

Parker J. Palmer Courage to Teach Award Recipients

Eileen Reynolds, MD

Internal Medicine

Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center, Boston, MA



Nominators had this to say:

Eileen's tenure as program director at BIDMC began during a tumultuous period for our medical center, when dire financial consequences of a difficult merger dominated decision-making and service demands on her trainees were most intense. Eileen's imprint on the program was immediate as she staunchly defended and maintained the educational integrity of every resident experience in the hospital during this time. In her subsequent years, she has continued to consistently place the educational needs of our residents above service needs, often facing difficult personal challenges from fiscal and administrative leadership in doing so.

She argues strongly and effectively for the critical role a flourishing residency program plays in the overall success of our medical center. Her steady advocacy and principled decision-making on behalf of her residents has since cultivated the critical balance in which her medical residents are challenged with the responsibility of being integral to the daily operation and mission of the hospital, while also ensuring that each resident's individual learning and development remains the utmost priority of any resident assignment.

Changes to our program in the last three years have included shrinking our service footprint to create more clinical and research electives, changing our clinical commitment to the inpatient and outpatient settings to allow more ambulatory exposure, and dramatically reorganizing our entire residency structure to create geographic units. All of these program modifications were not simple; they required buy-in and major structural changes that were not easy to fund or achieve. But they were all made with one thought in her mind: to offer residents a better educational experience.