



## 2009 AWARD WINNERS

### TOPS AWARD

#### **David B. Allison, PhD**

*University of Alabama at Birmingham, Birmingham, AL*

David B. Allison received his PhD from Hofstra University in 1990. He then completed a post-doctoral fellowship at the Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine and a second post-doctoral fellowship at the NIH-funded New York Obesity Research Center at St. Luke's/Roosevelt Hospital Center. He was a research scientist at the NY Obesity Research Center and Associate Professor of Medical Psychology at Columbia University College of Physicians and Surgeons until 2001. In 2001, he joined the faculty of the University of Alabama at Birmingham where he is currently Professor of Biostatistics, Head of the Section on Statistical Genetics, and Director of the NIH-funded Clinical Nutrition Research Center. He has authored over 350 scientific publications and edited five books. He has won several awards, including the 2002 Lilly Scientific Achievement Award from The Obesity Society (TOS) (formerly known as North American Association for the Study of Obesity, NAASO), the 2002 Andre Mayer Award from the International Association for the Study of Obesity, the National Science Foundation Administered 2006 Presidential Award for Excellence in Science, Mathematics, and Engineering Mentoring (PAESMEM), and the 2009 Centrum Center for Nutrition Science Award from the American Society of Nutrition. He has been elected as a Fellow of the American Statistical Association, the American Psychological Association, and the Society for Behavioral Medicine, holds several NIH and NSF grants, and has been a member of the Board of Trustees for the International Life Science Institute, North America, since 2002. He serves or has served on the editorial boards of Behavior Genetics; Clinical Pharmacology: Advances and Applications; Computational Statistics and Data Analysis; European Journal of Clinical Investigation; Human Heredity; International Journal of Eating Disorders; International Journal of Obesity; Journal of Obesity; Nutrients; Nutrition and Dietary Supplements; Nutrition Today; Obesity Reviews; Obesity; Public Library of Science (PLOS) Genetics and Surgery for Obesity and Related Diseases (SOARD).

Dr. Allison's research interests include obesity, quantitative genetics, clinical trials, and statistical and research methodology. He also serves as a frequent consultant and expert witness in the legal setting.



## MICKEY STUNKARD LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

### **George L. Blackburn, MD, PhD**

*Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center, Boston, MA*

Dr. George Blackburn serves as the S. Daniel Abraham Associate Professor of Nutrition and Associate Director of the Division of Nutrition at Harvard Medical School. He is also the Chief of the Nutrition/Metabolism Laboratory, and Director of the Center for the Study of Nutrition Medicine, which are affiliated with the Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center in Boston, Massachusetts.

In 1965, Dr. Blackburn received his medical degree from the University of Kansas. He completed his internship and residency at Boston City Hospital, Harvard Medical School, and in 1973, he obtained his doctorate in nutritional biochemistry from Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

Dr. Blackburn's laboratory has a priority to investigate the most complex issues dealing with nutrition and health. He has trained over 100 fellows in applied and clinical nutrition and has published widely on various aspects of nutrition, medicine, and metabolism, with over 400 publications to date. He is on the editorial board of and a reviewer for numerous journals including, the Journal of the American Medical Association, New England Journal of Medicine, Annals of Internal Medicine, American Journal of Clinical Nutrition, Journal of Parenteral and Enteral Nutrition, American Journal of Public Health, Journal of the National Cancer Institute, International Journal of Obesity. Dr. Blackburn has been most fortunate to be recognized for his contributions to the field of nutrition by being awarded in 1988 the Grace Goldsmith Award by the American College of Nutrition, and was, in 1992, also made an honorary member of the American Dietetic Association. In 1998 he received the Joseph Goldberger award in Clinical Nutrition from the American Medical Association, and was appointed, six years later, an American Society for Nutrition Fellow in recognition of a distinguished career in nutrition.

As an active participant in the field of nutritional medicine, Dr. Blackburn is a past President of the North American Association for the Study of Obesity (NAASO), now called The Obesity Society, and the American Board of Nutrition. Dr. Blackburn also serves on the board of directors for the Food Research and Action Center, and the Reality Coalition – a recently created organization aiming to spread the message for healthy, moderate weight loss. He remains on the Board of Advisors for the American Society of Parenteral and Enteral Nutrition (ASPEN) of which he served as president; he is a member of numerous other medical societies, including the American Medical Association, the American College of Surgeons, the American Diabetes Association, and the American Heart Association. He is a Co-Principal Investigator (Co-PI) on the NIH-funded Action for Health in Diabetes (Look AHEAD) and is the Associate Director and executive committee member of the NIH Boston Obesity Nutrition Research Center (BONRC).

