



A History of the Olive C. Farr Distinguished Service Award

This award is the highest honor bestowed on a PT member of the Iowa Physical Therapy Association. It is named in memory of Olive C. Farr, whose bequest in 1983 to the Iowa Physical Therapy Foundation provides scholarships and loans to students enrolled in Iowa physical therapy education programs.

Olive Farr was born Sept. 22, 1895, in Waverly, Iowa, and was educated at Cedar Falls Teachers College (where she also taught), the University of Iowa where she graduated in 1922 with a degree in physical education, and the University of Wisconsin at Madison where she received her certificate in physical therapy.

After eight years as a clinician, she became the first director of the physical therapy education program at the University of Iowa where she remained until retirement in 1963. She served as president of the Iowa Physical Therapy Association from 1946 to 1948.

Past recipients of the Olive C. Farr Distinguished Service Award include:

2025 Brenda Kemling	2004 Tony Mack	1983 Gary Smidt
2024 Jim Nespor	2003 Jane Brown	1981 Gary Soderberg
2023 Kevin Farrell	2002 Steven R. Clark	1980 Donald Shurr
2022 S. Juanita Robel	2001 Byron Bork	1979 Norman Miller
2021 Tracy Porter	2000 Susan Bell	1978 George Soper
2020 Kathleen Sluka	1998 Gary Debner	1977 Janet Dunn
2019 Jason Putz	1997 Steve Strong	1976 Margery Surbaugh
2018 Sandra Norby	1996 Mary Wheatley	1975 Warren Rogers
2017 Mike Burggraaf	1995 Kim Majerus	1974 Luella Schlotfelt
2016 Randy Boldt	1994 Dick Evans	1973 Nancy Thompson
2015 Steve Cassabaum	1993 Jim Hughes	1972 Joyce Johnson
2014 Mark Blankespoor	1992 Pam Duffy	1971 Ann McColley
2013 Kevin Rippey	1991 Ken Leo	1970 Margaret Campbell
2012 Blake Hardy	1990 Ralph Cushman	1969 Frank Hazelton
2011 Richard Shields	1989 John Barr	1968 Charlotte Vasey
2010 David Nielsen	1988 Dan Mack	1967 John Blauer
2008 Jeff Taeger	1987 John Wadsworth	1966 Terry Jones
2007 Pam Hazell	1986 Bruce Miller	1965 Leo Morrissey
2006 Brett Altman	1985 Walter Svoboda	1964 Philip Abood
2005 Jean Hammill	1984 Douglas Crosby	1963 Olive Farr