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**PAUL B. MAGNUSON AWARD FOR OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT IN
REHABILITATION RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT**

- 1. REASON FOR ISSUE:** This Veterans Health Administration (VHA) Handbook announces programmatic procedures for the Paul B. Magnuson Award for Outstanding Achievement in Rehabilitation Research And Development Service (RR&D).
- 2. SUMMARY OF MAJOR CHANGES:** Establishes procedures for the Paul B. Magnuson Award for Outstanding Achievement in RR&D Service.
- 3. RELATED DOCUMENTS:** VHA Directive 1203.
- 4. RESPONSIBLE OFFICE:** The Office of RR&D is responsible for the contents of this Handbook.
- 5. RESCISSION:** None.
- 6. RECERTIFICATION:** This document is scheduled for recertification on or before the last working date of March 2007.

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**PAUL B. MAGNUSON AWARD FOR OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT IN
REHABILITATION RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT**

1. PURPOSE

This Veterans Health Administration (VHA) Handbook defines the procedures for nominating candidates for the Paul B. Magnuson Award for Outstanding Achievement in Rehabilitation Research and Development Service (RR&D). The award consists of a one-time award of \$5,000 to an individual, with \$50,000 for up to 3 years to supplement ongoing peer-reviewed research, and a celebratory plaque.

2. BACKGROUND

a. Paul B. Magnuson, M.D., was a bone and joint surgeon who continuously sought new treatments and devices for assisting his patients as they faced unique situations presented by their disability. He saw patients as individuals and asserted, "People are no more alike in the shape and functional movements of their bodies and limbs than they are in their faces."

b. As a person, he was a champion of the underdog. As a physician, he saw his duty, not only as curing, but also as restoring a patient "to his family, his job, and his life." As a researcher, he noted that as long as there is disease and injury, the problems of medicine will never be completely and finally solved. As an advocate for veterans, he was the architect of the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Health Care System as it is known today.

c. World War II not only filled VA beds with patients, it left young men who left their medical training to serve with no offices to which to return. While civilian hospitals could not provide enough residencies to hire these professionals, VA hospitals were filling with soldiers, but could not hire enough doctors to care for them because of the rules and regulations of the Civil Service. As administrator under General Paul Hawley, and subsequently, as Chief Medical Director from 1948 to 1951, Dr. Magnuson argued for doctors, nurses, and dentists to be hired outside of the Civil Service, under what is now known as "Title 38." In addition, he created a system for medical school affiliations to staff VA hospitals with residents, interns, and chiefs of service.

d. Dr. Magnuson's medical career outside VA is equally impressive. In addition to his patient care practice and service as Chairman of the Department of Bone and Joint Surgery at Northwestern University Medical School, he conceived of and founded The Rehabilitation Institute of Chicago, was a Founding Member of the American Board of Surgery, and was a Fellow of the American College of Surgeons.

e. Dr. Magnuson left a remarkable legacy to VA and to the rehabilitation professional community. Through this award, the RR&D Service, remembers and honors both the man and his legacy.

3. SCOPE

The Paul B. Magnuson Award is presented annually to a VA RR&D investigator who exemplifies the entrepreneurship, humanitarianism, and dedication to veterans displayed by Dr. Magnuson during his career. The award was established in 1998, in recognition of the importance of rehabilitation research within the VA Health Care System. It is the highest honor for VA rehabilitation investigators. RR&D Service reviews nominations for the Magnuson Award annually. Nominations are to be submitted to RR&D by February 1; and successful candidates are notified by March 15. The award is presented at the following VA RR&D National Meeting.

