

UCSD Pulmonary Specialist Receives High Honor from American Lung Association

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The American Lung Association (ALA) of California awarded the Michael Stulbarg Memorial California Medal to physician/professor Andrew Ries, M.D., M.P.H., at its annual conference in San Francisco, on August 24, 2007.

Ries is associate dean for academic affairs and professor of Medicine and Family and Preventive Medicine at the University of California, San Diego, School of Medicine as well as medical director of the UCSD Pulmonary Rehabilitation Program. The ALA honored Ries for his "meritorious contributions to the understanding and treatment of lung disease."

Ries came to UCSD 30 years ago for pulmonary training with pioneering pulmonologist Kenneth Moser, M.D. Growing up an avid sports fan in Philadelphia, Ries says he learned to appreciate rooting for the underdog. When he came to UCSD there was a prevailing attitude that nothing could be done for those unfortunate patients with advanced lung disease. So Ries set out on a scientific journey that would firmly establish pulmonary rehabilitation as a reliable therapy and standard of care for chronic lung diseases. He has devoted his entire career to the treatment of patients with chronic lung disease and has helped to create one of the world's best pulmonary rehabilitation programs at the University of California, San Diego.

Regarding the ALA California Medal, Ries said, "It's nice to be recognized by your peers but that's not why we do this. Those who work in pulmonary rehabilitation are a great group of very dedicated and compassionate people. The patients are suffering. The situations are challenging but the medical professionals in this field really connect with their patients. We're in the trenches with them, helping them fight for a reasonable quality of life. Each day brings a great sense of satisfaction."

Ries has contributed to more than 160 scientific articles and publications on the diagnosis and treatment of chronic lung disease and has received a number of honors throughout his distinguished career.

The UC San Diego Division of Pulmonary and Critical Care Medicine provides diagnosis and treatment services for patients with acute and chronic lung diseases. In 2007, UCSD Medical Center was ranked 8th in the nation for the treatment of respiratory diseases by *U.S. News & World Report*.

The American Lung Association, established in 1904, is the greatest single resource for information and education about lung diseases. The ALA of California and its offices statewide help prevent lung disease and promote lung health, funding research since 1958.

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Media Contact: Kim Edwards, 619-543-6163, kedwards@ucsd.edu

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