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2025 Beckman Award Recognition Ceremony

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Celebrating Inspired Teaching and Enduring Impact

ATLANTA, GA – November 10, 2025 – On November 8, the Elizabeth Hurlock Beckman Award Trust hosted its annual Recognition Ceremony, honoring eight distinguished professors whose mentorship empowered their students to launch impactful initiatives that benefit communities across the globe.

Each professor received a cash award for inspiring their former student to create an organization, concept, or movement that embodies the spirit of civic engagement and social progress. Award recipients and their former-student nominators were honored at a celebratory dinner in Atlanta, recognizing the enduring power of mentorship and its positive, tangible impact on society.

Why the Beckman Award Matters

The Elizabeth Hurlock Beckman Award Trust was founded in 2008 through the will of Gail McKnight Beckman, a legal scholar and philanthropist, to honor her mother, Dr. Elizabeth Hurlock Beckman (1898–1988) — a pioneering psychologist, educator, and author.

Dr. Beckman was among the first female psychology professors at Columbia University and helped shape the field of child and adolescent development. Her seminal book *Developmental Psychology* became a foundational text, and her work made psychological concepts accessible to educators and families alike. A passionate advocate for gender equality, Dr. Beckman's influence extended far beyond academia.

Moved by her mother's legacy, Gail McKnight Beckman established the Trust to recognize educators who inspire students to create meaningful change. By honoring professors whose former students founded organizations or initiatives that make a lasting impact on their communities or fields of study, the Beckman Award celebrates Dr. Beckman's lifelong commitment to education and mentorship—and brings to life the ripple effect of inspired teaching across disciplines.

Since bestowing its first award in 2010, the Trust has awarded over \$4.2 million to 159 professors across disciplines including law, medicine, and psychology.

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2025 Beckman Award Winners

Denis Antoine II, MD, DFAPA, FASAM

Mentored: Andrew Gaddis, MD, MHS – Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine
→ Co-founder of Charm City Care Connection, improving access to health care in Baltimore.

Henry M. Blumberg, MD

Mentored: Nestani Tukvadze, MD, PhD – Emory University Rollins School of Public Health
→ Leader in drug-resistant tuberculosis research in the Republic of Georgia.

Jada Bussey-Jones, MD, MACP

Mentored: Stacie Schmidt, MD – Emory University School of Medicine
→ Contributor to Grady Health System's Food as Medicine and Healthy Living Initiative.

Jocelyn Getgen Kestenbaum, JD, MPH

Mentored: Marina Coriale, JD – Yeshiva University Benjamin N. Cardozo School of Law
→ Developer of concept & research infrastructure for the Slavery/Slave Trade Database Project.

Sheryl Heron, MD, MPH

Mentored: John Lewis, MD, MS, FACEP – Emory University School of Medicine
→ Founder of Emergency Medicine Remix and HEAL (Health, Equity, and Literacy).

Kelly L. Klump, PhD

Mentored: Jessica L. Van Huysse, PhD – Michigan State University
→ Developer of CEDP Brief Consultation Clinic for adolescent eating disorders.

Ruth Vinz, PhD

Mentored: Mikki Shaw, EdD – Teachers College, Columbia University
→ Co-founder of The Writing Center at Sing Sing Correctional Facility.

Joseph D. Vlah, MA

Mentored: Allison Peele Spalding, BA – Flagler College
→ Founder of Fostering Kindness, a public charity serving foster youth in Central Florida.

For more information or to submit a nomination for the 2026 Beckman Award, visit:

<https://www.wellsfargo.com/private-foundations/beckman-award-trust/>

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