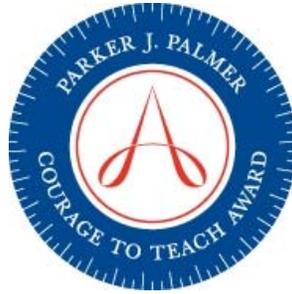


**2012 Parker J. Palmer Courage to Teach Award Recipients**  
**for Program Director Excellence**



**Andrew J. Varney, MD**

Internal Medicine  
Southern Illinois University  
Springfield, IL

**Nominators had this to say:**

“Dr. Varney developed a novel evaluation form for IM residents called the Competency Based Resident Assessment (CoBRA). This assessment is based on resident developmental changes. After piloting it in the department, he was able to demonstrate that it really does discriminate between residents at various levels of training. Not being one to shy away from a hard challenge, Dr. Varney is now in the initial stages of devising a developmentally based assessment form for evaluation of faculty.”

“In the clinic, he exemplifies the communication skills needed to identify with patients as individual human beings with unique needs and desires. The manner in which his patients speak about him is a testament to the trust and respect they have for him. His concern for their welfare is always genuine, and his ability to cross healthcare literacy barriers is unique. As young physicians, we are so fortunate to have a mentor who actively demonstrates the principles of the physician-patient relationship. This is something that cannot be learned from a book. On the inpatient service, he consistently emphasizes the need to understand the importance of effective communication during patient handoffs and discharges. Despite a busy schedule, particularly during residency interview season, he always comes to patient safety conferences and is an active contributor. Always a champion of teamwork, Dr. Varney emphasizes the need to find ways to improve the system rather than ascribing blame to an individual.”

“One resident recently told me, "In the future I hope to have the opportunity to be a program director somewhere. I feel so fortunate to have such a great example to learn from.”