

Berson Award Introduction for Herb Pardes at the 2018 APA meeting

It is a distinct honor for me to present the Berson Award of the Senior Psychiatrists to Herb Pardes this evening. Herb is currently serving as the Executive Vice Chair of the Board of Trustees of the NY Presbyterian Hospital which for those not familiar with the hospital it is the teaching hospital of Columbia University located a little over six miles north of where we sit tonight. How wonderful to be able to celebrate this special occasion in your home town! I am personally grateful for the wonderful care I received at your children's hospital at age 7 when I had a successful tonsillectomy at a time I had been diagnosed with acute thrombocytopenia purpura. Needless to say, not only did I not bleed out but I still remember the delicious ice cream that I was served before being discharged.

I am so impressed with Herb's unselfish service to and leadership at [Columbia beginning with his appointment as the Lawrence Kolb Professor and Chairman of the Department of Psychiatry from 1984 to 1999. Most of us senior psychiatrists will remember one of the only psychiatric textbooks available when we were medical students was Noyes and Kolb's Textbook of Psychiatry. The appointment at Columbia was the third chair of a department of psychiatry for Herb! The first one was at his alma mater, Downstate in Brooklyn and the second was at the University of Colorado, the only time that I am aware that he ventured academically west of the Mississippi. Simultaneous with his chairmanship at Columbia, Herb was the Director of the NY State Psychiatric Institute. Then in 2000 Herb became the President and CEO of the NY Presbyterian Hospital, a position he held till 2011.

All of us are also grateful to Herb for the wonderful work he did as Director of the NIMH from 1978 to 1984. In addition to bolstering the research efforts of the Institute he had two interesting international assignments, one in 1979 as part of the NIMH delegation to the USSR and in 1980 to the People's Republic of China. I hope in his comments tonight he will share with us what those experiences were like especially since both countries continue to be of great interest in today's current events.

I have had the good fortune of crossing paths with Herb and absorbing as much wisdom as I could from him in many settings over the years. We both attended a 1975 Conference on Education of Psychiatrists of the APA in the Lake of the Ozarks. This was the last in a series of decade conferences that APA had sponsored on academic psychiatry. Herb was an examiner for the American Board of Psychiatry and Neurology from 1975 to 1978, an honor that I shared with him in that era. He chaired an APA Task force on Recertification from 1976 to 1990 and on an ABPN Subcommittee of the Steering Committee on Continuing Certification. It is perhaps fortunate for his sake that he was not asked to assist with any maintenance of certification task forces.

It is my understanding that at one point in history all the ABPN oral exams were held at Columbia annually. During my 20+ years when the Board held its large oral exams in NYC Herb always assured that both the Psychiatric Institute and the Neurological Institute hosted several sections of the exams for general psychiatry as well as for adult and child neurology for which I was always grateful.

Herb has been the recipient of many APA awards. These include the Founders' Award, the Distinguished Service Award, the Vestermark Award, the Adolph Meyer Award, not to mention many other distinguished awards from other major psychiatric and medical organizations.

Herb's service to the APA included being Vice President from 1986 to 1988 and as President in 1990. His speech at the annual meeting Defending Humanistic Values was a thrilling one. I commend to all of you to go back and re read it in the American Journal as it remains very relevant in our current climate.

In the short time allotted I have not done justice to all that Herb Pardes has done for American psychiatry and for American medicine. For this I apologize to Herb.

At this point I should like Herb to come forward so that I can present him with the plaque from the Senior Psychiatrists as well as the check that comes with the Berson Award. I will ask Herb to say a few words as well.