

Gold Medalist Tribute • Etta D. Pisano, MD

Introduction by N. Reed Dunnick, MD

A gifted clinical radiologist, effective teacher, and accomplished investigator, Etta D. Pisano, MD, has transcended radiology to a position that influences the entire medical center at the University of North Carolina. She serves as Vice Dean for Academic Affairs and director of the Biomedical Research Imaging Center.

Dr Pisano was born in New York City and raised in suburban Philadelphia. She was a Daniel Webster Scholar and graduated cum laude from Dartmouth College. The oldest of seven children, Etta lost her mother when she was only 15 years of age. This experience galvanized her desire to improve women's health care. She chose medicine for her career and earned membership in the Alpha Omega Alpha Honor Society at Duke University, where she married her husband, Jan Kylstra, MD, an ophthalmologist now in private practice.

After a rotating internship in Pensacola, she took her radiology residency, including a fellowship in body imaging, at Harvard's Beth Israel Hospital. Dr Pisano stayed in Boston for her first years as a faculty member before moving to the University of North Carolina as assistant professor of radiology and section chief of breast imaging. Within a year, Etta became the principal investigator on her first grant, an innovative project to establish a low-cost screening mammography center. In 2001, the American College of Radiology Imaging Network (ACRIN) undertook a study of digital mammography involving almost 50,000 women; Etta A. Pisano, MD, was selected as the principal investigator. This Digital Mammographic Imaging Screening Trial (DMIST) demonstrated that although both digital and screen-film mammography have similar overall rates of accuracy, digital mammography was superior among women who are premenopausal or perimenopausal and those with dense breasts.

A prolific investigator, Dr Pisano has had 170 scientific papers published and has given 448 scientific and educational presentations. She has served as

a reviewer for 18 journals and as a member of the editorial board of six. Her research has been funded by 42 grants, and she has been the principal investigator for 28 of them.

In addition to her outstanding work advancing the field of breast imaging, Etta has served many of our professional radiology organizations. She has contributed in many capacities to the American College of Radiology and the Radiological Society of North America. She is a member of the Board of Directors of the Academy of Radiology Research. She served as an oral examiner for the American Board of Radiology and as president of the American Association for Women Radiologists. She is one of only a few diagnostic radiologists who have been elected to the Institute of Medicine of the National Academies.

Etta saved her best volunteer efforts for the Association of University Radiologists (AUR). Her first job was as a faculty member for the Picker-, then Marconi-, and now Philips-sponsored Academic Faculty Development Program.

She has served on 14 task forces or committees and has chaired many of them. For 10 years, she was a member of the AUR Board of Directors and in 2003 became our 51st president.

Not surprisingly, Dr Pisano has received many professional honors, including the outstanding teacher award from the University of North Carolina radiology residents and the Award for the Advancement of Women from the University of North Carolina. She was selected to give the commencement address for the university in 2005 and is the recipient of the ACRIN Career Contribution Award. In 2006, she received the Health Breakthrough Award from the *Ladies' Home Journal* and in 2007 was given the Making a Difference for Women Award by Soroptomist International. It is with great admiration that we bestow on Etta D. Pisano, MD, the Gold Medal of the Association of University Radiologists.



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