



### **Molly Shepard to Receive 2017 Woman One Award**

PHILADELPHIA- September 14, 2016 - The Institute for Women's Health and Leadership at Drexel University College of Medicine will present the 15th annual Woman One Award to author, entrepreneur, business and community leader Molly D. Shepard on April 24, 2017.

The Woman One program annually honors an outstanding woman for her leadership in the Philadelphia community and raises scholarship funds for talented, underrepresented women in medicine studying at the College of Medicine.

"Molly Shepard embodies the institute's commitment to advancing women's health and women's leadership," said **Lynn Yeakel**, director of the Institute for Women's Health and Leadership. "Her life and career have been devoted to empowering women to achieve and succeed in leadership positions, and her advocacy for finding a cure for Multiple Sclerosis (MS), an autoimmune disease that disproportionately affects women, has resulted in substantial increases in research funds."

The award will be presented at the 15th annual Woman One ceremony at the Rittenhouse Hotel in Philadelphia. Honorary co-chairs of the event are Drexel University President John A. Fry; Judith M. von Seldeneck, founder, chairman and CEO of Diversified Search; and Charles P. Pizzi, former president and chief executive officer of Tasty Baking Company.

Rita Akumuo is this year's Woman One scholar. She was selected for her academic achievements, leadership qualities and community service. Akumuo, the child of Nigerian immigrants, grew up in Camden, N.J., and graduated from Syracuse University. Now in her first year of medical school at Drexel, she is interested in eventually practicing medicine in underserved communities. Each Woman One scholar receives \$80,000 to \$100,000 in tuition support over four years

Shepard is the President and CEO of The Leader's Edge/Leaders By Design, a company dedicated to the advancement of executive and high potential leaders. She is a sought-after thought leader and speaker in the field of women's leadership development and is the author of four books including "Breaking Into the Boys' Club" (2015). Her fifth book, "The Bully-Proof Workplace," will come out in the spring.

Shepard is actively involved in the community and has served as co-chair for Women Against MS for the past five years and is a member of the Board of Directors for the National Multiple Sclerosis Society's Greater Delaware Valley Chapter. She is founder of the Women's Initiative for The United Way of Southeastern PA and is chairman emeritus of the United Way. She is also currently active as director and chairman emeritus of WHY Inc., president emeritus of the Pennsylvania Women's Forum, and is a member of the Board of Directors of the Greater Philadelphia Chamber of Commerce, and has previously served on many public and non-profit boards.

Among the numerous honors Shepard has received are the Woman of Spirit Award by the Greater Delaware Valley Chapter of the Multiple Sclerosis Society for her commitment to raising MS awareness, the Alice Paul Equality Award and the 2012 Brava! Achievement Award, which is given annually to top regional female CEOs for their entrepreneurial endeavors and commitment to the community by *SmartCEO Magazine*. She has also received the Greater Philadelphia Chamber of Commerce Paradigm Award given to the outstanding woman business leader of the year.

She holds a BA from Wheaton College, a master's degree in Psychological Services and Counseling from the University of Pennsylvania, a MSM in Leadership from The American College, and in May 2006

received an Honorary Doctorate of Humanities from West Chester University. In 2009 she received certification as an Internationally Certified Career Management Fellow (CMF) with ICC International.

“I am deeply honored to be receiving the Woman One Award as the work that the Institute for Women’s Health and Leadership aligns with everything I have worked hard for over the last 15 years,” Shepard said. “Talented and aspiring women still need the opportunity and support to achieve their highest career and life goals.”

In 14 years, the Woman One program has raised more than \$2.5 million and has supported scholarships for 30 current and former scholars at the College of Medicine. Past award recipients include Estelle Richman (2003), Leslie Anne Miller (2004), Dawn Staley (2005), Suzanne Roberts (2006), Risa Lavizzo-Mourey, MD (2007), Stephanie Naidoff (2008), Jane Pepper (2009), Eliana Papadakis (2010), Sara Manzano-Díaz (2011), Dianne Semingson (2012), Lisa Thomas Laury (2013), Laurada Byers (2014), Lynne Honickman (2015) and Reneé Amooore (2016).

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