

*ViewPoint* features candid conversations with prominent health behavior scholars. The column focuses on the human or interpersonal side of research and addresses such topics as how renowned researchers were initiated into the world of research, why they continue to do it, personal challenges encountered over the years, ingredients necessary to be a success as an investigator, key characteristics and qualities of inspirational mentors, sources of consternation, challenges that lie ahead, hot topics worthy of pursuit, and books and materials that are must reading. The intention is to share the viewpoints and thinking processes of our leading health behavior scholars. We hope that the column will be an inspiration to young and seasoned scholars alike.

---

Dr **Robert J. McDermott** is the Assistant Dean for Health Information and Communication at the University of South Florida College of Public Health and Co-Director of the Prevention Research Center, 1 of 23 funded by the Centers of Disease Control and Prevention. Dr McDermott has received more \$16 million in grants and contracts over the course of his career. He is prolific writer and has published 170 scientific articles, 50 book chapters, and 3 books. He is 1 of 35 invited professionals to be a founding member of the American Academy of Health Behavior and first elected president of the Academy. The American Association for Health Education (AAHE) named him Scholar of Year in 1999 and AAHE also earlier presented him with the Mabel Lee Award for early career achievement. In addition, he was the 2002 recipient of the William A. Howe Award, the highest award presented by the American School Health Association. For more information about Dr McDermott, see [www.ajhb.org/2000/24-1-10.htm](http://www.ajhb.org/2000/24-1-10.htm). Conversation took place on October 30, 2002. #0005

**Am J Health Behav 2004;28(1):87-96**

---