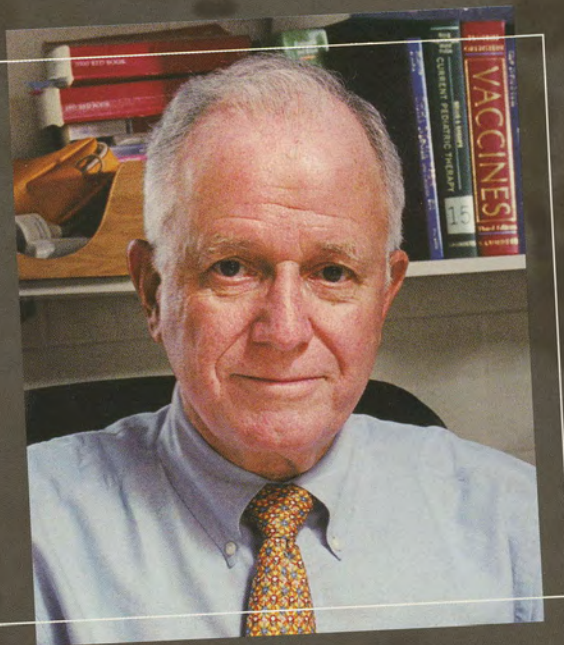


*Jerome O. Klein, MD*



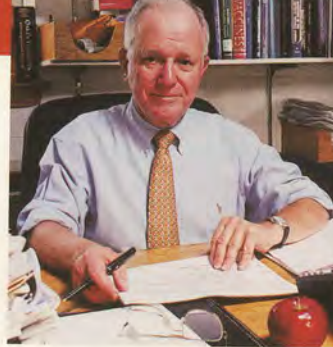
RECIPIENT OF THE 2002 MAXWELL FINLAND AWARD  
FOR SCIENTIFIC ACHIEVEMENT

The Maxwell Finland Award has been presented by NFID annually to individuals whose outstanding achievements have contributed significantly to improving human health. While this is certainly the case with this year's recipient, Dr. Jerome O. Klein is the first of Dr. Finland's fellows to be so honored.

Dr. Klein graduated from Union College in Schenectady, N.Y. in 1952 and Yale University School of Medicine in 1956. "I loved Yale," he says. "The student sets the pace and I thrived in that system of personal responsibility." In 1957, Dr. Klein started his pediatric residency training at the University of Minnesota Hospitals. "The person who influenced me most there was Bob Good. He was an extraordinary person, an innovative immunologist, and a skilled and caring physician."

With obligatory military service still in effect, and as a young physician interested in infectious diseases, Dr. Klein took a position in the Centers for Disease Control's Epidemic Intelligence Service (EIS). In those years the service was headed by Alexander Langmuir, who also became a major influence on Dr. Klein.

Dr. Langmuir impressed on his students the discipline of public health and thorough epidemi-



ologic investigation of disease. After his EIS training in Atlanta, Dr. Klein was assigned to the New York State Department of Health in Albany, where he investigated outbreaks of enteroviral infections and the Asian flu epidemic that was sweeping through the country.

Upon completing his two-year service with the EIS, Dr. Klein intended to return to Minneapolis, but chance intervened. He and his wife Linda, whom he had married when he was a medical student, were vacationing on Cape Cod. "It was raining one day, so we went to Boston. My wife fell in love with the city and suggested we spend a year there to finish my pediatric residency and then return to Minnesota. As it has turned out, we stayed and have been in Boston ever since."

Following his pediatric residency, in 1961 Dr. Klein became a research fellow in infectious diseases at the Thorndike Memorial Laboratory, under the direction of Dr. Finland, in the Boston City Hospital, now the Boston Medical Center.

"Those were the glory days of the Thorndike at the Boston City Hospital with Max Finland and Ed Kass as the senior investigators..." commented Dr. Samuel Katz, professor of pediatrics





at Duke University School of Medicine on the occasion Dr. Klein was presented with the Distinguished Physician Award of the Pediatric Infectious Diseases Society. That, and the Bristol Award, given by the Infectious Diseases Society are honors Dr. Klein is particularly proud of. "Those honors represent the opinion of your peers," he says.

In the more than 40 years that Dr. Klein has been in Boston he has published over 430 papers and is the author of two well known and well respected textbooks. One, "Infectious Diseases of the Fetus and Newborn Infants," now in its fifth edition is coauthored with Dr. Jack Remington, who was a Fellow at Boston City with Dr. Klein.

