

Duncan Clark Awardee



Leslie A. Falk, MD

1987

Leslie A. Falk was born in St. Louis, Missouri. He received an A. B. in 1935 from the University of Illinois. Falk completed two years at Washington University's medical school before receiving a Rhodes Scholarship to Oxford University where he studied chemotherapeutic agents such as penicillin and lysozyme.

Graduating from Oxford University in 1940 with a Ph.D. in medical science, Falk enrolled at the Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine from which he graduated with a M.D. in 1942. After a year's internship at Johns Hopkins Hospital, Falk enlisted in the U.S. Army Medical Corps and served in Washington, D.C. as a legislative aid, working on projects related to health insurance and mental health. He worked for the U.N. Relief and Rehabilitation Association in Byelorussia and the U.S. Public Health Service serving migrant workers health needs after the war. From 1948 to 1967, Falk was a medical administrator for the United Mine Workers Health and Welfare Fund located in Pittsburg, Pennsylvania,

Dr. Falk was very active in developing community health clinics and implementing innovative health care benefit and delivery systems to coal miners and their families. In 1967, Falk joined the faculty of Meharry Medical College as chair of the new Department of Family and Community Medicine, a post he held until his retirement in 1989. Throughout his career, Falk was active in the civil rights movement, and issues of social justice and universal health care. He was a member of the Physicians of Social Responsibility, the Urban League, the NAACP and other anti-war and anti-nuclear groups.