Our school has a long history of leadership in the field of Family Medicine and Dr. Sam Jones extends and strengthens this tradition every day. As the Program Director at the Fairfax Family Medicine Residency program since 1990, Dr. Jones (M.D. ’79) has trained a generation of family medicine practitioners, and perhaps more importantly, served as a role model for the well-rounded clinician and human being for all of his trainees.

“The respect that Sam has garnered from his residents is legendary,” states Dr. Anton Kuzel, Harris-Mayo Distinguished Professor and Chairman of the Department of Family Medicine. “He is a master of making us younger, lesser-experienced doctors feel like colleagues and not underlings,” recalls Dr. Winston Liaw, Fairfax Family Practice class of ’09. “He holds the learner in such high regard that I feel comfortable asking him any question – no matter how insignificant. His patients are all proud to have him as their doctor, and I am proud to have him as my teacher.”

Dr. Jones’ easy-going manner and ability to be fully “in the moment” with others creates a supportive environment for his patients and resident learners alike. Dr. Emily Faltemier, Chief Resident, found as she met Dr. Jones’ patients that, “the way they speak of him is exactly how I hope my patients will someday speak of me as a family doctor.”

“As a leader, he leads by example. He is always the first to offer to help when the situation arises. He is the first to arrive in the morning and the last to leave at night. No matter what other issues may need his attention, if a faculty member or resident comes to him with a problem, he immediately shifts his priorities to focus on that individual and their needs.” shares Dr. Susan H. Burroughs, Associate Director of the Fairfax program.

Dr. Jones has recently been preparing his Fairfax practice to achieve the highest certification by the National Center for Quality Assurance. As part of this process, residents learn tools to create innovation and high standards in their own practices. One key feature of the Fairfax program is the faculty’s commitment to research in family medicine. Evidence-based practice is emphasized and residents create original research and have the opportunity to write papers and present at conferences.

Dr. Jones recently completed his term as President of the Board of Directors of the Association of Family Medicine Residency Directors during which he focused on the theme of the “New Model Practice.” He is involved at the national level as co-chair of the P4 Project, Preparing the Personal Physicians for Practice, a facet of the TransforMED program of the American Academy of Family Practice. He recently received the Innovator Award from the Society of Teachers of Family Medicine in recognition of his leadership on the P4 project. Dr. Kuzel writes, “Sam continues to be a leader and role model for the other Family Medicine Residency Directors in the state. He is respected for his wisdom and candor, and is frequently consulted on difficult problems.”

Dr. Faltemier provides a fitting summary of why Dr. Jones has earned this honor:

“Then of course, there are the intangibles. The way you know, not only through your experience, but through your sixth sense, that someone has integrity, a sense of fairness, and dedication. It is in the way Sam treats his colleagues, in the tireless hours he works, in his open-mindedness to new solutions, and in the way he talks about his family. It is in his good humor, in his optimism, and in his tireless efforts on behalf of our program and our discipline.”