

## TED M. BURNS HUMANISM IN NEUROLOGY AWARD – 2020

NOMINATIONS DUE DECEMBER 31, 2019

There are those in the neurological profession who are gifted in both the care and advocacy that they provide for their patients as well as their passion and effectiveness in teaching future generations of neurologists to do the same. Those with this calling deserve recognition, which will serve not only to honor them, but also to pay it forward and motivate future generations who share this innate gift. These individuals are gifted educators and patient advocates, but moreover, they inspire others with their approach. We often encounter colleagues who successfully influence and educate on a local scale and through existing, traditional pathways – but few change the paradigm for humanism and education, and are thereby able to broaden the reach and scope of neurology internationally. This award seeks to acknowledge the influence of the most benevolent and innovative in our field, who through their work, advance the field of neurology and make knowledge more accessible through their innovative teaching. The award aims to celebrate neurologists whose work embodies humanism – in patient care, in education, in advocacy, and even in everyday encounters. Finally, the award aims to inspire neurologists to improve healthcare delivery and the lives of their colleagues and patients, now and in the future, locally and internationally. Innovations in education and practice beyond traditional mechanisms will be recognized as integral to the approach of the awardee as well.



**Need for Award:** In order to maintain the idealism and compassion of neurology, humanism must remain primary as our practices evolve in an era of changing societal pressures and emerging technology. Those that maintain these priorities while simultaneously adapting new technologies to disseminate neurologic education for the improvement of our patients' lives should be celebrated among the leaders in our field. Dr. Ted M. Burns has been visionary in fostering trainees and colleagues, and for foreseeing novel mechanisms to make the full scope of neurology accessible locally and abroad. Dr. Burns has mastered the delivery of compassionate, patient-centered care, and has a track record of calling attention to and addressing disingenuous practices in medicine and inequities in care. His contributions to the development and growth of the American Academy of Neurology's "Neurology" podcast, and his mentoring of team members, have been visionary, innovative, and exemplary. This award seeks to encourage current and future neurologists to advocate similarly for their patients and their field, and to innovate practical and useful mechanisms by which to educate trainees, peers, and the greater public about important issues in neurology.

**About Ted M. Burns:** Dr. Burns grew up in a Kansas City suburb. He graduated from the University of Kansas with a bachelor's degree and a medical degree. He completed a

neurology residency and a clinical neurophysiology fellowship at the University of Virginia (UVA). Following that, Dr. Burns completed a fellowship in peripheral nerve disease at the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minnesota. He was a Senior Staff Neurologist at the Lahey Clinic in Boston and a member of the consulting staff at Boston Children's Hospital for 2 years before joining the faculty at UVA. Dr. Burns is currently the Harrison Distinguished Teaching Professor in the Department of Neurology at UVA. He has served as the director of UVA's residency and clinical neurophysiology training programs and his educational skills have been recognized at UVA through membership in the Academy of Distinguished Educators, the Dean's Teaching Award of Excellence, and the Master Educator Award. He has also served as Vice Chair in the Department, Chief of the Neuromuscular Division and Director of the Electromyography Laboratory.

Dr. Burns was the recipient of the 2018 Distinguished Researcher Award from the American Association of Neuromuscular and Electrodiagnostic Medicine (AANEM), particularly related to his research in patient centered assessment and treatment of myasthenia gravis (MG). He developed the practical and easy to administer MG Composite and MG Quality of Life scales, which are recognized worldwide as standard end-points for MG clinical trials. In an effort to improve patient centered MG care and empower patients, Dr. Burns advocated to include formal measurement of quality of life as part of routine clinical care. He also developed an electronic method to allow patients to track quality of life at home and share this with their physicians. Dr. Burns expanded his focus to apply these same principals to other neuromuscular disorders. He collaborated with others to develop of quality of life tools for patients with peripheral neuropathy and inflammatory myopathies. Dr. Burns' passion for patient advocacy grew beyond the traditional avenues of medical education. In 2015, he began a tireless campaign on behalf of patients to organize neuromuscular colleagues from across the United States to lobby professional organizations, pharmaceutical companies, the FDA, and the United States Congress for fair pricing for medical therapies. His work led directly to real policy changes and improved patient access to treatment.

As an innovator in neurologic education, Dr. Burns started the *Neurology* podcast in 2007 in an era before most had smartphones. He was a visionary in seeing the potential of this medium to disseminate neurologic education and make it accessible for practicing neurologists around the world. This vision has been realized with over 600 episodes, 20 million downloads, and over 17,000 CME hours created since the podcast's inception. Dr. Burns also started the AANEM Podcast in 2006, distributing over a hundred podcasts on various neuromuscular topics (the vast majority conducted by Dr. Burns himself). In 2019, in the midst of battling cancer, Dr. Burns continued his track record of innovation by leading the creation of the *Neurology Minute* – a short, weekday blast of neurology news and education available on portable and home assistant devices.

As a friend and mentor, Dr. Burns is beloved for promoting a fun and inclusive educational environment, stimulating awareness and advocacy for the community, and embodying an honest and kind approach to patient care. Even during Ted's illness, his motivation remains to educate and edify; he shared his own story with the view that it may make us better physicians and caregivers, as articulated in his 2017 *Neurology* editorial "*On Being Sick – Musings About Kindness, Side Effects, and Slowing Down.*"

**Benefits:** The 2020 recipient will receive a certificate of recognition from the American Brain Foundation (ABF) at its Commitment to Cures dinner taking place at the American Academy of Neurology (AAN) Annual Meeting along with a monetary award. Additionally, the recipient and their humanism and educational platform and efforts will be mentioned on the AAN podcast to help promote awareness and recognition of humanism and innovation in neurology.

**Eligibility:**

- Nominees should exhibit humanism in neurology through humble leadership, advocacy, innovation, and creativity.
- Nominee does not need to be an active AAN member, but their work should reflect the priorities of the AAN, in supporting neurologists and furthering neurologic education
- Posthumous nominations will not be accepted.

**Application Requirements:**

- Nominations/applications are due on December 31, 2019
- Applicants must submit all application materials in one email to [grants@americanbrainfoundation.org](mailto:grants@americanbrainfoundation.org).
- Nominations/applications must include a statement letter that includes:
  - o Nominee's/applicant's name and institution
  - o Description of characteristics of humanism, and well as unique aspects of their approach to furthering the field of neurology and supporting trainees and/or colleagues
- Applications must include a current curriculum vitae of the nominee
- An individual may be nominated with supporting documentation from a second nominator