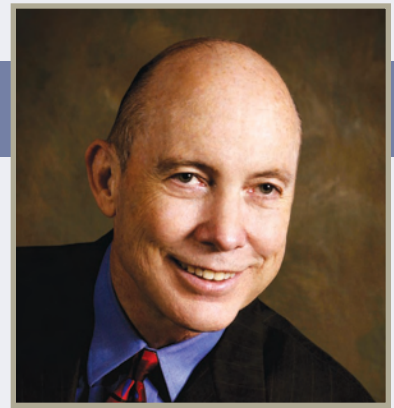


The 2010 Max Cole Leadership Award

The Max Cole Leadership Award recognizes a DCMS member for outstanding service to the profession of medicine and to the community. The first award was given to Charles Max Cole, MD, in 1985 for his numerous contributions on the national, state and local levels. Dr. Cole died on June 1, 2009, at the age of 95.



Don Read, MD

By Lauren Cowling, director of communications

This year's recipient, Don Read, MD, is unique because not only is he a former DCMS president, but he was on the other side of medicine while he battled West Nile Virus. After months of rehabilitation, he began serving his community and others who had the virus by creating a support group.

Dr. Read grew up the son of a World War II veteran and a dedicated church secretary. He knew two things at a young age — that he wanted to be a physician and that volunteering and helping others is a natural part of life.

Dr. Read spent his early years in Fort Worth and Dallas before his father's job called for the family to relocate to Glendale, Calif. At Hoover High School, he was the quarterback and captain of the football team, as well as an outstanding student. He moved back to Texas to attend Austin College in Sherman. While a student, he went to Ethiopia as part of Operation Crossroads Africa, a summer work-camp program that matched U.S. college students with their African counterparts to build schools. His overseas volunteer activities continued when he was at the University of Texas Medical Branch at Galveston; he spent his last six weeks at UTMB doing a clerkship with the Presbyterian mission hospitals in Zaire.

After completing his medical education, Dr. Read interned at Northwestern University's Passavant Memorial Hospital in Chicago. During his Navy service that followed, he served with the First Marine Division during the Vietnam War and was awarded the Bronze Star Medal, an individual military decoration given for heroic or meritorious achievement of service.

After completing his training in general surgery and colon and rectal surgery in Chicago, he became the director of surgical education at Cook County Hospital and assistant professor of surgery at the University of Illinois. He met his wife of 40 years, Roberta, on his first day of interning.

"I was a poor, lost intern trying to learn my way around the hospital when a cute nurse took me under her wing," he says. "I've been there ever since."

In 1978 Dr. Read returned to Texas, this time for good, setting up his practice at Medical City Dallas Hospital. He's served in many roles at Medical City, most notably as chief of general surgery and president of the medical staff, as well as a member of the board of trustees. While at Medical City, he has followed a path of continual volunteering and encouragement to other physicians and patients. He founded an impaired

physicians committee at the hospital to aid with treatment and rehabilitation of physicians with drug and alcohol addiction. This experience led to his appointment as chairman of the DCMS Physicians Recovery Committee.

His involvement with DCMS has been steady since he became a member in 1978 and was elected president for 2002. During his term, Project Access Dallas was launched. Although Dr. Read said he was privileged to preside over the start of PAD, he quickly credits several others for getting the program off the ground. Since its inception in 2000, the program has grown steadily, and Dr. Read is looking forward to expanding the number of patients the program serves. In addition to volunteering to treat PAD patients, Dr. Read serves on the DCMS Community Service Committee, which oversees PAD.

Dr. Read's serious case of West Nile Virus in 2005 resulted in his founding of the West Nile Support Group in Dallas. After becoming ill while visiting his daughter in Illinois, several days later he was diagnosed with WNV. After two months of in-patient rehabilitation and another month of at-home rehab visits followed by a couple months of daily outpatient rehab, he gradually returned to active practice. He established the support group to give hope to other WNV patients that their health will improve. He regularly visits West Nile patients in the hospital and does his best to explain the virus in uncomplicated medical terms. He counts this as his most rewarding volunteer activity. Although the number of WNV cases has decreased dramatically since he was infected, the threat remains. In fact just last year one of Dr. Read's support group members died from the virus.

Dr. Read's desire to help others comes from his belief that people are responsible for taking care of the less fortunate, a belief founded on the basis of Jesus Christ's call to his disciples to do the same. Dr. Read and his wife are active members of Highland Park Presbyterian Church, where they sing in the choir. Their two children also are musically talented: Sarah is an organist in Wisconsin and Alison is a harpist in Dallas.

Aside from his many roles in the Dallas community and DCMS, Dr. Read is a member of the TMA board of trustees, has served as president of the Texas Society of Colon and Rectal Surgeons, and as chairman of TMA's Patient-Physician Advocacy Committee and the Southwestern Medical Foundation board of trustees. DMJ