The Washington Academy of Family Physicians Foundation is pleased to honor Samuel W. Cullison, MD, FAAFP, as its recipient of the 2010 Family Medicine Educator of the Year award. This award recognizes an Academy member for excellence in teaching, development of innovative teaching models, or the implementation of an outstanding educational program.

Dr. Cullison is the Residency Program Director at Swedish Cherry Hill, a role he has enjoyed since he left private practice fifteen years ago. He is widely recognized for his exemplary teaching skills. Dr. Nancy Auer, the former Chief Medical Officer of Swedish (2000 – 2010) praised Dr. Cullison as "a tireless advocate for Family Medicine training. He continuously looks for ways to integrate his residents into the fabric of our organization and for ways to enhance their educational experience. He excels at evaluating the community in which we live and practice and find areas where Family Medicine residents can be trained and thrive.”

Dr. Cullison an educational innovator, having been responsible for the development and introduction of Areas of Concentration (AOCs) in response to a trend he noticed of residents moving to “specialties” within Family Medicine. These AOCs include: integrative medicine, sports medicine, women’s health, international medicine, addiction medicine, and legislative leadership. He also assisted in developing a hospitalist fellowship at Swedish for Family Medicine graduates.

Dr. Cullison has demonstrated leadership and advancement of Family Medicine through his involvement in the ACGME Residency Review Committee from 2001 through 2007. He served as Vice-Chair for 2006-2007 and co-authored the RRC Program Information Form revision impacting all family medicine residencies nationwide. He has served on the Residency Program Solutions consultancy board advising residency programs, as faculty for the National Institute for Program Director Development (NIPDD) and on the SRFM Board of Directors. Dr. Cullison also consults with programs for Internal Reviews and in addressing RRC concerns. He has been a member of the Washington Academy of Family Physicians since 1978, serving as its President in 1987-1988. He has also served for 13 years on the Washington Physicians Health Program board, three of which have been as the Chairman.

Additionally, Dr. Cullison has authored over 15 publications in peer reviewed journals, among which was an original investigation of carbamazepine for use in benzodiazepine withdrawal, a seminal paper in addiction medicine. He is one of 100 physician mentors selected nationally in the Physician Clinical Support System, a mentoring program for primary care physicians. Dr. Cullison has been named a “Top Doctor” four times by Seattle magazine. Twice he has been named in national publications as one of the nation’s best doctors.

Dr. Jeanne Cawse-Lucas, clinical instructor and 2009 graduate of the Swedish Cherry Hill describes Dr. Cullison as someone who is, “Consistently innovating new programs, facilitating growth and mentoring residents and faculty; Sam Cullison exemplifies what a Family Medicine educator can and should be.” We couldn’t put it any better. The WAFP commends and thanks Dr. Sam Cullison for exemplifying the values of Family Medicine education in Washington, and is proud to have presented him with the 2010 Family Medicine Educator of the Year award.