

## Recognizing outstanding achievements.

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Editorial Board, International Journal of Pharmaceutical Excipients

Editorial

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This has been an exciting summer with the Olympics and Paralympics taking place in Paris. These incredible events have showcased the diverse sporting talents of athletes from across the globe. Those excelling at the highest level are awarded medals to reflect their accomplishments. Somewhat tangentially, but correspondingly important in our area of science, we have the upcoming IPEC Foundation's annual awards ceremony that takes place in parallel with AAPS PharmSci 360 in October. For those unaware of the IPEC Foundation, its purpose is to reward and encourage innovation and research into excipients by recognizing and awarding outstanding scientific experts who are leaders in their field, and provide Graduate Student Scholarships to encourage emerging scientists in their academic studies.

Since 2008 grants and scholarships have been awarded annually. Proposed award recipients may be nominated by professors, counselors; faculty members of institutions of higher learning; members of the Foundation; and employees in the pharmaceutical, chemical, food, or excipient industry.

The Foundation establishes for each award the amount (if any), the criteria for selection, the nomination process, and the selection process. All awards may not be offered every year as determined by the Foundation Scientific Advisory Board.

The IPEC-Foundation has established the following major awards:

### **THE LOUIS BLECHER LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD**

Louis Blecher was a chemist, with a distinguished career with GAF/ISP (subsequently acquired by Ashland). Mr Blecher founded IPEC-Americas in 1991 and in 2008 he received the organization's first Outstanding Lifetime Achievement Award. His efforts and strong commitment to building a global excipient trade association, and to set high standards for global self-regulation and harmonization of excipients over more than 20 years, were of enormous benefit to the entire international pharmaceutical industry.

This award was established to reward those individuals who, during their lifetime, have made substantial intellectual contributions to the field of excipients.

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Recipients of this award receive recognition from the IPEC-Foundation as a reward for their long dedication to the understanding excipients.

#### **THE RALPH SHANGRAW MEMORIAL AWARD**

Professor Shangraw, former Chair, Department of Pharmaceutics, spent more than 38 years teaching and conducting research on improving our understanding of excipients at the University of Maryland School of Pharmacy, along with many years of service on the Expert Committees of the U.S. Pharmacopeia. Professor Shangraw was one of the founding members of the American Association of Pharmaceutical Scientists (AAPS).

The Ralph Shangraw Award is awarded to any person who, in the opinion of the Board, has provided outstanding research contributions on the study of excipients or excipient-related technology over a number of years. Recipients of this award receive \$10,000 from the IPEC-Foundation as recognition of their efforts. It is open to all scientists of any nationality or residence working in the field of research described above.

#### **THE PATRICK DELUCA EMERGING RESEARCHER AWARD**

Dr DeLuca received his Doctorate degree from Temple University. In 1970 he joined the faculty at the University of Kentucky College of Pharmacy where he held administrative positions and served as Associate Dean. He was an accomplished researcher, and in 2006 received the AAPS Dale E. Wurster Research Award in Pharmaceutics in recognition of his substantial contributions in inducing thermal transitions during the lyophilization process, improving cycles through the addition of mass-transfer accelerators, and allowing formulation of biopharmaceuticals through the use of cryoprotectants. Dr DeLuca received an honorary doctorate degree from the University of Perugia in Perugia, Italy. He was president of the APHA and AAPS as well as editor of the AAPS journal, PharmSciTech.

This award is presented each year to a beginning career scientist (from anywhere around the globe) after they have been awarded their Ph.D. i.e., postdoctoral fellows, research assistant professors and early-stage assistant professors (within 5 years of receiving their doctorate). Selection criteria for this award include: demonstrated interest in and dedication to the area of excipients in terms of: published manuscripts and a research proposal in the area of excipient scientific/technological research.

The award (in the amount of \$7,500 per year) is for up to two years, with the second year of funding being contingent upon adequate progress during the first year.

#### **THE HENK DE JONG INDUSTRY RESEARCH ACHIEVEMENT IN EXCIPIENT TECHNOLOGY AWARD**

Professor Dr. Henk De Jong taught Pharmaceutical Analytics and Analytical Chemistry for more than two decades at the University of Leiden, and then as Extraordinary Professor of Pharmacy. From 1984 to 2007 he worked at Laboratoires Servier. Professor De Jong was a founding member of IPEC and remained very active in IPEC activities over the years. He was the Chairman of IPEC Europe for two terms, a member of the IPEC Europe Board for more than 10 years, and a vital excipient “activist”, to use his words, in many committees.

