Newborn Screening Leaders Honored by APHL

Silver Spring, MD - The Association of Public Health Laboratories (APHL) presented awards to leaders in the field of newborn screening during a ceremony held today at the 2013 Joint Meeting of the Newborn Screening and Genetic Testing Symposium and the International Society for Neonatal Screening. We commend the exceptional and innovative work of all those who were nominated.

The following awards were given:

**George Cunningham Visionary Award in Newborn Screening** – This year’s recipient is Dr. Phillip Ferrell from the University of Wisconsin Medical School. Dr. Ferrell’s work has centered primarily on cystic fibrosis research as well as racial infant mortality. His commitment to cystic fibrosis (CF) screening was demonstrated by his pioneering and promoting a two-tiered mutation screening process that has led to improvements in CF testing. Dr. Ferrell has also worked with Clinical Laboratory Standards Institute (CLSI) to develop guidance on the management and treatment of newborns diagnosed with CF.

**Harry Hannon Laboratory Improvement Award in Newborn Screening** – This year’s recipient is Dr. Anne Marie Comeau of the New England Newborn Screening Program, UMASS Medical School. Dr. Comeau is highly recognized by her colleagues for her significant role in the advancement of newborn screening testing nationwide. Her tireless efforts with severe combined immunodeficiency (SCID) detection research played an integral role in the endorsement of this screen by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Secretary’s Advisory Committee for Heritable Disorders in Children and Newborns for inclusion into the recommended newborn screening panel.

**Champion of Newborn Screening Award** – This year’s recipients are Vicki and Fred Modell, cofounders of the Jeffrey Modell Foundation. Vicki and Fred Modell established $12 million dollars in funding for research collaboration with the NIH, founded several fellowship and scholarship programs related to research into primary immunodeficiency (PI) and established the
Jeffrey Modell Immunology Center at Harvard. The advocacy performed by the Modells and the Jeffrey Modell Foundation has been instrumental in the addition of SCID to the HHS Secretary’s Advisory Committee for Heritable Disorders in Children and Newborns Recommended Uniform Screening Panel and subsequent attempts to adopt this screen across the country. In addition, they have led a tireless effort to promote newborn screening across the globe and to improve or save the lives of newborns afflicted with PI.

Congratulations to all award winners.

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The Association of Public Health Laboratories is a national non-profit located in Silver Spring, MD, that is dedicated to working with members to strengthen governmental laboratories with a public health mandate. By promoting effective programs and public policy, APHL strives to provide public health laboratories with the resources and infrastructure needed to protect the health of US residents and to prevent and control disease globally.

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