The ACADEMY for Radiology & Biomedical Imaging Research
Advancing Innovation in Imaging Science

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The Academy for Radiology & Biomedical Imaging Research is proud to announce Mitchell D. Schnall, MD, PhD, as the 2026 Academy Gold Medal Recipient.

Established in 2014, the Academy Gold Medal recognizes extraordinary contributions to advancing imaging and radiology research, honoring those who have raised the profile of imaging research and encouraged future efforts toward medical advances.

Dr. Schnall has been part of the Academy's story since the very beginning. In the early days, when he was a junior investigator, he took trips to Capitol Hill with former Academy Presidents Drs. Stanley Baum and Douglas Maynard to advocate on behalf of the National Institute of Biomedical Imaging and Bioengineering (NIBIB). That involvement grew into a lasting commitment, and Dr. Schnall has been a voice for the imaging research community ever since.

Dr. Elizabeth Krupinski, Academy Vice President, praised his leadership: "Dr. Mitchell Schnall has been a vital champion for our field, tirelessly advocating for robust federal investment in medical imaging R&D and helping secure the resources necessary to drive cutting-edge technological and clinical advancements."

Dr. Schnall didn't just advocate; he catalyzed change where he saw opportunity. After being nominated to the American Society for Clinical Investigation (ASCI) and the Association of American Physicians (AAP), both medical societies where radiologists were rarely recognized, he proposed establishing a similar status for the radiology community. He worked with Dr. Dick Ehman to establish the Academy's Council of Distinguished Investigators.

Beyond his advocacy work, Dr. Schnall is a Professor of Radiology and the Senior Vice President for Data and Technology Solutions at the University of Pennsylvania Health System. His history with the University of

Pennsylvania starts in 1986, when he received his MD and PhD in biophysics, and he joined the faculty in 1991. As a young faculty member, he worked at the interface of MRI technology and clinical practice to develop purpose-built technology to improve technical performance. Among his significant contributions are coil technology and acquisition approaches for Breast MRI. He has also been a leader in the establishment of a formal clinical trial culture in radiology through his leadership in ACRIN and now ECOG-ACRIN.

In 2012, Dr. Schnall became Chair of the Department of Radiology at the University of Pennsylvania, serving in this role through 2024. During his time as chairman, he championed the role of clinician scientists in radiology, establishing the first NIH-supported research residency track. His research focus resulted in doubling the size of the department's research funding over his tenure.

"Mitch is a rare physician-scientist with profound expertise spanning scanner instrumentation, clinical applications, and healthcare integration. He is a true visionary," remarked Dr. Satoshi Minoshima, Academy Secretary and Treasurer.

Dr. Schnall's contributions have been recognized widely. He was elected to the Institute of Medicine in 2012 and received a gold medal from the International Society for Magnetic Resonance in Medicine in 2013. The Radiological Society of North America (RSNA) named him its Outstanding Researcher in 2017, and he is an elected member of the American Society for Clinical Investigation (ASCI) and the Association of American Physicians (AAP).

When asked about Dr. Schnall's contributions, Dr. Pamela Woodard, Academy President, said, "This has been his life's passion, and he is more than deserving of the Academy's highest honor."

The Academy will honor Dr. Schnall and the 2026 Academy Class of Distinguished Investigators at RSNA 2026 with a special ceremony and reception, from 3:00-5:00 PM CT on Tuesday, December 1, 2026, in room S105BC, at McCormick Place in Chicago, IL.

More information on this award and the Academy's events at RSNA 2026 can be found on the Academy website.