

OCTOBER 30, 2006 - The Preeclampsia Foundation handed out its prestigious Hope Awards at its annual benefit gala, "Saving Grace: A Night of Hope" on Friday evening. The awards, designed to recognize individuals who have made significant contributions to preeclampsia research and awareness, were this year given to S. Anath Karumanchi, MD; Marshall Lindheimer, MD; Thomas Easterling, MD; and Ms. Laura Muller.

"These award recipients are catalysts of change-innovative thinkers with tireless energy who represent the best of the medical community, and the best of the foundation. The research discoveries and the awareness efforts that have been made during the last year and last several years offer tremendous hope that one day soon we can offer women real treatment for this pervasive and troubling disorder," says Eleni Z. Tsigas, Chair of the Preeclampsia Foundation Board of Directors. ***About the Hope Award Recipients:***

**S. Anath Karumanchi, MD - "Innovator of the Year"**

Dr. Karumanchi, a nephrologist in the Center for Vascular Biology at Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center (BIDMC) and assistant professor of medicine, obstetrics and gynecology at Harvard Medical School, was honored with the Hope Award for "Innovator of the Year." Dr. Karumanchi's team at BIDMC, collaborating with researchers from The Hospital for Sick Children in Toronto, recently discovered a protein that escalates preeclampsia to a severe and life-threatening state. This research breakthrough followed Dr. Karumanchi's earlier discovery that elevated levels of the sFlt1 placental protein leads to the onset of preeclampsia. Dr. Karumanchi's research, which has been licensed to several bio/pharmaceutical companies, is currently funded by NIH.

**Marshall Lindheimer, MD - "Lifetime Achievement in Advocacy"**

Dr. Marshall Lindheimer, professor emeritus in the department of medicine, obstetrics and gynecology and in the committee of clinical pharmacology at the University of Chicago, was honored with the Hope Award for "Lifetime Achievement in Advocacy." Dr. Lindheimer's research and career have been dedicated to the care of pregnant women with hypertension and renal disease. Even though Dr. Lindheimer is technically "retired", he has committed tireless energy to connecting young investigators-and a young organization, the Preeclampsia Foundation-with opportunities, ideas and other influential individuals and organizations. Ms. Tsigas said of Dr. Lindheimer, "A pollinator of progress, a lifetime of selfless devotion, a zeal for motivating and mentoring others."

**Ms. Laura Muller - "Volunteer of the Year"**

Ms. Laura Muller, Director of Support for the Preeclampsia Foundation and Tobacco Policy Specialist for the Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium, was honored with the Hope Award for "Volunteer of the Year." Ms. Muller joined the Preeclampsia Foundation in early 2003 and has volunteered in many different capacities, including online moderator, webmaster and forum administrator, essentially creating the infrastructure that has allowed over 4,500 users to be dynamically served on the Forum. She was recently appointed to the Board of Directors for the Preeclampsia Foundation for the term beginning January 1, 2007.

"Lives are literally saved on our forum because of the high standards you set and insist upon," said Ms. Tsigas. Ms. Muller has shown "unflinching professionalism and compassion" and "exceptional volunteerism and commitment" in her years of service to the Preeclampsia Foundation.

***About the Founders Award Recipient:***

**Thomas Easterling, MD - "Founders Award"**

The Founders Award is given to individuals who have been particularly influential in the founding and success of the Preeclampsia Foundation. Dr. Easterling is a national expert in the field of hypertension in pregnancy, a professor at the University of Washington School of Medicine and Director of the Preeclampsia Foundation's Medical Board. He and his team at the University of Washington are members of the NIH-sponsored Obstetrical Pharmacological Research Unit network investigating the use of medications in pregnancy. Dr. Easterling continues an active clinical and research practice at the University of Washington and is a co-founder of the Preeclampsia Foundation.

Dr. Easterling's efforts were critical in securing the best and most influential representatives for the Preeclampsia Foundation's Medical Board, providing the foundation with credibility and entrée to important opportunities and events. Dr. Easterling's ongoing support, insights and efforts in the foundation's "Ask the Experts" Web site initiative, professional contributions to research, and representation of the foundation as a media spokesperson have been instrumental to the success of the organization.