A Tribute to Dr. Corrie Anderson, 2021 Robert M. Smith Awardee
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“...a broad smile and mischievous laugh”. If asked to describe Dr. Corrie Anderson, that would be my first answer. I might follow with, “thoughtful and deeply engaged, he really cared about knowing me”. Those who know him will recognize these traits. I am so happy that the 2021 Robert M. Smith Award is being presented by the AAP to Dr. Corrie Anderson, a colleague so deeply deserving of this award.

I should start by describing Dr. Anderson’s professional accomplishments, but to do so would be a disservice to him. Corrie is first and foremost a family man, husband to his soulmate, Virginia, and father to Virginia and Chase. A son and a brother. If he had not had the illustrious career for which this award is long overdue, these relationships would nevertheless speak to a life of unqualified success and achievement. The pride and love for his family is evident in any conversation with him and is expressed in the sincere interest he takes in hearing about the goings-on in the lives of his colleagues and trainees. It is no surprise then that his career is notable for the depth of mentorship and guidance he has provided, and that so many colleagues chose to nominate Dr. Anderson for this award.

Dr. Anderson graduated Harvard University A.B. Cum Laude (Biochemistry and Molecular Biology) and then attended Stanford University School of Medicine. Thereafter, he returned to Boston for a Pediatric residency at The Children’s Hospital followed by Anesthesia residency at The Brigham and Women’s Hospital. He returned to The Children’s Hospital, Boston for his fellowship in Pediatric Anesthesia.

As an undergraduate at Harvard, Dr. Anderson’s future successes were portended with a Harvard Fellow’s Scholarship, a Browne Scholarship and a Dreyfus Fellowship for Biomedical Research. At Stanford University, his commitment to and aptitude for scientific discovery and education lead to a Merck, Sharp and Dohme Research Fellowship and acceptance to a Medical Scientist Training Program (MSTP)-NIH Research Training Program.

Post-fellowship, Dr. Anderson was recruited to UCLA School of Medicine as an Assistant Professor of Anesthesiology and Pediatrics. In Los Angeles, his career flourished, and he advanced rapidly, earning a promotion to Associate and subsequently full Professor. Awards earned at UCLA include Outstanding Physician of the Year from the Department of Nursing and Outstanding Teaching by an Assistant Professor from the Department of Anesthesiology. Dr. Anderson was Director of the Pediatric Anesthesiology Program at UCLA for a number of years and rose to Director of the UCLA Child Pain Study Center and Director of the UCLA Pediatric Pain Service.

In 2001, his expertise in pediatric pain medicine lead to his recruitment to University of Washington and Seattle Children’s as Director, Pain Medicine. His career in Seattle is notable for extensive involvement in both University and Hospital affairs, with leadership roles on numerous committees addressing a broad range of academic and clinical priorities. As before, his wholehearted commitment to education has resulted in numerous Teacher of the Year awards from the Anesthesiology residents.

He has been in the forefront of education in regional anesthesia for children and has traveled widely to deliver ultrasound guided nerve block workshops and literally hundreds of lectures. His compassion in teaching has led to numerous trainees from underserved countries visiting Seattle to learn about regional anesthesia techniques that can transform anesthetic care for children in their countries.

Dr. Anderson has an inventive and inquiring mind. At UCLA and in Seattle he earned numerous grants for research and innovation. He established a fund for support of the Pediatric Pain Program in Seattle. He has numerous patent awards related to patient comfort, pain management and regional anesthesia.

Along with his wife, Virginia, Dr. Anderson is also a philanthropist. Most recently, the couple funded an endowment in support of Regional Anesthesia Research and Education at the University of Washington.

My career path and Corrie’s crossed when I joined the Department in Seattle in 2004. Since then, I have benefited immensely from his personal and professional counsel. Whether discussing youth soccer (Corrie had the courage to coach his kids; I just volunteered to “manage” my daughters teams), being reminded to prioritize family above all else, or collaborating on numerous publications or clinical endeavors, his friendship and collegial presence has been so very valuable to me.

Dr. Anderson has been an AAP member since 2004 and served on the Executive Committee of the Section on Pediatric Anesthesiology and Pain Medicine from 2007-2014. For almost 10 years, he contributed tirelessly as Newsletter Editor for the Section. His service on behalf of the Section continues, most recently as lead author on the revision of the Academy’s policy statement on The Assessment and Management of Acute Pain in Infants, Children, and Adolescents.

This award recognizes Dr. Anderson’s lifetime of academic excellence and his exemplary career in pediatric anesthesia. His career-long commitment to mentorship and his leadership in the development of pediatric pain medicine are accomplishments that deserve, even demand, recognition. The name, Corrie T. M. Anderson, is one that belongs alongside those previously recognized for making significant advances in the practice of pediatric anesthesiology.