

## **Lee Gurel—Presidential Citation August 3, 2017 American Psychological Association Convention, Washington, DC**

A few years ago, an article caught my eye. It featured a psychologist with a distinguished career, and that was noteworthy. But what it was that had caught my eye was how fondly he talked of his long-ago teachers, and how they had inspired him, and how he had wanted to be like them, but didn't know if he could. That psychologist, of course, was Lee Gurel. I hoped I might meet him, and, as luck would have it, when the Lee Gurel Lecture came into being at the APA convention in 2010, I was privileged to be the first Gurel Lecturer. Dr. Gurel was exactly as advertised: thoughtful, kind, insightful, and possessed of a gentle sense of humor.

It was only later that I learned how profoundly his education had affected him, and how profoundly he in turn had influenced the teaching of psychology. Like many successful psychologists, Lee has published important research, much of it aimed toward improving the lives of mental health patients in a variety of settings. That, we would all agree, is important. But what brings us here today is Lee's contributions to the work of those of us who have spent our careers teaching psychology.

Lee Gurel is a graduate of Clark University—a place where he gathered good memories of inspiring teachers, and where, in turn, he has invested significant capital, both psychological and financial, in annual workshops for teachers of psychology from across the country. For a quarter century or more, he has supported the teaching of psychology through the American Psychological Foundation, funding the Gurel Learning Center at the APA building, development of teaching units for high school psychology, and travel to the APA convention for psychology teachers.

Lee's professional, scientific, and philanthropic contributions are indeed exceptional. But in the eyes of the psychologists and teachers who know him, his most important contributions may be his kindness and his enthusiastic encouragement of our profession. Lee not only gives of his financial and professional assets, but he also loves associating with psychology teachers—whether over dinner, a cup of coffee, or in the corridors at the APA convention. He has become a father (or maybe grandfather?) figure to many, and will leave a legacy that goes far beyond the influence of the dollars he has given to the cause. He inspires young teachers, as well as old ones like me, and makes those who know him hope that they too can become the kind of human being he is.

Today we are proud to present Dr. Lee Gurel this Presidential Citation for his lifetime contributions to the teaching of psychology.