The Foundation created this award to recognize individuals working in an industrial setting who have made significant contributions in the field of excipient technology over a number of years. It is open to all industry-based workers in the field of excipients, regardless of nationality or country of residence. Nominations for this award are reviewed by the Foundation’s Scientific Advisory Committee, and top candidates (3) worthy of the award are referred to the Foundation Board for final selection. The award does not carry any monetary compensation.

Occasionally other awards may also be established at the discretion of the Foundation. Awards may also be discontinued at the discretion of the Foundation.

If after solicitation of applications, the Foundation does not receive a nomination deemed worthy of a particular award, that award will not be awarded for that particular year. The Decision of the Foundation Board is final. Individuals who wish to apply for the awards must submit the related completed nomination form. Applicants are required to submit a summary of their accomplishments and research endeavors. Applicants should also submit their current *curriculum vitae* as part of their application. The application form and supporting documents should be submitted by June 15<sup>th</sup> of the year of application. Mailed nominations can also be submitted by sending them to: IPEC Foundation, 3138 10<sup>th</sup> Street N, Suite 500, Arlington, VA 22201.

All the applicants/nominees must sign a statement declaring that the contents of the application are true and accurate.

It is worth mentioning that serving members of the Foundation's Board, its Scientific Advisory Committee, or members of the Executive Committee of the International Pharmaceutical Excipients Council of Americas ("IPEC-Americas") shall not be eligible to receive any of the Foundation Awards, except the Louis Blecher Memorial Award.

The Foundation has also established a maximum of five (5) Excipient Graduate Student Scholarships to be awarded in any one year. These scholarships acknowledge excellence in research conducted at graduate level in the field of excipients.

Examples of relevant research topics include (but are not limited to):

- Understanding the relationship between physical/chemical properties and functionality of excipients,
- the role of excipients in nanotechnology
- the role of absorption facilitators,
- optimizing excipient functionality,
- development of functionality-based acceptance tests,
- development of performance standards for excipients,
- excipient safety,

- excipient compatibility,
- new or novel applications of existing excipients,
- development of new excipients.

Winners of the scholarships are the individuals judged to have provided the most outstanding contributions to the field through their current work. All applicants/nominees must be in their final year of a full-time graduate program leading to the award of a Doctor of Philosophy degree, or equivalent, from a recognized academic institution, and not have completed their defense of their thesis, at the time of their nomination. Graduate students undertaking their research while in full-time employment are not eligible for these Graduate Student Scholarships. All applicants must have an abstract accepted for presentation at the AAPS PharmSci 360 meeting.

Candidates selected for scholarships must present their research in person at the AAPS PharmSci 360 Meeting in the year of the award where they will receive a cash award of US\$1500. If more than one scholarship winner is identified (to a maximum of two) for a particular research effort, they will share the scholarship. For more information on how to apply for Graduate Student Scholarships please refer to the Foundation website at <https://www.ipecfoundation.org/awards/graduate-student-award>.

Winners of the IPEC Foundation's annual awards for 2024 are as follows:

#### **Ralph Shangraw Memorial Award**

Dr. Jean-Christophe Leroux, Institute of Pharmaceutical Sciences, Zurich, Switzerland

#### **Patrick DeLuca Emerging Researcher Award (2 year)**

Dr. Sichen Song, University of Minnesota, (also a previous graduate student winner in 2022)

Dr. Sabrina Banella, University of Ferrara, 2<sup>nd</sup> year winner

**Graduate Student Awards**

Ms. Kinnari Arte, Purdue University

Mr. Akshay Narula, University of Connecticut

Mr. Hennis Patel, St. John's University

Mr. Adwait Pradhan, The University of Texas at Austin

Ms. Rachana Sapkota, Purdue University

Congratulations to all the recipients. These winners will be recognized at the IPEC-Foundation's annual award ceremony that will take place on Tuesday October 22, at the Hyatt Regency Hotel, Salt Lake City, Utah. Descriptions of their excellent research studies will be provided in the next issue of this journal.