



*Ezgi Tiryaki, 2014–15 Distinguished Teacher  
Postbaccalaureate, Graduate, and Professional Teaching Award*

A former medical student recalls his first encounter with Ezgi Tiryaki, when she brought to class a real patient with amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS). It was a “lecture” that left people in tears of sadness and joy, turning the focus from “*what you need to know*” to “*why you are becoming a doctor.*”

Tiryaki has had a profound influence on many budding physicians over the years as associate professor of neurology. Her former students call her “profoundly influential” and the “ideal academic physician educator.” She has shown “transformative leadership” as the director of the neurology residency program and has mentored and advised many students.

She’s committed to learners’ professional development. One colleague notes that Tiryaki “demonstrates

both high expectations and patience as she helps junior colleagues work through the challenges associated with effective care of patients and their families.”

And for more than 20 years Tiryaki has been actively engaged in ALS research, participating in a large number of funded clinical trials exploring potential treatments. She’s been an invited speaker on ALS at the U’s Mini Medical School twice—on the recommendation of former students.

“Her career as a medical educator provides an outstanding example of ... the best of professional education at the U of M,” says a colleague. Adds another: “In my over 35 years of teaching and leading in the field of education, I can honestly state that I have never met another teacher of Dr. Tiryaki’s caliber.” ✎

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*“Helping a struggling learner to overcome challenges and undertake a successful career is as satisfying as it is humbling. Learner remediation has been one of the most difficult, yet rewarding, elements of my work.”*

