

Awards Honor Alumni Success

FIVE RECOGNIZED WITH BU'S HIGHEST ACCOLADE **BY CALEB DANILOFF**

Apparently the decade of the 1970s was good for planting the seeds of success. Of the four recipients of the Boston University 2007 Alumni Awards, three earned University degrees in that era.

At the annual Alumni Awards Dinner and Ceremony on January 25, President Robert A. Brown described the awardees as “a very special and elite group of individuals.”

“We try to prepare our students for careers and lives that are personally fulfilling, professionally successful, and marked by service to the community,” Brown said. “Your success in these areas is the foundation of our reputation.”

The honors were presented by Steve Karbank (CAS’79), president of the Boston University Alumni Council. A Young Alumni Award was also given.

ALUMNI AWARDS

Michael L. J. Apuzzo (MED’65)

As a resident in neurosurgery at Yale, Michael Apuzzo began working on a device that would allow surgeons to create complex brain images to aid in surgery. He became a leader in that subspecialty, called image-directed stereotaxis, or stereotaxy, which has since become integral to today’s minimally invasive neurosurgery. Sweden’s Karolinska Institute has called him “the primary intellectual catalyst in neurological surgery.”

Apuzzo is the Edwin M. Todd/Trent H. Wells, Jr., Professor of Neurological Surgery and a professor of radiation oncology, biology, and physics at the University of Southern California Keck School of Medicine. In 1995, Apuzzo received the Boston University School of Medicine’s Distinguished Alumni Award, and in February 2007 he en-

dowed the Michael L. J. Apuzzo Prize for Creativity and Innovation at MED.

As a student at the School of Medicine, Apuzzo found faculty members who were role models and a setting that was “small, intimate, exceptionally warm and embracing,” he said at the ceremony. “So many of my medical values and the morality of what I’ve done, the goals that I’ve had, and the ambitions that I’ve had were set within what was at the time a very modest setting. But the setting was so powerful, so inductive, and so esteemed, that I draw upon it now, after so many years.”

Raymond L. Kotcher (COM’79)

Raymond Kotcher is chief executive officer and senior partner of the public relations agency Ketchum, a unit of Omnicom Group. He joined as vice



George Schweitzer (COM’72) and Nancy Livingston (COM’69), a member of the Boston University Alumni Council.



Michael Apuzzo (MED’65) with BUAC member Judie Friedberg-Chessin (SED’59).



Richard Shemin (CAS’72, MED’74) and his wife, Susan.

president in 1983, assumed the presidency in 1992, and became CEO in 2000. Kotcher endowed the Kotcher-Ketchum Scholarship for graduate students in public relations at the College of Communication, and in 1994 he received a COM Distinguished Alumni Award.

Kotcher noted the profound changes in communications since he earned a master's at BU. "For those of us who have been fortunate to attend this University and the College of Communication, I believe we are uniquely prepared to join in this new conversation, whatever direction it goes in, whatever form it takes," he said. "What we have learned at COM is going to remain relevant and lasting, despite the tectonic shifts taking place in our fields. We have learned how to apply the tools and techniques so we can create compelling and important conversations. But more important, I believe, is that we have been taught at COM the enduring principles of communication, which do not change despite the epic, breakneck, never-ending change that is taking place in communications and technology today."

George F. Schweitzer (COM'72)

As president of the CBS Marketing Group, George Schweitzer oversees all marketing, advertising, and promotion for CBS, as well as sales and affiliate promotions, network creative services, and special events. He is also responsible for collaborations with such CBS divisions as King World, CBS Paramount Television, CBS Radio, CBS

Outdoor, and Showtime. He joined the company in 1972.

Schweitzer drew laughter when he shared an anecdote about one of BU's most famous alumni: Howard Stern (CGS'74, COM'76). About ten or fifteen years ago, Schweitzer said, Stern made an on-air call to one of his former COM radio professors and asked if he remembered him. "The professor said no," Schweitzer recalled. "Howard Stern said, 'Well, do you remember anyone from BU who has made it?' And the professor said, 'The only person I remember who is doing well in broadcasting is George Schweitzer.'"

Richard J. Shemin (CAS'72, MED'74)

A specialist in minimally invasive and robotic-assisted cardiac surgery, Richard Shemin is a professor and chief of the division of cardiothoracic surgery and executive vice chair of the department of surgery at UCLA Medical Center. He also is codirector of the Cardiovascular Center at the Ronald Reagan UCLA Medical Center. Shemin was a professor and chair of the department of cardiothoracic surgery at the BU School of Medicine for twenty years before moving to UCLA last year. In 2002, he received MED's Distinguished Alumni Award.

"Among all the honors and awards I have been fortunate to receive, this one is the most meaningful," Shemin said. "Boston University provided the academic environment for me to flourish as an undergraduate and as a medical student." Shemin noted that his acceptance into the six-year com-

bined liberal arts-medical curriculum program that admits students just out of high school was a life-changing event. The program was "competitive, experimental, and exciting," he said, and his philosophy and religion minor "enhanced my talents in communication, critical thinking, and understanding ethical and cultural diversity."

YOUNG ALUMNI AWARD

Ali Noorani (SPH'99)

Ali Noorani is executive director of the Massachusetts Immigrant and Refugee Advocacy Coalition (MIRA), through which organizations advocate for the rights and opportunities of immigrants and refugees. He joined MIRA in 2003, having been director of public health at the Dorchester House Multi-Service Center and Codman Square Health Center since 2000. While still a student in the School of Public Health, Noorani was a leader in local efforts for social justice, first as acting director of Boston's Environmental Diversity Forum and then as director of the Greater Boston Urban Resources Partnership.

"The faculty at Boston University, especially in the environmental health department, are amazing people who do work that is cutting-edge," Noorani said. "What the School of Public Health taught me is that it doesn't matter what you do, if it's advocating for immigrant rights, doing communications work, or being a doctor, it's about justice, equality, how you do the science, and how you do the work."



Young Alumni Award recipient Ali Noorani (SPH'99).



Raymond Kotcher (COM'79) (second from right) and his wife, Betsy, with (from left) Tobe Berkovitz, College of Communication dean ad interim, and Ray Hart, School of Theology dean ad interim.