In many ways, Dr. Blackburn's work is also his recreation – he loves what he does and looks forward to it every morning. But he is equally if not even more passionate about his four children and his grandchildren, for whom he is driven to make the world a better place. Dr. Blackburn loves to engage his mind and think outside the box; for him, living life means learning. His activities reflect this. Dr. Blackburn reads endlessly; biographies are a particular favorite, through which he learns what great minds before have done to become ever greater and more effective. Some of his side interests, researched outside of his work life have ranged from longevity to genetics, nanotechnology, Jewish living, Middle Eastern politics, and unpredictable rationality. Perhaps the most appropriate description of Dr. Blackburn's life is this: leave the world better off than when you received it, and learn everything you can.



## GEORGE A. BRAY FOUNDERS AWARD

### **Thomas A. Wadden, PhD**

*University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, PA*

Thomas A. Wadden, PhD is Professor of Psychology in Psychiatry at the University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine and Director of the Center for Weight and Eating Disorders. He received his AB in 1975 from Brown University and his doctorate in clinical psychology in 1981 from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

Dr. Wadden's principal research is on the treatment of obesity by methods that have included lifestyle modification, very-low-calorie diets, exercise, medication, and surgery. He has also investigated the metabolic and psychosocial consequences of obesity and weight loss. He has published over 220 scientific papers and book chapters and has co-edited four books, the most recent of which is *Obesity: A Guide for Mental Health Professionals* (with Albert J. Stunkard and Robert I. Berkowitz). His research has been supported for more than 20 years by grants from the National Institutes of Health.

Dr. Wadden serves on NIH's Clinical Obesity Research Program (CORP) and on the editorial boards of *International Journal of Eating Disorders*, *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*, and *Obesity Research*. Dr. Wadden has served as President of the Obesity Society and currently is an associate editor of *Obesity*, the journal published by the Obesity Society.

## LILLY SCIENTIFIC ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

### **Martin G. Myers, Jr., MD, PhD**

*University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI*

Dr. Myers received his AB in Molecular Biology from Princeton University in 1988 and then earned MD and PhD degrees (studying insulin signaling) from Harvard Medical School in 1997. Following the completion of his degrees, he joined the faculty of the Joslin Diabetes Center/Harvard Medical School and began to study leptin action via the leptin receptor, LepRb. In 2004, Dr. Myers moved to the University of Michigan, where he is the Vincent Professor of Diabetes Research. Building on his training in intracellular signaling, the Myers lab began exploring the intracellular mechanisms of leptin signaling. The Myers lab then undertook a series of studies that revealed the physiologic function of specific leptin signals *in vivo*. These studies revealed important roles for STAT3 in the regulation of feeding and energy expenditure by leptin, roles for other signals in the attenuation of leptin action, and yet other signals in the regulation of glucose and lipid metabolism and reproduction. More recently, the Myers lab has begun to explore the neural basis of leptin action, revealing roles for distinct sets of leptin-responsive neurons in specific aspects of leptin action. The sum of work from the Myers lab thus reveals the mechanisms of leptin action from “soup to nuts”- from intracellular pathways to physiologic endpoints. Overall, these studies have elucidated the mechanisms by which leptin controls energy balance and a variety of neuroendocrine parameters. The Myers lab continues to take a broad-based approach to understanding leptin action by defining the mechanisms of cellular LepRb action, studying the neurons that express LepRb, and determining the roles of these molecular and neural mediators in leptin action *in vivo*.



## ANNUAL AWARDS FOR OUTSTANDING JOURNAL ARTICLES PUBLISHED IN *OBESITY*

### **Best Research: Bradley Appelhans, PhD**

Neurobehavioral Inhibition of Reward-Driven Feeding: Implications for Dieting and Obesity  
17(4):640-647

Bradley Appelhans, PhD is an assistant professor in the Department of Preventive Medicine at Rush University Medical Center. He completed his Ph.D. in clinical psychology at Arizona State University and studied behavioral cancer prevention during a postdoctoral fellowship at Northwestern University. The primary aim of his research is to identify neurobehavioral processes involved in eating behavior, obesity, and weight loss, and apply this knowledge to the prevention of obesity and its comorbidities. His prior studies have linked the hormones leptin and cortisol to individual differences in stress-driven eating, and he is currently conducting a NCI-funded study examining the role of executive function and reward sensitivity in adhering to a weight loss diet. Dr. Appelhans is also collaborating with a large supermarket chain to evaluate the effectiveness of an obesity prevention program.

