



Putnam Scholars Program

“That was Sam. He was a master at inspiring people, drawing them into the work, and into connections with the community doing the work; forever embracing life and its possibilities, optimistic, loving.”(1)

“I was deeply affected by Sam’s commitment to the work, [and] the joy he found in completely submerging himself in it...Rarely have I felt as heard and as fully seen as when I was with Sam.”(2)

The American Academy on Communication in Healthcare (AACH) seeks to endow a new project that realizes the vision of its co-founder, Dr. Samuel Morse Putnam, whose life and work were shortened by his untimely death in October, 2005. Sam’s lifetime commitment was to advocate for and conduct education and research in physician-patient communication. His personal touch and magnetism engaged countless physicians and educators in the work he loved and produced strong bonds among like-minded individuals in many countries. Respected and loved by both patients and colleagues, he was truly an original, always eager to hear the ideas of teachers as well as students, and a team player whose encouragement was selfless. *“Sam [had a] compassionate ear and almost visionary gift of seeing into another’s soul.”(3)*

The **Putnam Scholars Program** celebrates Dr. Putnam’s life and honors his influential work. AACH invites you to commemorate Sam by donating to the Program endowment. The Program will extend Sam’s work by supporting medical educators or researchers who are focused on improving physician-patient 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 Teaching and Research Forum. Faculty at schools or hospitals in the United States and abroad may apply. Preference will be given to applicants who submit creative plans to augment their institutions’ academic resources through the design of special programs, enhanced curricula, new research projects and/or faculty development efforts. In this way, awards will sustain both Sam’s longstanding enthusiasm for networking among schools, countries, and disciplines, and his ardor about expanding the cadre of physicians, educators, and researchers who are skilled in communication and relationship-centered care.

AACH is a non-profit interdisciplinary group of medical educators and clinicians dedicated to improving physician-patient relationships and communication. In the quarter-century since its founding by Sam and Mack Lipkin, Jr., AACH’s internationally-recognized members, courses, and materials have enhanced the skills and effectiveness of thousands of educators and clinicians in the United States and abroad. The Academy is uniquely able to bridge professional disciplines, medical schools and theoretical perspectives for the benefit of patients and clinicians around the world. *“Every one of our 12 Boston University faculty who attended the course was profoundly and, positively changed by the experience”(4)*

For more details about the **Program**, Dr. Putnam, and about the membership, projects and accomplishments of the American Academy on Communication in Healthcare, visit www.AACHonline.org. We particularly call your attention to AAPP’s memorial issue of *Medical Encounter*, Winter 2006, in which moving personal accounts bear witness to the far-reaching effects of Sam’s warm, loving and generous spirit.

- 1.) Dennis Novack, MD, Professor of Medicine, Associate Dean Medical Education, Drexel U College of Medicine.
- 2.) Jenni Levy, MD, Attending Physician, St. Luke’s Hospital, Bethlehem, PA.
- 3.) Charlotte Williams, MBChB, Assistant Professor of Medicine (Geriatrics), U of Alabama.
- 4.) John Noble, MD, Professor of Medicine, Boston U School of Medicine.