

July 11, 2008

## JOHN BLAIR BARNWELL AWARD

**1. PURPOSE:** This Veterans Health Administration (VHA) Notice establishes the annual John Blair Barnwell Award including information and procedures relating to the nomination, application, review, and selection process.

### 2. BACKGROUND

a. The John Blair Barnwell Award (Barnwell Award) for outstanding achievement in clinical science is the Clinical Science Research and Development's (CSR&D) highest honor for scientific achievement.

(1) The Barnwell Award, established in 2007, to honor John Blair Barnwell, M.D., distinguished educator and physician-scientist, was the Director of Research and Education at the Veterans Administration (now the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA)) Central Office in the 1940s. Prior to joining VA, Dr. Barnwell was a Professor at the University of Michigan and also held positions as Director of the Tuberculosis Division at the Veterans Administration (1946 to 1960), and President of the National Tuberculosis Society (1946). Honors and awards received by Dr. Barnwell include the Trudeau Medal, the highest honor bestowed by the National Tuberculosis Society in 1950, the Dearholt Medal from the Mississippi Valley Conference on Tuberculosis, and the Bruce H. Douglas Award from the American Thoracic Society.

(2) Dr. Barnwell's contributions to VA include the formation of the Veterans Administration-Army-Navy Cooperative Studies in the Chemotherapy of Tuberculosis Program, which pioneered the model of the multi-site clinical trial to test treatments for tuberculosis following World War II. Furthermore, Dr. Barnwell's leadership inspired enthusiasm and passion for the care of patients and fostered a tradition of top-level clinician-researchers within VA. Through his efforts, the depth and quality of VA patient care was greatly enhanced with the influx of broad, multi-disciplined talent in medicine and science.

(3) In the spirit of Dr. Barnwell's prolific professional accomplishments, the Barnwell Award aims to recognize senior VHA investigators who have achieved international acclaim for clinical research accomplishments in areas of prime importance to VA's research mission and who have also demonstrated a high level of clinical commitment to the patient population.

b. The Barnwell Award is given for outstanding scientific achievements in clinical research that advance the diagnosis and treatment of diseases and disorders in the veteran population. Although the award may occasionally recognize a single exceptionally-influential contribution, it is generally expected that recipients will have made notable sustained contributions that lead to better evaluation and/or treatment of conditions that are particularly important to veterans' health care. Clinical research to be recognized by the Barnwell Award needs to reflect efforts leading to clinical implementation of new diagnostic or treatment strategies. Such research could include

**THIS VHA NOTICE EXPIRES JULY 31, 2012**

**VHA NOTICE 2008-10**  
**July 11, 2008**

prospective interventional clinical trials (drug or device) that provide definitive evidence on a treatment, development of radiological methods, electrophysiological diagnostics, development and clinical validation of laboratory tests, application of innovative methodological design, or analytical strategies and similar activities. Typically this research will have in large part been conducted within VA medical facilities.

**3. JOHN BARNWELL AWARD**

a. **Description**

(1) The recipient receives a cash award in the amount of \$5,000 and an inscribed plaque commemorating the recipient's scientific achievements. The VA medical center which employs the recipient also receive an inscribed plaque honoring the recipient. In addition, the recipient will receive \$50,000 per year for 3 years in additional research support. The Barnwell Award is presented to the recipient at a national meeting held in Washington, DC, whenever possible.

(2) An award announcement will be published in a scientific or clinical journal by CSR&D.

b. **Eligibility.** To be eligible for the Barnwell Award, nominees must:

(1) Currently have, at minimum, a 5/8 salaried VA appointment (or an approved waiver).

(2) Have performed research at a VA facility for at least the previous 5 years.

(3) Have held national peer-reviewed clinical research support (e.g., VA, NIH, NSF) as a PI for a minimum of 10 years, cumulatively.

