

EXCEPTIONAL MOMENTS

IN TEACHING



Mashaal Dhir, MD, an associate professor of Surgery at Upstate Medical University, is the **November 2023** recipient of the **Exceptional Moments in Teaching recognition**.

COMMENTS FROM DR. DHIR'S STUDENTS:

“Dr. Dhir taught me about the agony that we might face one day when the disease is beyond our capability to treat. Dr. Dhir was performing a Whipple procedure on a patient, and as he continued, he realized that he may have to abort the operation due to the advanced disease process and prior treatments that made the operation technically difficult, if not impossible. As I watched, I could see the agony in Dr. Dhir as he weighed his choices. He explained the pending decision to the resident and myself, asked colleagues in the OR for a second opinion, and tried his best to continue the operation. But the choice became clear, even to me as a medical student. I think what made Dr. Dhir an exceptional teacher was that it would have been very easy to lose composure, and not explain to the trainees in detail about his thought process. And yet even with this immense pressure, Dr. Dhir maintained his professionalism, and expressed humility at this terrible disease that he could not treat. Being right there as he made this impossible decision, perhaps I will be able to emulate Dr. Dhir if I am ever faced with such a choice.”

“Dr. Dhir is an all-around great person to be around. He provided lots of excellent teaching points. Super friendly with patients even when giving challenging and sad diagnoses. Skilled surgeon and always very nice to students. I appreciate Dr. Dhir and his hard work for all his patients.”

The Norton College of Medicine recognizes exceptional teachers with the monthly “Exceptional Moments in Teaching” program. Honorees are selected via student assessments from courses and clerkships. Recognized teachers—including medical faculty, residents, nurses and other educators—are those who challenge students and provide an exceptional learning experience.