



Federation of Pediatric Organizations

Executive Office: 6728 Old McLean Village Drive, McLean, VA 22101

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

January 23, 2024



2024 JOSEPH W. ST. GEME, JR. LEADERSHIP AWARD RECIPIENT ANNOUNCED

McLean, VA – Pediatrician Dr. Benard P. Dreyer is the 2024 Joseph W. St. Geme, Jr. Leadership Award recipient. Dr. Dreyer is a leader with a lifetime record of significant contributions to child health and the profession of pediatrics. He has had a major impact in the areas of health equity, child poverty, diversity and inclusion, early brain and child development, and the promotion of pediatric research. Dr. Dreyer is an Academic General Pediatrician and Developmental-Behavioral Pediatrician who has devoted his professional career to serving poor children and families who are mostly immigrants or minoritized.

Dr. Dreyer attended medical school at the New York University School of Medicine, earning election to the Alpha Omega Alpha Society in his second year. He completed residency training and a chief residency in pediatrics at the Albert Einstein College of Medicine. After two years on the faculty at Albert Einstein and as Director of Pediatric Emergency Medicine at Jacobi Hospital, as well as leading the formation of the first Emergency Medicine Residency in New York State, he returned to New York University School of Medicine to lead Ambulatory Pediatrics at Bellevue Hospital in 1976. He has remained there ever since and was soon appointed Director of Pediatrics at Bellevue Hospital. He was promoted to Associate Professor in 1978 (with tenure granted in 1983). He is now Professor of Pediatrics for the last 20 years. He was appointed Associate Chair of Pediatrics in 1997, a post which he held until 2004 when he was appointed Interim Chair of Pediatrics (2004-2005), then Vice Chair of Pediatrics (2006-2007), and finally Interim Chair of Pediatrics (2007-2008). Since 2019, he has been Vice Chair for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion. He has served as Chair of the Curriculum Committee for the New York University School of Medicine since 2007 after being the Co-Chair of the Curriculum Committee from 2001 to 2007.

Dr. Dreyer has had a number of important leadership positions in Pediatric organizations, some of which are members of the Federation of Pediatric Organizations (FOPO), as well as other important scientific organizations focusing on medicine. He was on the Board of Directors of FOPO in 2011, 2012 and 2016.

Within the Academic Pediatric Association (APA), Dr. Dreyer was Chair of the Research Committee (2006 to 2009), President-Elect, President, and Immediate Past President (2010 to 2013), Chair of the Task Force on Childhood Poverty (2012 to 2015), and Founder and Director of the APA Research Scholars Program (2012 to 2015). He is also co-editor of three supplements to *Academic Pediatrics* that have major impact: Child Poverty in the United States (published in 2016), Child Poverty in the United States in the Age of COVID (published in 2021), and Racism in Pediatrics (in preparation).

Within the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), Dr. Dreyer was President-Elect, President and Immediate Past President (2015 to 2018), Medical Director of Policies, Clinical and Technical Reports and Clinical Practice Guidelines (2018 to present), and a member of multiple committees, councils and sections, as well as Co-Chair of various committees both nationally and regionally. As AAP President, he led the AAP's Strategic Priority on Poverty and Child Health including shepherding the 2016 Policy Statement on Poverty and Child Health and associated advocacy activities. He is now overseeing the updated policy statement on Poverty and Child Health (in preparation).

Within the Pediatric Academic Societies (PAS), Dr. Dreyer served on the Program Committee from 2008 to 2021, on the Executive Committee and Strategic Planning Committee from 2015 to 2017, and on the Inaugural Board of Directors from 2018 to 2021. He also served on committees in the Society for Development and Behavioral Pediatrics (the Research Committee, and the DEI Committee among others) as well as the annual SDBP Research Mentorship Workshop. He also serves on the Reach Out and Read National Medical Advisory Committee (2017 to present).

Within the National Academies of Science, Engineering and Medicine (NASEM), Dr. Dreyer served on the Round Table for Health Literacy from 2009 to 2013. He also, more importantly, was part of the NASEM Committee that produced the groundbreaking report "Roadmap to Reducing Child Poverty" in 2019 and follow-up advocacy efforts. This report led to the Biden administration adopting the reformed child tax credit (child allowance) which reduced child poverty in 2021 by 40-50 percent.