(4) Not have received the Barnwell Award previously.

c. **Selection Process**

(1) The Director, CSR&D appoints a review committee from among VA field representatives, former Barnwell Award recipients, representatives from other Federal agencies that fund clinical research and appropriate ad hoc representation, as needed. Members are chosen for knowledge of an appropriate scientific content area and knowledge of the scientific review process.

(2) The Barnwell Award Review Committee evaluates all applications for the Barnwell Award and recommends the most qualified candidate for the award. The Barnwell Award Review Committee basis its recommendation on the following criteria.

(a) The significance of the research to a field of clinical or behavioral science aligned with VA's research portfolio.

(b) The originality of the research.

(c) Evidence that the research has had and/or will have a broad impact on scientific and/or clinical disciplines and evidence that the nominee has acknowledged VA employment and support in the majority of publications and presentations.

(d) Evidence of outstanding scientific achievement including, but not limited to, sustained history of peer-reviewed funding, including CSR&D Program funding (either Merit Review or CSP), publications in top-tier scientific journals, invited lectures at national and international scientific meetings, exemplary service to VA and veterans in clinical and research arenas, membership in and service to national and international professional organizations, editorial service to professional journals, membership on grant review committees, other national and international research prizes.

(e) Evidence of contributions to outstanding clinical innovation and demonstrated application of findings into VA Standard of Practices.

(3) The Director, CSR&D, reviews the selection process, and recommends to the Chief Research and Development Officer (CRADO) either approval or disapproval of the Barnwell Award Review Committee recommendation.

(4) The CRADO reviews the selection of the candidate and upon approval submits it for review to the Deputy Under Secretary for Health Operations and Management (10N), the Deputy Under Secretary for Health (10A), and for the approval of the Under Secretary for Health (10).

(5) The Under Secretary for Health (10), or designee, approves the candidate and presents plaques to the recipient and to the Director of the recipient's VA Medical Centers at an appropriate ceremony. *NOTE: If, in the judgement of the committee and the Director, CSR&D, no applicant meets Barnwell Award criteria, then no award will be conferred in that given year.*

**5. NOMINATION AND SUBMISSION:** Nomination, submission, formatting, and timelines including due dates can be found in Attachment A and Attachment B.

**6. RESPONSIBLE OFFICE:** The VHA Office of Research and Development, Clinical Science Research & Development (125) is responsible for the contents of this VHA Handbook. Questions may be referred to 202-254-0482.

**VHA NOTICE 2008-10**  
**July 11, 2008**

**7. RESCISSIONS:** None. This notice is rescinded July 31, 2012; however, the information reflected remains in effect.

Michael J. Kussman, MD, MS, MACP  
Under Secretary for Health

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**ATTACHMENT A**

**INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE NOMINATION, PREPARATION, AND SUBMISSION OF APPLICATIONS FOR THE JOHN BLAIR BARNWELL AWARD**

**1. NOMINATING PROCESS**

*NOTE: Clinical research that is oriented towards understanding the mechanisms of health and disease (including studies of the psychological or biological basis of human behavior or cognition), rather than direct patient diagnosis and treatment, is more appropriately considered for the Middleton Award, as are epidemiologic and behavioral studies in which an investigator studies causes or factors associated with the health and illness of veterans.*

*NOTE: Research that is directed towards health systems improvements is more appropriately considered for the Under Secretary's Award for Health Services Research. Research aimed at the development of rehabilitative strategies and assistive devices is appropriately considered for the Paul B. Magnuson Award.*

- a. Applicants for the award may be nominated in two ways:

- (1) VA Medical Center's may submit applications to the Director, CSR&D annually by the specified application submission deadline.

- (a) The VA Medical Center Research and Development (R&D) Committee evaluates the merits of all candidates for the Barnwell Award, nominates the most outstanding candidate, and recommends the nominee to the facility Director for approval.

- (b) The VA Medical Center Director, with advice from the facility's R&D Committee, submits one outstanding nomination for the Barnwell Award.

