

Bill Branch, MD
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The Putnam Scholars Program:

The Academy has honored our dear friend Sam Morse Putnam with the Putnam Scholars Program. The Winter issue of Medical Encounter in 2006 contained numerous eulogies written by numerous Academy members whose lives Sam had touched. The Putnam Scholars Program was conceived to carry on Sam's passion: welcoming people into the Academy's work. As Dennis Novack wrote, " Sam...was a master at inspiring people, drawing them into the work, and into connections with the community...forever embracing life and its possibilities, optimistic, loving." The Putnam Scholars Program aims to support young medical educators or researchers who are focused on improving healthcare relationships and communication. Awards from the endowment income will provide mentoring by a senior AACH facilitator to each Putnam Scholar and sponsor the Scholar's attendance at the AACH Research and Teaching Forum. They will be our future leaders.

We are fortunate in having Bill Clark's leadership from the beginning to organize the Committee, define the Scholars and raise the initial endowment. So far, AACH has \$114,612 pledged of which \$79,445 has been received. Recently, Adina Kalet agreed to join Bill in leading the Scholars, especially as we move to the phase of calling for nominations and choosing the first scholar, soon to be followed by many others. However, we will need over a year of collecting interest on the full \$114,612 to fund the first Scholar. This is why we must continue to raise funds and collect pledges as soon as possible for this very worthwhile project. All details of the Putnam Scholars Program and a Pledge form are prominently displayed on the AACH web site.

I envisage the Putnam Scholars Program as a well known and signal honor being bestowed on generations of those entering our field for many years to come. It will be quite a tribute to Sam. I can imagine a dinner honoring dozens of distinguished former Scholars and their mentors, perhaps around 2020.

With all best wishes,
Bill Branch, President, AACH