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AMA Honors Paul S. Appelbaum, M.D. for Leadership in Medical Ethics and Professionalism

Arlington, Va. – Today, the American Psychiatric Association (APA) congratulates APA member and past president Paul S. Appelbaum, M.D. for receiving the American Medical Association (AMA) 2007 Isaac Hays, M.D. and John Bell, M.D. Award for Leadership in Medical Ethics and Professionalism. The award was presented at the Interim Meeting of the AMA House of Delegates in Honolulu, Hawaii.

Dr. Appelbaum has a distinguished career of contributions to psychiatry, much of which has focused on medical ethics. Dr. Appelbaum currently chairs the APA Council on Psychiatry and the Law, and previously chaired the APA Ethics Appeals Board and the Commission on Judicial Action.

In a letter nominating Dr. Appelbaum for this award, the APA, along with the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry (AACAP) and the American Academy of Psychiatry and the Law (AAPL), wrote, in part:

Dr. Appelbaum has a long, distinguished history of contributions to organized medicine, much of which have focused on medical ethics. He not only embodies the principles of medical ethics within his own practice, he carries on the tradition by teaching new physicians how to incorporate ethical values into their professional lives.

Among his accomplishments as a leader in ethics in psychiatry has been the creation of a mechanism for peer review of psychiatric expert testimony, development of ethical standards for psychiatric involvement in death penalty proceedings, and leading the formulation of the APA's position on psychiatric participation in interrogations (an approach subsequently adopted by the AMA). As APA President, he initiated a much-needed process of updating the APA's annotations to the AMA's Principles of Medical Ethics. His work within the field of forensic psychiatry concerns the practical application of medical ethics within the framework of the justice system.

“Dr. Appelbaum is a renowned leader in medical ethics, and we congratulate him on this prestigious honor,” said Carolyn Robinowitz, M.D., APA President and delegate to the AMA. “His creative and critical contributions to theory and practice enhance our profession as well as patient care.”

Dr. Appelbaum is the Dollard Professor and Director of the Division of Psychiatry, Law and Ethics for the Department of Psychiatry at Columbia University College of Physicians and Surgeons, as well as a Faculty Associate at the Columbia University Center for Bioethics. He previously served as the A.F. Zeleznik Distinguished Professor and Chairman of the Department of Psychiatry and Director of the Law and Psychiatry Program at the University of Massachusetts Medical School. He has worked with state, national and international professional medical organizations for nearly three decades, including the International Academy of Law and Mental Health, the American Society of Law, Medicine, and Ethics, and the APA.

The Isaac Hays, M.D. and John Bell, M.D. Award for Leadership in Medical Ethics and Professionalism was established by the AMA Foundation and AMA Board of Trustees in 1997 and is named for co-writers of the original Code of Ethics for the American Medical Association.

About the American Psychiatric Association:

The American Psychiatric Association is a national medical specialty society whose more than 38,000 physician members specialize in diagnosis, treatment, prevention and research of mental illnesses including substance use disorders. Visit the APA at www.psych.org and www.HealthyMinds.org.

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