

Learning to Care for Those in Harm's Way



Uniformed Services University
of the Health Sciences
4301 Jones Bridge Road
Bethesda, MD 20814-4799

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Contact: Sharon Holland, Office of
External Affairs

Email: Sharon.holland@usuhs.edu

Dr. Jonathan Forsberg, Navy Orthopaedic Oncologist, to Receive the Ellis Island Medal of Honor

Bethesda, Md. – Navy Commander (Dr.) Jonathan A. Forsberg, professor and director of the DOD Osseointegration Program and Musculoskeletal Oncology in the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences-Walter Reed National Military Medical Center (USU-WRNMMC) Department of Surgery, has been selected to receive the 2017 Ellis Island Medal of Honor.

Each year thousands of nominations are submitted for the prestigious award which is bestowed upon a select 100 individuals chosen from throughout business, government, medicine, art, and education, as well as honorees from all branches of the military, whose accomplishments in their fields and service to the nation are “a cause for celebration,” according to the National Ethnic Coalition of Organizations (NECO).

Since the Medal was founded in 1986, distinguished Americans including USU-WRNMMC professor of Surgery Dr. Rahul Jindal and Defense Health Agency Director Vice Adm. (Dr.) Raquel Bono, seven Presidents of the United States, Nobel Prize recipient Elie Wiesel, Generals Norman Schwarzkopf and Colin Powell, Justice Sandra Day O’Connor, Secretaries of State Madeline Albright, Condoleezza Rice and Hillary Clinton, Bob Hope, Muhammad Ali, Frank Sinatra, Rosa Parks, Mike Wallace and Mia Farrow have received the award for their significant humanitarian or philanthropic contributions to America.

“I’m honored simply to be considered—but to be recognized among this very distinguished crowd is truly humbling,” said Forsberg.

The Medal ranks among the nation’s most renowned awards. The U.S. Senate and House of Representatives have officially recognized the Ellis Island Medal of Honor, and each year the recipients are listed in the Congressional Record.

“The Ellis Island Medals of Honor embody the spirit of America in their celebration of patriotism, tolerance, brotherhood and diversity. They recognize individuals who have made it their mission to share with those less fortunate their wealth of knowledge, indomitable courage, boundless compassion, unique talents and selfless generosity; all while maintaining the traditions of their ethnic heritage as they uphold the ideals and spirit of America,” according to the NECO announcement.

“Commander (Dr.) Jonathan Forsberg is one of USU and Walter Reed’s stars. He is a brilliant surgical scientist who is tackling one of the most challenging issues in amputee care – strengthening the

interface between the patient and their prosthesis. He is an inspiration to all who work with him,” said Dr. Arthur Kellermann, dean of USU's F. Edward Hebert School of Medicine.

Forsberg is a 1997 graduate of the U.S. Naval Academy and a 2001 alumnus of USU's F. Edward Hebert School of Medicine. He earned his Ph.D. from the Karolinska Institute in Stockholm, Sweden. He completed an orthopaedic surgery residency at the National Naval Medical Center in Bethesda, followed by an orthopaedic oncology fellowship at Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center in New York. He is a Diplomate of the American Board of Orthopaedic Surgery, and a member of numerous professional medical societies. Forsberg also holds a faculty appointment as assistant professor of Surgery at Johns Hopkins University and serves as a consultant to the National Cancer Institute.

Forsberg has devoted much of his Navy career to research geared towards applying personalized medicine to extremity tumor surgery using advanced bioinformatics approaches. He developed the first validated model to help guide the surgical treatment of metastatic bone disease. Using similar techniques, he furthered understanding of the complex relationships between variables in the treatment of soft tissue sarcomas of the extremities. His military-specific research includes the characterization and prevention of combat-related heterotopic ossification, and developing next-generation osseointegration techniques for patients with amputations.

The Medal of Honor, in its 31st year, is sponsored by NECO and will be presented at a ceremony held on historic Ellis Island, May 13. The ceremony is followed by a gala in the original registry room of the historic Ellis Island Great Hall, a symbolic and literal gateway for 12 million immigrants to the U.S.

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About the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences

The Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences, founded by an act of Congress in 1972, is the nation's federal health sciences university and the academic heart of the Military Health System. USU students are primarily active duty uniformed officers in the Army, Navy, Air Force and Public Health Service who receive specialized education in tropical and infectious diseases, TBI and PTSD, disaster response and humanitarian assistance, global health, and acute trauma care. A large percentage of the university's more than 5,200 physician and 1,000 advanced practice nursing alumni are supporting operations around the world, offering their leadership and expertise. USU also has graduate programs in biomedical sciences and public health committed to excellence in research, and in oral biology. The University's research program covers a wide range of clinical and other topics important to both the military and public health. For more information about USU and its programs, visit www.usuhs.edu.