

## 2009 ABS Ulrich Henschke Award: Patricia Eifel, MD



Dr. Eifel received her undergraduate and M.D. degrees at Stanford University Medical School, where she went on to train in radiation oncology. After a fellowship year in the laboratory of J. Martin Brown, she moved east to take a position on the faculty of the Joint Center for Radiation Oncology. After marrying and moving to Texas, Dr. Eifel spent several years at the University of Texas Medical Branch and then, in 1986, moved to the University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center where she has practiced for more than 20 years. She has served as chief of the Gynecologic Radiation Oncology Section since 1997.

Dr. Eifel's interest in gynecologic cancers began during her residency at Stanford where she co-authored ground-breaking studies that defined the importance of uterine papillary serous variants of endometrial cancer and where she also began to learn the art of brachytherapy with Alvaro Martinez and Don Goffinet. Her focus on the study and clinical management of gynecologic cancers intensified when she joined the faculty of MD Anderson and had the opportunity to work with Louis Delclos. During the past 20 years, Dr. Eifel has participated in the treatment of thousands of patients with gynecologic cancers. She has documented MD Anderson's experience with more than 8000 patients treated for carcinomas of the cervix, vulva and vagina, reporting their outcome, analyzing side effects and confirming and characterizing the key role of brachytherapy in the curative treatment of these cancers. Dr. Eifel was principal investigator in studies that helped to define the role of concurrent chemoradiation in treatment of gynecologic malignancies. Her studies of the internal motion of pelvic target volumes have illustrated the complexity of highly conformal external beam delivery and underlined the continued importance and clinical advantages of brachytherapy. More recently, in collaboration with MD Anderson physicists, Dr. Eifel has explored the use of pulsed dose-rate brachytherapy in the treatment of gynecologic cancers and has participated in the development of advanced applicator systems suitable for image-guided brachytherapy. She has published more than 130 peer-reviewed publications as well as numerous chapters, invited articles and books that focused on the nature and treatment of gynecologic cancers.

Dr. Eifel is a devoted teacher. Her refresher courses on cervical cancer, endometrial cancer, brachytherapy and vaginal cancer have drawn large audiences for nearly 20 years. She has been a frequent speaker at annual meetings of the ABS and an organizer and teacher of the ABS Gynecology schools. She has shared her experience with hundreds of residents and fellows at MD Anderson and in more than 40 visiting professorships. She has served on the board of the ABS and is currently the immediate past Chairman of the Board of ASTRO.

Dr. Eifel lives in Bellaire, Texas with her husband, Jim Belli, also a radiation oncologist and retired chair of the department in Galveston. She is a serious photographer and recent President of the Board of the Houston Center for Photography. For added relaxation, she plays the piano, tends her rose garden and frolics with her new puppy, Rufus.