



News Release



**Dermatology
Foundation**
SHAPING THE FUTURE OF DERMATOLOGY

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Phoebe Rich, M.D.

Receives Dermatology Foundation Clark W. Finnerud Award

At its recent annual meeting of membership in Orlando, FL, the Dermatology Foundation presented Phoebe Rich, M.D. with the prestigious 2016 Clark W. Finnerud Award. The award recognizes Dr. Rich's many contributions to the field as both an exceptional clinician and highly effective part-time teacher and mentor to new generations of dermatologists.

Dr. Rich is an internationally recognized leader in nail biology and diseases who is revered by patients, students, and colleagues alike. She is in private practice in Portland, OR, and an adjunct professor with the Department of Dermatology at Oregon Health Sciences (OHSU).

“As few others have done, Phoebe has most assuredly advanced the field of dermatology through her career accomplishments and contributions to the specialty,” a colleague shares. “She teaches our medical students, residents, and fellows in her specialty clinics at OHSU and through her private practice, and teaches our community dermatologists and providers, and our faculty. She has attracted students and residents to lifelong careers in dermatology, and some to the specialty of nail dermatology, through her charisma, her skill, and the fun and intellectual stimulation that infuse her teaching.”

When Dr. Rich finished college, becoming a dermatologist was not among her goals. After moving to Portland, OR, she happened to find work as a medical assistant in the dermatology department's clinic at OHSU. She was encouraged there to pursue her newfound interest in the specialty, and went on to complete medical school and her residency. As a first-year dermatology resident 25 years ago, Dr. Rich chose the topic of nail disorders for a resident talk because there was little interest and knowledge in that area. After her talk, “people thought I must know

something about nails,” Dr. Rich says, “so they began sending complicated nail patients to me.” The more she learned, the more she knew this would be her niche, and many of her faculty and mentors helped her pursue that interest.

Dr. Rich now sees patients with nail disorders who are referred from up and down the West Coast. She enjoys sharing her passion and knowledge of nail disorders by teaching in many venues locally, nationally, and internationally. As a devoted teacher and mentor, she would like to encourage more careers in medical dermatology, especially in her area of nail diseases.

Among her diverse professional activities, Dr. Rich is a charter member of the Council for Nail Disorders, a member of the European Nail Society, and has held leadership roles in the Oregon Dermatology Society. She has also served on the Board of Directors of the AAD.

A former mentee had contacted Dr. Rich for guidance after deciding to establish a nail clinic in the Midwest and was *amazed* when Dr. Rich suggested that she come to Portland and shadow her in private practice and university clinic. “This offer was just the beginning of her mentorship. I was speechless at the breadth and depth of her teaching and generosity.”

The Dermatology Foundation was established in 1964 and is the leading private funding source for skin disease research. It provides funding that helps develop and retain tomorrow’s teachers and researchers in dermatology, and enable advancements in patient care. For more information visit dermatologyfoundation.org.

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