

From the University of Mississippi Medical Center Division of Public Affairs

UMMC'S DR. JOHN HALL NAMED SEC PROFESSOR OF THE YEAR

Respected researcher, student mentor named best teacher from the conference's 14 member schools

Media contact: Jack Mazurak at (601) 984-1970 or jmazurak@umc.edu. [Photos and video can be found here.](#)

JACKSON, Miss. – Dr. John Hall, a professor and administrator at the University of Mississippi Medical Center, has been named the Southeastern Conference's 2014 Professor of the Year in recognition of his excellence both in the classroom and as a topflight obesity and cardiovascular researcher.

The SEC announced Hall's selection today as the top professor among those teaching at the SEC's 14 member institutions of higher education.

"Dr. John Hall represents what is best about academic leadership in the Southeastern Conference," UM Chancellor Dan Jones said. "His reputation as an educator spans the globe and his contributions in the broad fields of medicine and physiology are substantial. He exemplifies the ideals we should all have for an SEC Professor of the Year."

Hall is the Arthur C. Guyton Professor and chair of physiology and biophysics, and director of the Mississippi Center for Obesity Research at UMMC. He is one of the most recognized teachers and researchers in the areas of cardiovascular and renal physiology, mechanisms of hypertension, obesity and metabolic disorders.

At UMMC, he's mentored more than 120 postdoctoral fellows, graduate students and medical student researchers. He's seen six of his understudies go on to become chairs or directors of various university departments, and one is dean of graduate studies at UMMC.

Hall said the award is a tribute to the university and the team of researchers there.

"I am deeply honored and feel very privileged to represent the University of Mississippi," Hall said. "There are 14 outstanding universities, so it was a real surprise to me when I received the notice that I was chosen for this honor. I think this to me is important because it does signify that the Southeastern Conference really values academics and scholarship.

"This is a tribute not to me so much, but the university – that we have a good team here of cardiovascular researchers and many folks that work together. I like to say that the team is a lot more than the sum of its parts. I think that's especially true in this case."

The award is given each year to one SEC faculty member with a record in research and scholarship that places them among the elite in higher education. The winners are picked from the universities' SEC Faculty Achievement Award nominees. The SEC will provide Hall with a \$20,000 honorarium and recognize him at the SEC Spring Meetings in May.

Hall has fostered development of the next generation of "exemplary scientists," said Dr. James Keeton, vice chancellor for health affairs and dean of the UMMC School of Medicine.

"Dr. Hall is part of a lineage that includes some of the finest scientists this country has produced," Keeton said. "He is the product of a department that has nurtured many leaders in the field of physiology and, in turn, his leadership has fostered the development of the next generation of exemplary scientists. There's no greater legacy than that, and no person more deserving of this honor."

Hall received his bachelor's degree at Kent State University, his doctorate in physiology at Michigan State University and his postdoctoral training at UMMC before joining the faculty.

His laboratory was the first to use renal-pressure natriuresis to demonstrate how the kidney's ability to excrete salt and water plays a vital role in controlling blood pressure and maintaining salt and water balance in hypertension. Hall's lab was also the first to discover that increases in leptin, a hormone secreted by fat cells, causes high blood pressure and links obesity and hypertension.

He has been the principal investigator of grants that have brought roughly \$50 million in extramural funding to UMMC. Hall's research has been funded by the National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute since 1975 and he's also been director of a National Institutes of Health Program Project since 1988. He has written more than 530 publications and has been cited more than 35,800 times. He also co-authored the "Textbook of Medical Physiology" that is considered the leading textbook on the subject. It has been translated into 14 different languages and is one of 18 books he has either written or edited.

Hall has been inducted into the Norman C. Nelson Order for Teaching Excellence at UMMC, and in 2005, his students nominated him as an All-Star Professor.

Mississippi Gov. Phil Bryant said the honor for Hall reflects the countless lives he's touched through his work.

"I have had the privilege of calling Dr. John Hall a friend for many years," Bryant said. "His work is a perfect example of the excellence and innovation found in Mississippi. He has touched countless lives in the classroom and through his research. He certainly deserves this honor."

Mississippi Commissioner of Higher Education Hank Bounds praised Hall's accomplishments as both a researcher and educator.

"Dr. Hall's excellence both in research and in the classroom has affected so many lives in a positive way," Bounds said. "His research on obesity and cardiovascular problems – two of the most important issues facing our state and our nation – is invaluable. As a mentor to more than 120 postdoctoral students, graduate students and medical student researchers, he has had an immeasurable positive impact on the medical field.

"This recognition is well-deserved and Dr. Hall is to be congratulated on this wonderful professional accolade from the Southeastern Conference."

####

4/30/2014

Please forward this message to colleagues who might be interested. If you wish to be removed from this list or know of a colleague to add, send an e-mail message to: jmazurak@umc.edu.

The University of Mississippi Medical Center, located in Jackson, is the state's only academic medical center. UMMC encompasses five health science schools, including medicine, nursing, health related

professions, dentistry and graduate studies, as well as the site where University of Mississippi pharmacy students do their clinical training. The Medical Center's health-care enterprise includes five hospitals and University Physicians, the faculty group practice. The Medical Center's threefold mission is to educate tomorrow's health-care professionals, conduct innovative research to improve human health, and to provide the highest quality care available to the state's population. A major goal of the Medical Center is the improvement of the health of Mississippians and the elimination of health disparities. For more information, contact the Division of Public Affairs at (601) 984-1100 or umc.edu/publicaffairs