

It is an honor and privilege to present the 2010 AUR Gold Medal to James H. Thrall, MD. This is particularly rewarding for me as a member of Dr Thrall's department because it allows me to recognize his outstanding leadership and personal achievements, both nationally and internationally, and particularly his accomplishments as radiologist-in-chief at the Massachusetts General Hospital (MGH).

Dr Thrall grew up in Ann Arbor, Michigan, and pursued both his undergraduate and medical degree programs at the University of Michigan. He completed training in radiology and nuclear medicine at the Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Washington, DC, where he subsequently served as assistant chief of nuclear medicine. Dr Thrall then returned to the University of Michigan as assistant professor of internal medicine and radiology in 1975 and was promoted to professor in 1981. Dr Thrall's unique talents as a leader and an administrator extraordinaire were recognized very early in his career. He was successfully recruited to serve as the chairman of the Department of Radiology at Henry Ford Hospital in 1983. He is currently radiologist-in-chief at MGH and is the Juan M. Taveras Professor of Radiology at Harvard Medical School. He has held these positions since 1988 and currently also serves as a trustee of the Massachusetts General Physicians Organization.

Dr Thrall's accomplishments as a clinical expert and scholar are well recognized. He is the author of over 300 publications and reviews and is the founder and editor of *The Requisites in Radiology* textbook series. Nationally, he has been appointed to numerous leadership positions in organized radiology. He is past president of the American Roentgen Ray Society and has served on the Board of Trustees of the Research and Education Foundation of RSNA and the Board of Trustees of the Society of Nuclear Medicine. He currently is chairman of the Board of Chancellors of the American College of Radiology and secretary-treasurer of the Academy of Radiology Research. He is a member of the Advisory Committee to the director of the National Institutes of Health.

The key to understanding Dr Thrall's remarkable career is to appreciate the fact that he is recognized by his colleagues and throughout the community of radiol-

ogy as a visionary in the truest sense of the word. He not only has seen an exciting future for radiology, he has perhaps more than anyone else helped to create it.

Dr Thrall is well grounded in mathematics, medicine, and humanism. His understanding of medicine goes well beyond radiology. These qualities are reflected in the accomplishments and innovations that he has pioneered in the radiology department at MGH, which have become a model for radiology practice nationally. During his tenure, he has introduced management processes from business and industry, with a focus on

defining departmental mission, vision, and values. Our department has witnessed the growth of ever more sophisticated management information systems and financial arrangements. He is the author of nontraditional activities previously absent from radiology departments, many of which were highly innovative. These include the introduction of marketing techniques, the development of consulting groups, clinical trial groups, and a three-dimensional postprocessing laboratory. His interest in technology led to the early adoption of PACS, speech recognition, and electronic order entry. Such innovations in administration and management have been widely

admired and introduced in departments throughout the country.

Dr Thrall has long realized that the future of our specialty is greatly dependent on the quality of our research. The establishment of the Molecular Imaging Center and the Martino Center for Biomedical Imaging at MGH, the latter in partnership with Harvard and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, has helped to position radiology in the forefront of translational research and technology development. MGH has attracted the highest level of extramural funding among all academic radiology departments in the United States. Dr Thrall's creativity and vision are fortunately coupled with a great insight into the human condition. He inspires, supports, and delights in the success of others. I have been one of the beneficiaries of his support and inspiration, and my own academic career would not have been possible without his leadership and support. As a resident, Dr Thrall was consumed with a vision of what the future of radiology would be. We are all indebted to him as the 21st century leader who has truly made it happen.



James H. Thrall, MD