

“Dr. Galen R. Wenger Honored with 2026 P.B. Dews Lifetime Achievement

We are incredibly proud to share that our own Dr. Galen R. Wenger, PhD, has been awarded the 2026 ASPET P.B. Dews Lifetime Achievement Award for Research in Behavioral Pharmacology. This is a huge honor for Dr. Wenger and our department, as it recognizes a lifetime of outstanding achievement in research, teaching, and professional service.

The award is named for Peter Dews, a pharmacologist at Harvard credited with founding behavioral pharmacology as a new experimental science concerned with the rigorous assessment of the behavioral effects of drugs. The award was established in 2010 to honor those whose work considers behavior as a fundamental part of biology, which is critical to understanding drug action at the systems level. Dr. Wenger is the 13th Dews Award winner, and the second from UAMS after the previous Department of Pharmacology and Toxicology Chair Donald E. McMillan received the award in 2010. Dr.

Wenger’s career has been modeled on the same principles which Dews established, which is perhaps not surprising given that Dr. Wenger was a postdoctoral fellow with Dews. After receiving his BA from Goshen College and his PhD from West Virginia University, Dr. Wenger completed a fellowship at the University of Colorado before moving to Harvard Medical School. It was at Harvard, working directly in the Dews lab, where he and Dews pioneered behavioral pharmacology with mice, a species of obvious importance to toxicology that had nevertheless not previously been studied using sophisticated behavioral methods.

Dr. Wenger was recruited to UAMS by Dr. McMillan in the mid-1970s, and spent essentially his entire independent career in the Department of Pharmacology and Toxicology. During his tenure at UAMS, Dr. Wenger made his mark on the field of behavioral pharmacology through a long list of achievements:

- **Scientific Innovation:** He helped introduce the cumulative-dosing procedure to the field and showed how behavioral principles could be used to study toxicology.
- **Research Impact:** His independent work at UAMS has been vital to our understanding of rate dependency, cognition, behavioral genetics, and behavioral toxicology.
- **National Leadership:** An ASPET member since 1977, Dr. Wenger has served as President of the Behavioral Pharmacology Society and sat on numerous review committees for the NIH, NIDA, and NIEHS.
- **Service to UAMS:** His contributions here are too many to list, but he was notably the first-ever recipient of the Distinguished Faculty Service Award.

Dr. Wenger will be traveling to the annual ASPET meeting to accept this award in person. We are so proud of everything he has accomplished and the way he continues to represent our department on the national stage.

Please join us in congratulating Dr. Wenger on this well-deserved honor.