The other, co-authored with Charles Bluestone, an otolaryngologist, is "Otitis Media in Infants and Children" and deals with the topic for which Dr. Klein has become internationally known. As Dr. Georges Peter, professor of pediatrics at Brown University School of Medicine in Providence notes, "When one thinks of otitis media, one thinks of Jerry. Any symposium on the subject involves Jerry."

There are many other infectious disease topics to which Dr. Klein has lent his expertise. Dr. Katz lists some of them: antibiotic pharmacokinetics and efficacy, neonatal sepsis, Mycoplasma, infectious bacteremia in febrile children, bacterial and viral vaccines, and others. "I doubt that a single antibiotic has reached clinical usage without investigation and comment by Jerry Klein. This includes the antibacterial activity of garlic and onions."



Dr. Klein says he has been fortunate in his choices as role models—Bob Good, Alex Langmuir, Max Finland—all were extraordinarily helpful and personally kind.

Dr. Klein's career at Boston City differed in one respect from all the other fellows who were trained by Dr. Finland. He stayed on. "Max was the mother hen who kicked the chicks out," says Dr. Klein. "He wanted them to flourish in other environments. For some reason I must have been a different chick, because he asked me to stay. I was happy to stay in Boston. I got an NIH Career Development Award, then there were other grants, and my academic and investigative career was jump-started by Max."

Out of more than a hundred fellows Dr. Finland trained over the years there may have been only four who were pediatricians, observed Dr. Klein. Dr. Peter says "Dr. Klein put pediatric infectious disease on the map as an allied but independent program."

Discussing his career at Boston City Hospital, Dr. Klein pointed out that it is a community hospital serving about 40,000 inner city children. "The conditions that I was interested in were those that affected this community. A lot of the diseases we saw were disabling. Our children suffered from neonatal sepsis, ear infections,





fevers, bacteremia, meningitis. They needed vaccinations, and they needed to be handled with special care because there was always the burden of social problems.”

Dr. Klein, in common with most if not all of Dr. Finland’s some 1,400 students and fellows, calls him a father figure. Dr. Finland never married and he lived at the hospital. His fellows were his children and, in turn, they had a camaraderie based on this common bond. After leaving fellowship, Dr. Finland continued to be a counselor and supporter. This month, on the centennial of his birth, all of his “children” are coming to a celebration in his honor in Boston.

But if he was married to his work, Dr. Finland was no ivory tower ascetic. “He loved to take people out to Boston restaurants or to attend the symphony,” said Dr. Klein. Dr. Finland was a selfless individual who built a sense of loyalty. “Max thought of your welfare, not his. He was a short man, and unassuming, but a giant nevertheless in the world of infectious diseases.”

As a mentor, Dr. Klein has followed in Dr. Finland’s footsteps. Dr. Peter, for example, says: “I remember going to see Dr. Klein, when I was a fellow finishing my education and the strong encouragement he gave me to stay in academic infectious diseases. He preceded me as editor of the Red Book and the model he developed for the 1982 issue was one that I perpetuated and expanded. At every level he is a mentor for those who work for him.”

Besides professional issues, Dr. Peter recalls that he shares a common interest with Dr. Klein

in the fortunes of the Boston Red Sox. “We are both avid fans,” Dr. Peter says. Adds Dr. Klein, “My spirits go up or down according to whether the team wins or loses, which is distressing because they lose more often than they win.”

Dr. Klein has three children. His daughter Andrea, a nurse, married a hematologist, Zachary Spigelman, and is a mother of three. His son, Bennett is a lawyer in Boston who is director of the AIDS Law Project. He litigated successfully the first HIV discrimination case before the US Supreme Court, which established national anti-discrimination protection. His third child, Adam, is well-known as director of promotions for Boston’s five leading rock and roll radio stations.

Dr. Carol Baker, now professor of pediatrics at Baylor College of Medicine in Houston similarly recalls Dr. Klein’s courtesy and encouragement when she came to Boston for a year to study adult infectious diseases in the early 1970’s. “Good for me, but difficult for a pediatrician,” she notes. “Jerry extended the courtesy and encouragement that he is legendary for. What impressed me was his warmth and kindness to me floundering around in a city I didn’t know.”

“This is a man who truly cares about people and medical research. What a great match they were: Max and Jerry, quite different people but very similar in their love of medicine and teaching.”

Dr. Klein has continued in the tradition of Maxwell Finland by developing a program that has reduced the burden of infectious diseases in children in his community and throughout the world.

