


Michael Manns winner of the 2022 UEG Lifetime Achievement Award

This year the UEG has awarded one of its most prestigious awards, the UEG Lifetime Achievement Award to Michael Manns. Michael is a gastroenterologist and current President of Hannover Medical School in Hannover, Germany. The award is bestowed on health professionals who made a profound impact on gastroenterology and dedicated time and energy to further the cause of the UEG. Well, Michael easily meets with these criteria. For starters, Professor Manns is an acclaimed scientist whose contributions truly have improved the lives of patients suffering from liver diseases. His research massively contributed to a better understanding of the diagnosis and management of autoimmune hepatitis and infectious hepatitis C. He is a well published author and his papers are widely read and cited. While this clearly shows that he steers the field and moves scientific borders, his advocacy work for UEG deserve to be highlighted. After knocking twice on the doors of the UEG he won over the hearts and minds of his peers with a compelling presentation and became the president-elect to serve as UEG's president in 2016 and 2017. It was Michael who coined the term 'Digestive Health' to encapsulate the broad variety of gastroenterological disorders in single tag line. This was a brilliant brainwave, and it really captures the UEG as an umbrella organisation which combines all leading European societies concerned with digestive health. UEG has since started a 'Digestive Health' Group, a platform of Members of the European Parliament that strives for prevention, treatment and better understanding of the causes of digestive diseases. But perhaps it takes a bit more than scientific achievements and taking leadership roles withing UEG to receive these accolades.¹ I would like to delve a bit deeper why I believe Michael is so successful in his many roles he has in his long career. If you want to achieve as a human being please look at Michael Manns. He is very communicative and just loves to engage with people. He is just a warm and welcoming person who radiates energy. He effortlessly makes contacts and wins people over by his congenial attitude. As a professional he connects people and creates (scientific) networks that opens up possibilities for others in his network to blossom. Good functioning networks are the prerequisites to obtain funding which is the oxygen to continue the effort.² He pushed for (the expansion) of the highly successful fellow exchange program which has blossomed since.³⁻⁵ One of his key traits is that he knows how to tell a story. He is a really excellent raconteur, and a master of the petite

histoire. We all know that stories build a connection but the reason why he excels is that Michael shares more of himself in the story. As a chair of National Societies Committee I had the honour to give back to back speeches with him during the party of the young UEG group. This was always rowdy business in front of lively attendees and he always impressed me with the ease of his talks and the connection he created with the audience. During his presidency he was a great supporter of the UEG Journal and he has contributed many fine pieces.^{6,7} He also mentioned time and time again that we should go for decisive studies such as randomised clinical trials. As the Editor-in-Chief of the Journal I am happy to say that we receive more and more reports on clinical trials.^{8,9} With such a successful track record you can ask yourself does he always pick winners? Well, not so sure here. Michael is a strong supporter of Hannover 96, the premier soccer team of this university town in Germany. Hannover '96 holds an uneven record of the past decade, with all the glory of winning games but also the misery that comes with relegation. Despite the downsides that come with rooting for this team he remains a loyal fan over the years. The authenticity that comes with him, adds to the great person Michael Manns is, rightfully bestowed with the 2022 Lifetime Achievement Award.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors have no conflicts of interest to declare.

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DATA AVAILABILITY STATEMENT

Data sharing not applicable to this article as no datasets were generated or analysed during the current study.

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