### **Best Research: Thomas A. Wadden PhD, Delia S. West PhD, Rebecca H. Neiberg MS, Rena R. Wing PhD, Donna H. Ryan MD, Karen C. Johnson MD, John P. Foreyt PhD, James O. Hill PhD, Dace L. Trencle MD, and Mara Z. Vitolins DrPH**

One-Year Weight Losses in the Look AHEAD Study: Factors Associated With Success  
17(4):713-722

Thomas A. Wadden (See George A. Bray Founders Award)

### **Best Reviewer: Jacqueline M. Stephens, PhD**

Professor and Associate Chair - Graduate Program  
Department of Biological Sciences  
Louisiana State University

Jacqueline M. Stephens, PhD is the Associate Chair and Director of Graduate Studies in the Department of Biological Sciences at Louisiana State University; she also serves as a distinguished professor. Dr. Stephens completed her PhD in biochemistry at East Carolina University School of Medicine and studied insulin resistance during a postdoctoral fellowship at Boston University School of Medicine. Jacqueline Stephens was the chair of the 2008 Obesity Society Program Committee and has also served on the Scientific Review Committee since 2007. Dr. Stephens research interests have focused on the regulation, activation and function of transcription factors in adipocytes. Dr. Stephens received the Lilly Scientific Achievement Award in 2005.

## NEW INVESTIGATOR RESEARCH GRANT AWARD FINALISTS

### **J. Graham Thomas, PhD**

*The Miriam Hospital and Brown University, Providence, RI*  
"Improving Behavioral Weight Loss via Electronic Handheld Device"  
Mentor: Rena R. Wing, PhD

J. Graham Thomas is a postdoctoral research fellow at the Weight Control and Diabetes Research Center of Brown University and The Miriam Hospital, where he is supported by a grant from the American Diabetes Association. He holds a PhD in Clinical Psychology from Drexel University. His research interests include the prevention and treatment of obesity and eating disorders, with an emphasis on the



use of technology to facilitate measurement and intervention. He recently completed a study of obesogenic eating behavior in the natural environment using Ecological Momentary Assessment via palmtop computer, which showed that heavier individuals have a low probability of overeating when there are few palatable foods present, but a high probability of overeating when such foods are abundant. Along with Dr. Rena Wing, he also recently completed a randomized clinical trial of weight loss via the internet using multimedia video lessons. He looks forward to developing a new intervention that combines cell phones and internet technology to delivered tailored weight loss treatment to patients in their natural environment.

**Elinor L. Sullivan, PhD**

*Oregon Health & Science University, Portland, OR*

*“The Consequences of Maternal Obesity and High Fat Diet Consumption on Offspring Energy Balance Regulation: An Emphasis on the Serotonin System”*

*Mentor: Kevin L. Grove, PhD*

Elinor Sullivan is a post-doctoral fellow in Dr. Kevin Grove's laboratory in the Division of Neuroscience at the Oregon National Primate Research Center. Elinor received her BA in Biology from Willamette University in 2000 and her PhD in Physiology from Oregon Health and Science University in 2006. She completed a post-doctoral position in Dr. Laurence Tecott's laboratory at the University of California, San Francisco.

#### **ETHAN SIMS YOUNG INVESTIGATOR AWARD FINALISTS**

**Anthony Molina, PhD**

*Boston University School of Medicine, Boston, MA*

**Gavitt Woodard**

*Stanford University Medical Center, Stanford, CA*

**Kiyah Duffey, PhD**

*University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, NC*

**Henriette Kirchner, MS, PhD candidate**

*University of Cincinnati Genome Research Institute, Cincinnati, OH*

**F. Martin Fisher, PhD**

*Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center, Boston, MA*

#### **PAT SIMONS TRAVEL AWARD FINALISTS**

**Hui Zhang, MD, MSc**

*Clinical Research Institute of Montreal, Montreal, CA*

**Eneida Villanueva, BS, PhD Candidate**

*University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI*

**Katherine Strissel, PhD**

*Tufts University, Obesity & Metabolism Lab, Boston, MA*



**Gautam Sikka, PhD**  
*Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine, Baltimore, MD*

**Cathryn Kolka, PhD**  
*University of Southern California, Los Angeles, CA*

**Elinor Sullivan, PhD**  
*Oregon Health & Science University, Portland, Oregon*

**Francesca Amati, MD**  
*University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh, PA*

**Mousumi Bose, BS, PhD**  
*New York Obesity Research Center, New York, New York*

**Kim-Anne Le, PhD**  
*Department of Physiology, University of Lausanne, Lausanne, Switzerland*

**Paula Chandler-Laney, PhD**  
*University of Alabama at Birmingham, Birmingham, AL*

**Jessica Fisher, BS**  
*University of Southern California, Los Angeles, CA*

**Natalie The, MPH**  
*University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, NC*

**Lisa Troy, PhD**  
*Tufts University, Boston, MA*

**Madiha Abdel-Maksoud, MD, MSPH, PhD**  
*University of Colorado School of Public Health, Aurora, CO*

**Nisa Maruthur, MD, MHS**  
*Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine, Baltimore, MD*