Dr. Dreyer has been an extremely effective advocate for issues that negatively impact children and families. In addition to childhood poverty, he has focused on immigrant health and anti-racism and health equity. During his years as AAP President and tenure on the AAP Executive Committee, he visited the southern border of the US with Mexico and spoke out about appropriate treatment of unaccompanied minors and immigrant families. He worked with the AAP Council on Immigrant Child and Family Health to spearhead a number of impactful policies. He worked with the AAP Washington, DC Office to collaborate with other organizations to push back on misguided government policies. His advocacy of immigrant children and families continues and is needed more than ever. He is presently working with the Migrant Clinician's Network and their Specialty Care Access Network as the New York State and New Jersey Champion. He regularly receives referrals of children (and sometimes parents) in need of subspecialty medical and behavioral care and finds hospitals and subspecialists who are able to provide care for these immigrants. He is on the Board of the Grace Children's Foundation which brings children from around the world who have life-threatening conditions to the United States or other countries with advanced health care systems. As an example, two children who Dr. Dreyer arranged care for in the United States were a girl who was a multiple trauma victim of a car crash from the Dominican Republic and a boy from Zimbabwe who had survived an attack on his face by hyenas. Both children would have died if not brought here; both are now doing well and have returned to their home countries. Dr. Dreyer has also been very involved in the present migrant crisis with thousands of families arriving by bus in New York City from states on the southern border. He has arranged care for these children as well as pregnant women and has advocated with the city leadership for better conditions in the hotels and shelters in which these families are placed.

Dr. Dreyer has also been an active and effective advocate for anti-racism, health equity and diversity/inclusion. As Vice Chair of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) for Pediatrics, he has led resident and faculty education regarding racism and health equity, as well as quality improvement efforts to find and eradicate health inequities due to racism and ethnic bias, whether implicit or explicit. He has now been asked to co-lead the groups of Vice Chairs of DEI for NYU Grossman School of Medicine. This new position will allow him to bring improvements in DEI to the entire medical school. At the Pediatric Academic Societies meeting in 2019, he gave the Armstrong Lecture at the invitation of the APA leadership. He focused on racism and bias and the work we need to do in pediatrics. In response to his call to action, leaders from around the country joined with him to set up a group, Pediatricians Against Trauma and Racism (PART). This group has collaborated on a number of actions, including a commentary in *Pediatrics* after the murder of George Floyd in the spring of 2020 ("The Death of George Floyd: Bending the Arc of History Toward Justice for Generations of Children"). This commentary had 25 authors, including eight former AAP Presidents, and leaders of the APA, APS, APS, APPD, the Society of Adolescent Health and Medicine (SAHM), and SDBP. Dr. Dreyer and PART also

sponsored state of the art plenaries at PAS, as well as an in-person meeting last spring at PAS that he led. Dr. Dreyer also served on the AAP Task Force on Addressing Bias and Discrimination. As previously noted, he is co-editor of a supplement to *Academic Pediatrics* on Racism in Pediatrics.

Dr. Dreyer's clinical efforts have spanned primary care, developmental-behavioral pediatrics, and pediatric hospital medicine. For over 40 years he has led a primary care program at Bellevue Hospital, including co-located mental and oral health services and clinics in homeless shelters. This comprehensive program is focused on interventions in primary care to improve early childhood outcomes, including early brain development and obesity, as well as an innovative focus on health literacy and medication safety.

His research credentials are equally impressive. He has over 150 peer-reviewed research publications. His research has been informed by his clinical activity and his patients. His research has focused on improvements in primary care, family homelessness, immigrant health, literacy, and more recently inpatient patient safety and long COVID. He also provides education in research methodology to fellows and faculty at NYU Grossman School of Medicine as well as nationally at meetings and scholar programs. He is a sought after speaker for grand rounds and visiting professorships around the country.

He is the recipient of many awards, including the NYU university-wide Distinguished Teaching Award (2017), the AAP's prestigious Clifford C. Grulee Award (2019), the APA Public Policy and Advocacy Award (2014), the APA Armstrong Lectureship Award (2019), and the New York Academy of Medicine Millie and Richard Brock Lectureship Award (2019). Dr. Dreyer also hosts a weekly radio show, "On-Call for Kids", on Sirius-XM.

In summary, Dr. Dreyer has made a major impact on children and families, improving their pediatric care and advocating for those who may not be able to advocate for themselves. He is always trying to correct health inequities and improve the future for all children and families. His career exemplifies the principles of Joseph W. St. Geme, Jr, MD, and this award given in his name.

The Federation of Pediatric Organizations is comprised of the American Academy of Pediatrics, Academic Pediatric Association, American Pediatric Society, American Board of Pediatrics, Association of Medical School Pediatric Department Chairs, Association of Pediatric Program Directors, and Society for Pediatric Research. The purpose of the federation is to promote optimal health for children by building on the efforts and expertise of the member organizations, and on the relationships between the member organizations to accomplish shared goals.

###