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Scleroderma Foundation Names University of Michigan Physician and Researcher as “Doctor of the Year”

Dinesh Khanna, M.D., M.Sc., Honored at Annual Banquet in San Francisco

DANVERS, MASS. (Aug. 19, 2011) – The Scleroderma Foundation named Dinesh Khanna, M.D., M.Sc., its 2011 Doctor of the Year during this year’s National Patient Education Conference held last month in San Francisco. The award recognizes a skilled physician or researcher for his or her involvement within the Foundation, and for helping provide guidance and support to the organization’s patient population.

“Those who know Dr. Khanna as a physician and caretaker know that he is a caring and compassionate doctor who does not lose sight of the fact those patients always come first,” said Scleroderma Foundation’s CEO Robert J. Riggs. “He is a highly-regarded researcher who is well respected among his peers in the medical community, and his patients also know him as a compassionate physician who always puts their well-being first and foremost.”

Dr. Khanna is the Marvin & Betty Danto Research Professor of Connective Tissue Research and Associate Professor of Internal Medicine in the Division of Rheumatology, and the newly-appointed director of the Scleroderma Program at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor. He previously was the clinical director of the scleroderma clinic at the David Geffen School of Medicine at the University of California at Los Angeles.

He has authored more than 120 peer-reviewed publications and book chapters including a defining paper on gastrointestinal issues in scleroderma. Dr. Khanna received his medical training at the University College of Medical Sciences in New Delhi, India. He completed his residency at Wright State University School of Medicine in Dayton, Ohio, and a fellowship in rheumatology and a Master of Science in Clinical Research at the University of California at Los Angeles School of Medicine.

The leadership of the Scleroderma Foundation is proud to honor Dr. Khanna for his dedication to individuals impacted by this disease. He has made powerful contributions to research aimed at unraveling the cause of scleroderma, and the search to find effective treatments to enhance the lives of people living with this complex autoimmune disease.

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Doctor of the Year Award

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About Scleroderma

Scleroderma is a chronic, often progressive, autoimmune disease in which the immune system attacks its own body.

Scleroderma means “hard skin.” It can cause a thickening and tightening of the skin. In some cases, it causes serious damage to internal organs including the lungs, heart, kidneys, esophagus and gastrointestinal tract. As scarring, or sclerosis, of these organs and organ systems progress, they work less effectively, and can lead to organ failure and death.

Some medications and treatments can help with certain symptoms, but there is no cure for scleroderma. The disease affects about 300,000 people across the U.S. In comparison, approximately the same number of people are affected by multiple sclerosis.

About the Scleroderma Foundation

The Scleroderma Foundation is the national organization for people with scleroderma, their families and friends. It was formed Jan. 1, 1998, by a merger between the United Scleroderma Foundation and the Scleroderma Federation.

The Scleroderma Foundation is headquartered in the metro Boston area in Danvers, Mass. It is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization dedicated to serving the interests of people living with scleroderma. The Foundation has a network of 23 chapters and 145 support groups committed to carrying out the three-fold mission of support, education and research. The Scleroderma Foundation funds an average of \$1 million in new grants each year to find the cause and cure for scleroderma.

For more information about the Scleroderma Foundation, visit www.scleroderma.org or call (800) 722-HOPE (4673).

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Attachments: Khanna-Riggs.jpg

Photo caption: Dinesh Khanna, M.D., M.Sc., received the award for Doctor of the Year from the Scleroderma Foundation’s CEO Robert J. Riggs at the National Patient Education Conference in San Francisco. (Photo credit | Heather Hryciw Photography)