Jessie Hardges

*Staff Shining Star*

Jessie Hardges, Autopsy Supervisor, is honored with the staff shining star award.

Jessie began as an autopsy assistant during the summer when he was in high school in the early 1970s. After college graduation in 1978, he returned as a full-time autopsy technician, remaining here since and serving as supervisor for the last 30 years. Over the course of 5 decades, Jessie has taught several hundred pathology trainees the basics of autopsy techniques. He patiently answers their most basic or complex questions. His knowledge of human anatomy and skills for difficult dissections, complicated by existing pathology, has been passed on to young pathologists who never forget his guiding hand. Trainees are not the only beneficiaries of his knowledge, as attending pathologists also continue to seek out his expertise.

He has an unofficial role as a counselor, for all who have personal issues or just need a friend. His constant attention to detail ensures that the autopsy suite maintains a safe and professional environment. Behind the scenes, he takes care of all issues for permits, interacting with funeral homes and with families, in a gentle, compassionate, and humane manner. He facilitates the acquisition of tissue samples during autopsy for research. He oversees the use of autopsy specimens for resident and medical school education, and for community outreach, including demonstrating harmful effects of smoking on the lungs. His professionalism and dedication to the autopsy service are the attributes which define Mr. Hardges.