



News *Release*

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Richard K. Scher, M.D.

Recipient of the Dermatology Foundation's Lifetime Career Educator Award

The Dermatology Foundation recognized the tremendous contribution Richard K. Scher, M.D. has made to the specialty of dermatology by honoring him with the Lifetime Career Educator Award at its recent annual meeting of membership in San Francisco. The award celebrates Dr. Scher's distinguished career and the high standard he has set for the next generation of teachers in all areas of dermatology.

"He is an outstanding teacher whom his students revered", noted John R. Stanley, M.D. who presented the award to Dr. Scher at the DF Annual Meeting. Dr. Stanley also quoted long-time colleague Dr. C. Ralph Daniel III, " 'He brought nail disease to the practicing dermatologist and made it simple, easy, and approachable.' "

Dr. Scher brought the treatment of nail disorders into the modern age. He established the

first nail clinic in the United States at New York University and was instrumental in advancing the diagnosis and treatment of nail disorders. He wrote much of the seminal textbooks, was a consistent AAD nail educator for decades, and has taught over 200 residents. He was primarily responsible for populating the specialty with a growing cadre of dermatologists who have special expertise in treating and teaching about nail problems.

Dr. Scher's choice of specialty came about through lucky circumstances. During his internship at SUNY Brooklyn/Maimonides Hospital, he caught sight of a notice from the dermatology department at NYU. They needed a researcher in skin chemistry and would provide a dermatology residency plus a generous stipend. He applied, was accepted, and found dermatology a perfect fit.

Afterward, Dr. Scher entered private practice and taught part-time with the department at NYU. One day, the Vice Chairman approached him: “ ‘We don't have a nail clinic. We need one—and we'd like you to do it.’ “ Dr. Scher knew little about nails, but was assured that once he started the clinic he would see many of them, and soon would know more about nails than most dermatologists. At the time there were only two people in the U.S. with an interest in nails. Dr. Scher spent time with each one and then started the clinic.

Dr. Scher's next step took him to Brown University and then to Columbia University, where he established his second and third nail clinics. Now, Professor of Dermatology at the University of North Carolina in Chapel Hill, he is consolidating the state's first center for nail disease. His more than 200 publications include the comprehensive text—*Nails: Diagnosis, Therapy, Surgery*, written with colleague C. Ralph Daniel III, MD, and is now in its third edition. Add to that his countless lectures and visiting professorships, presidency of the AAD, and major editorial roles in a wide number of journals.

“What makes me most proud,” Dr. Scher says, “is that most nail specialists in the U.S. today spent some time with me. The opportunity to work with young dermatology residents is my main reason for remaining in academic medicine. Helping to train them is my way of giving back.”

The Dermatology Foundation was created in 1964 and is the leading private funding source for skin disease research. It provides funding that helps develop and retain tomorrow’s teachers and researchers in dermatology and enables advancements in patient care.

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