- (c) The VA Medical Center Associate Chief of Staff (ACOS) for R&D ensures that all required application materials are prepared correctly and submitted to CSR&D VA Central Office by the specified deadline.

- (2) CSR&D may identify highly qualified investigators and solicit applications from the ACOS for R&D of the appropriate VA Medical Center by the specified submission deadline.

**2. FORMAT.** Applications must consist of single-spaced typed pages with 1-inch margins at each edge. Use only letter-quality, black print. The font size should be at least 11 point in Arial.

**3. CONTENT.** Each application must consist of:

- a. A cover sheet listing the following information in the order specified:

- (1) John Blair Barnwell Award.

**VHA NOTICE 2008-10**  
**July 11, 2008**

(2) Name and degree(s) of applicant. **NOTE:** *Social security number (SSN) of applicant will be requested for final awardees only to allow for required security and background reviews.*

(3) Name of Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) medical center.

(4) Applicant's current VA employment status (in 8ths).

(5) Number of years employed by VA.

(6) Applicant's position at the VA and academic title (indicate tenure status).

(7) Administrative contact name, telephone number, e-mail, and fax number.

(8) Approval, Name, title, and signature of the ACOS for R&D and VAMC Director.

b. A complete and current curriculum vitae (with funding history) and bibliography of the applicant (not to include abstracts, submitted papers, or papers in preparation).

c. A summary (two-page maximum) of the applicant's research achievements.

d. Three letters of support generated within the previous 6 months from scientists who are not employees of the applicant's VA Medical Center, or members of the faculty at the affiliated medical school.

e. Three reprints representative of the applicant's major original research publications.

**4. ELECTRONIC SUBMISSION:** (See Att. B.) Submit a CD only (no paper copies) using FEDEX to:

Department of Veterans Affairs  
Clinical Science Research & Development (125)  
Barnwell Award  
810 Vermont Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20420

**NOTE:** *The statement "DO NOT X-RAY" must be clearly written on the outside of all mailers.*

**5. TIMETABLE FOR SUBMISSION AND REVIEW DUE DATE**

a. Applications due at Veterans Health Administration (VHA) Central Office by February 1

b. Clinical Science Research & Development (CSR&D) administrative review of applications during February and March.

c. The Committee reviews applications during June and July.

d. Contact Information on Timetable Issues

Department of Veterans Affairs  
Clinical Science Research & Development (121)  
Barnwell Award  
1722 Eye Street NW, Suite 900  
Washington, DC 20006

Phone - (202) 254-0482  
Fax - (202) 254-0471

**ATTACHMENT B**

**INSTRUCTIONS FOR ELECTRONIC SUBMISSION OF APPLICATIONS  
FOR THE JOHN BLAIR BARNWELL AWARD**

1. Barnwell Award nominations must be submitted on a compact disc (CD-R or CD-RW). The VA Medical Center's Research & Development Office is responsible for submitting the CD to Clinical Science Research & Development (CSR&D).

2. **CD Submission Instructions** *NOTE: The submission deadline is February 1.*

a. The entire nomination package must be saved as one PDF file, including cover sheet, complete current CV, letters of support with signatures, summary of applicants research achievement, and publication reprints. Save this file using the convention: Lastname.firstinitial-Barnwell\_Nomination\_Fiscal year XX.pdf (e.g., Smith.J-Barnwell\_Nomination\_F07.pdf).

*NOTE: Free or low-cost PDF conversion programs are listed (at the end) on VA intranet at: <http://vawww.research.va.gov/funding/electronic-submission.cfm>.*

b. The facility Research Office must submit the proposal on CD using FedEx to:

Department of Veterans Affairs  
BL/CS R&D Program Review (121F)  
810 Vermont Avenue, NW  
Washington DC 20420  
(202) 254-0104

c. The FedEx package must be clearly marked 'DO NOT X-RAY.'

d. To confirm receipt of the CD or address any questions, the facility R&D Office may contact the CSR&D Administrative Officer at 202-254-0482.