4. PROCEDURE

a. **Evaluation Criteria.** Paul B. Magnuson Honorees are selected by an appropriate review group, which considers all applications and forwards one recommendation to the Under Secretary for Health, for approval. Selection represents exceptional merit in the following areas; the candidates have:

- (1) Displayed genuine dedication to the care of veterans with disabilities;
- (2) Conducted work which has significantly impacted America's veterans through innovative solutions to disability issues;
- (3) Made a substantive contribution to the future of VA RR&D by inspiring and mentoring a new generation of investigators;
- (4) Espoused the philosophy of the Rehabilitation Team approach to returning patients to the highest possible level of function.

b. **Eligibility.** Each nominee must be employed by VA at least 5/8 time. The research contribution leading to the nomination must have been carried out in VA, and it must clearly relate to VA's rehabilitation research mission.

c. **Nomination Process.** Nominations may be made by other scientists, the local Research and Development (R&D) committee, or the RR&D Merit Review Board through the Director, RR&D. No more than one nomination may be submitted by each VA health care facility in a given year.

d. **Submission Process.** Nominations are due by February 1 of each year. Nomination packages are to be prepared by the Associate Chief of Staff (ACOS) for R&D, and submitted by the health care facility Director to the Director, RR&D at VA Central Office. Required materials consist of an original and 15 copies of the following:

- (1) A statement from the VA facility Director presenting the rationale for the nomination.
- (2) A summary of the nominee's research achievements, specifying contributions to knowledge, to the advancement of the field, and the specific relevance to veterans and VHA (not

to exceed three pages). Additional evidence of the impact of the nominee's work may be submitted in any form (not to exceed six additional pages).

(3) Nominee's complete and current curriculum vitae and bibliography.

(4) Letters of support from the local R&D Committee and the Dean's Committee of the local medical school.

(5) A letter of support from an investigator (who is not an employee of the nominee's VA health care facility or a member of the faculty at the affiliated medical school).

e. **Review Process.** All applications are reviewed by an ad hoc review group to include rehabilitation professionals from both within and outside VA. The review group will recommend one nominee to the Director, RR&D. Upon approval, the Director recommends that candidate to the Under Secretary for Health, through the Chief Research and Development Officer (CRADO).

f. **Award.** Awardees receive a \$5,000 cash award and a plaque. Awardees with a currently funded, nationally peer-reviewed research project (VA Merit Review or non-VA research support) also receive an additional \$50,000 per year for 3 years to support that research. Awards are presented at the following VA RR&D National Meeting.

5. RESPONSIBILITIES

a. **R&D Committee.** The local R&D Committee evaluates the merits of all candidates proposed by the VA medical center and recommends one candidate to the VA medical center Director.

b. **Director, VA Health Care Facility.** The facility Director recommends the candidate to the Director, RR&D.

c. **ACOS for R&D.** The ACOS for R&D ensures that all required documentation accompanies the nomination letter from the VA facility Director and that the complete nomination package is submitted to RR&D for receipt by the specified due date.

d. **Review Group.** The review group evaluates all applications and recommends one candidate, based on the specified review criteria, to the Director, RR&D. If no candidate meets the high standards attendant to this award, no award will be given.

e. **Director, RR&D Service.** The Director, RR&D, or designee, is responsible for:

(1) Appointing the review group and approval or disapproval of the recommended candidate;

(2) Forwarding the nomination to the CRADO for approval; and

(3) Ensuring presentation of the award at an appropriate national, public venue.

f. **CRADO.** The CRADO, or designee, is responsible for:

(1) Approving selection of the nominee and submitting VA Form 5-4459, Recognition of High Level of Performance, to the Under Secretary for Health, for award approval;

(2) The written notification to the nominee's VA facility Director, when the nomination is approved.

g. **Under Secretary for Health.** The Under Secretary for Health is responsible for approving the nomination. The Under Secretary, or designee, is responsible for presenting the award to the honored researcher and to the VA facility Director, at the national ceremony.

h. **Administrative Officer for R&D.** The Administrative Officer for R&D authorizes payment to the honoree's VA facility of the one-time individual cash award of \$5,000 and the research support of up to \$50,000 for each of 3 years.