

## SFG Distinguished Service Award

In 2021, the SFG Board of Directors established the Distinguished Service Award, which was intended to recognize individuals with a sustained record of distinguished service to the Society for Glycobiology and/or the glycobiology community. This year, the Board has chosen to bestow the Distinguished Service Award not to an individual, but rather to a group of distinguished glycobiologists, listed below, who have served as ***Essentials of Glycobiology* Editors**. In so doing, the Board recognizes the sustained effort and altruistic contributions that drove the creation, production, and enduring impact of a textbook which continues to serve as an invaluable resource for capturing and communicating knowledge in glycobiology.

Sequential editions of *Essentials* have grown in their content, relevance, and value and constitute a distinguished deliverable of the *Essentials of Glycobiology* Editors. It is highly unlikely that any member of our Society is not familiar with this textbook and exceedingly likely that all members have held, read, and referred to its contents at one point or another. *Essentials* is also an important entry point for new students and for otherwise experienced colleagues who may not be familiar with glycobiology. The visibility this textbook provides to the field of glycobiology and the value it brings to training and dissemination cannot be underestimated.

As the editors of the first two editions considered mechanisms for maintaining sustainability and accessibility of their work, they formed the Consortium of Glycobiology Editors for the purpose of supporting “the impact of the textbook in education in the field of Glycobiology or to otherwise support education in the field of Glycobiology.” Over its lifetime, this non-profit consortium provided a mechanism for editors to allow the entirety of their royalties and other income associated with publication to be redirected toward further enhancement and development of the textbook as well as toward targeted engagement with trainees. A novel collaboration with the Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory Press and the National Center for Biotechnology Information allowed *Essentials* to become the first example of a completely free “open access” online version of a major textbook, published simultaneously with the hard copy.

While this award recognizes the success of the *Essentials of Glycobiology* Editors as a group across all four editions, its origin and expansion arose from the actions of the leadership of the early editions, especially Ajit Varki, who facilitated the full availability of the textbook on the NCBI Bookshelf, enhancing dissemination, promoting community outreach, and building visibility for the Society for Glycobiology. As Executive Editor of *Essentials*, Dr. Varki celebrates the contributions of the entire group of *Essentials of Glycobiology* Editors in the Preface to the 4th edition, emphasizing that many individuals deserve recognition and credit for the collaborative success of the textbook.

Based on the extreme value of the *Essentials* textbook to our field and on the contribution its editors have made to the goals of the Society, the Board is pleased to bestow the 2024 SFG Distinguished Service Award upon the *Essentials of Glycobiology* Editors.

The *Essentials of Glycobiology* Editors are Ajit Varki, Markus Aebi, Carolyn Bertozzi, Richard Cummings, Alan Darvill, Jeffrey Esko, Marilynn Etzler, Hudson Freeze, Gerald Hart, Taroh Kinoshita, Jamey Marth, Debra Mohnen, Nicolle Packer, James Prestegard, Peter Seeberger, Ronald Schnaar, and Pamela Stanley.

