

Award for Excellence in Teaching Presented to Sandy Barth, PhD

May 28, 2013

It is truly an honor and a pleasure to present the Award for Excellence in Teaching to Sanford (“Sandy”) M. Barth, PhD.

Sandy is a health economist who has taught for the Jefferson School of Population Health programs in public health and health policy since the first day we opened our doors in September 2009. To date, he has taught *US Healthcare Organization and Delivery* and *Advanced Health Policy* a total of 15 times to public health and health policy students, including three cohorts of experienced executives at Johnson & Johnson in Titusville, NJ.

Sandy has also served as interim Director of the Health Policy program and supervised numerous capstone projects in Health Policy. No stranger to Jefferson, he taught similar courses for Jefferson’s Bachelor of Science degree programs in health services management and health services management information systems from 2002 to 2009, when we summoned him from retirement to teach for us in Jefferson’s new School of Population Health.

Sandy’s BS degree, in economics, is from Rider University, his MA is in Health Care Administration from George Washington University, and his PhD in Health Economic Policy is from Century University in Albuquerque, NM.

Sandy’s experiences in the field of health care are truly exceptional. He has more than 40 years of experience in economic analysis of health care delivery and financing. His analysis of employer, provider and payer markets in the 1970s and ‘80s led to publication of a predictive model on health market changes that now defines today’s healthcare market. Shortly before he retired, he served as consultant to Aetna, Inc. on issues of



Sandy Barth, PhD (center) receives the Award for Excellence in Teaching from Carolyn Golab, PhD, and David B. Nash, MD, MBA.

strategic assessment of the Medicare population, provider pay-for-performance modeling and programmatic outcomes evaluation. Before that, he served as the Supervisor of the Pennsylvania Public School Employees’ Retirement System Health Options Program. He is the founder and managing director of SMB Strategic Solutions, a private educational and research initiative.

He has served as a consultant to Johns Hopkins University Health System; the Hispanic Physicians Network, Independence Blue Cross/Keystone Health Plan East/AmeriHealth; the Northern Virginia Health Care Purchasing Alliance; Sara Lee Corporation; Parker-Hannifin; PECO Energy, and the Chattanooga and Memphis Business Coalitions on Health, among others. He has served on the Advisory Board of the National Managed Health Care Congress and the American Society of

Quality Control; he has been an appointed member of the Pennsylvania Economy League Task Force on Health. He is widely published and a frequent speaker, here and abroad, on current healthcare issues, especially health system process improvement, assessment of health care financing and delivery, and medical plan benefit trends and longitudinal changes in the health status of 50-65 year olds.

One of the electives offered in the MPH program is Qualitative Research Methods which introduces students to techniques and ways to “quantify” qualitative information with the use of special NVivo software. An NVivo analysis of student responses revealed that “excellent,” “favorite,” “enjoyable,” “challenging,” “knowledgeable,” and “great discussions” were the words most frequently used to describe Sandy’s courses and his teaching.

Continued on next page

Population Health *Matters*

Vol. 26 No. 3 | SUMMER 2013

Let's let the students speak for themselves:

Very elegant approach to a very complex task – well organized, well prepared, very informative. Encouraged critical analysis, not just memorization. Favorite class.

Sandy was amazing. He has so much passion, it was contagious. His ability to make information tangible was so valuable.

Excellent instructor, really motivated students and encouraged fruitful and relevant discussion...

He really knows his subject matter. I really enjoyed learning about the US healthcare system from his expertise.

This is one of the best courses I've ever taken. Dr. Barth clearly has a huge knowledge base on the subject and encouraged questions and discussions in class. This was by far my favorite class of the MPH curriculum.

But this student probably summed it up the best, speaking directly to his instructor:

I appreciate the style of your learning. You foster a stress-free and comfortable environment for learning so we can concentrate on the information. You are very

welcoming for discussion and questions. I appreciate that. It helps to keep me engaged and interested. You clearly have a wealth of information from the lifetime of career experience and it certainly shined through as an asset to your teaching abilities. You are also a terrific and engaging storyteller.

On the more personal side, Sandy Barth is a native of Hartford, Connecticut. Before embarking on his career in health policy and economics, and during the Vietnam War era, he was a Captain and a medic in the US Army Medical Services Corp, directing a MASH unit in Korea during the capture of the US Pueblo and its 80 sailors by the North Koreans in January 1968. He is very proud of his military service and considered making the military a permanent career, but left in order to pursue graduate studies in health policy and economics.

Sandy is an avid golfer who dreams of golfing in Hawaii, is a dedicated gardener who grows his own tomatoes, peppers, cucumbers and eggplants, and he is king of the outdoor barbecue. He and his wife, also named Sandy, met on a blind date and were intrigued that they both had the same name; Sandy and Sandy will be married 41 years this August. They have two children, Pamela and David, and two very adorable granddaughters, Samantha, 5, and Jeanine (“Nina”), 3, who are

definitely spoiled by their grandparents. When not golfing, cooking, traveling to exotic places like the Far East, the Middle East or Eastern Europe, cruising the German *Autobahn* at 100 miles per hour, or preparing for a month-long trip to Australia and New Zealand this fall, Grandpa Sandy can be found explaining the intricacies of managed care to Samantha and Nina, who nod in appreciation and fortunately concur with all of his explanations.

The success of our programs depends greatly on the quality and dedication of its faculty. It depends on individuals like Sandy Barth who teach because they love to do it and for the contribution they can make to helping others achieve their goals. Sandy, it is with great pleasure that we present you with the 2013 JSPH Award for Excellence in Teaching. You have done so much to enlighten the world, including our students, about the mysteries and intricacies of the US healthcare system. As your students said so accurately, you are “awesome” and “amazing.” ■

Presentation of the Award for Excellence in Teaching written by Caroline Golab, PhD, Associate Dean for Academic and Student Affairs, Jefferson School of Population Health.