

In Memoriam

Norman J. Siegel, M.D.

Norman J. Siegel was, without a doubt, one of the world's leading pediatric nephrologists. He died suddenly on April 28, 2006 at the age of 63 while attending the meeting of the Pediatric Academic Societies in San Francisco. His contributions to pediatrics and to nephrology encompass a broad spectrum of topics that reach through all aspects of these specialties.

Norm, as he was called by his friends, colleagues and collaborators, was a native of Texas and a Phi Beta Kappa graduate of Tulane University. He attended medical school at the University of Texas Medical Branch in Galveston before coming to Yale in 1968 as an intern in pediatrics. Following his pediatric residency, he became the first postdoctoral fellow in pediatric nephrology at Yale, where, working with John Hayslett, he was among the first to study the significance of focal and segmental sclerotic lesions in pediatric patients with idiopathic nephrotic syndrome. In his second year of fellowship, to gain experience in basic science, he joined my laboratory where his life long interest in the pathophysiology of acute renal failure was born. Shortly thereafter, appointed an Assistant Professor of Pediatrics, he established an independent Section of Pediatric Nephrology in the Department of Pediatrics. He rose through the ranks rapidly to become a tenured full Professor by the age of 39. He excelled as a clinician, involving himself in every aspect of the care of his patients. His clinical investigations covered a wide range of topics in the areas of glomerulonephritis, lupus nephritis, minimal change disease and renal transplantation. In the laboratory he conducted research in the renal hemodynamics and the metabolic alterations of the kidney during acute renal failure. With Dr. Robert Shulman, he pioneered the use of nuclear magnetic resonance methods to assess adenine nucleotide metabolism of the kidney in vivo. On the basis of these metabolic studies, he demonstrated that the recovery from ischemic acute renal failure could be accelerated by the infusion of adenine nucleotides and that thyroxin had a beneficial effect on the recovery from toxic acute renal failure. These results stimulated his interest in the biochemical and cell biological mechanisms that underlie the renal epithelial response to injury. His cellular and molecular biological

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studies of the role of heat shock proteins in ischemic renal injury and in the tolerance of immature tubules to anoxic damage have provided insights into potential new therapeutic pathways for the management of acute kidney injury. During his very productive academic career, Norman published over 180 scientific papers in peer-reviewed journals and numerous chapters in textbooks. He was the co-editor of the 21st edition of the classic textbook, Rudolph's Pediatrics. He received many honors and awards, including the Mitchell I. Rubin Award for Distinguished Achievements in Pediatric Nephrology, the Founder's Award of the American Society of Pediatric Nephrology and the James Colangelo Achievement Award of the National Kidney Foundation of Connecticut. He was a distinguished visiting professor at numerous academic medical centers in North America and abroad.

Norm, an outstanding teacher and mentor, was beloved by medical students, pediatric residents and nephrology fellows. He had a special gift to take complex problems and translate them into easily understandable concepts. He nurtured the early careers of numerous postdoctoral fellows and pediatric residents who have continued on to faculty positions in this nation and abroad. His teaching went beyond the teaching of medical students and residents to the education of the parents of the children he cared for, making lasting impressions that have remained decades after their treatment.

In addition to his scientific and clinical skills, he was a conscientious and valued citizen of the Yale School of Medicine and the University. In the Department of Pediatrics, he served for many years as Vice Chairman and leader of the house staff program. He functioned as an acting Chairman on two occasions and served as the interim Chair following the departure of Dr. Joseph Warshaw. He was a leader in the wider medical school community and served as a member of the Board of Governors of the Yale Medical Group and chaired its Finance Committee. In addition, he spearheaded many Yale Medical Group initiatives and provided a broad institutional perspective that enhanced the progress of the school's clinical agenda. He led a committee that created a new faculty track that rewarded outstanding clinicians and educators and, most recently, he headed a school wide strategic planning process at the request of the Dean. On a national level, he served in a leadership capacity in many societies including the National Kidney Foundation, the American Society for

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Pediatric Nephrology, the American Society of Clinical Investigation, the International Society of Pediatric Nephrology, the Society for Pediatric Research, the American Pediatric Society and the American Board of Pediatrics. In 1997 he was elected to the Council of the American Society of Nephrology and in 2002, he became President.

Norm had many talents that extended beyond his medical career. Though he had left Texas many years before, he retained the relaxed hospitality of a Texan when he offered his guests his special Texas style barbecued spare ribs cooked in a special smoker imported from the Lone Star State. His culinary talents included a special ability as a master baker of breads. A connoisseur of the wines of the New World, he sought out and discovered small boutique wineries in California and in the many countries that he visited. A lover of Bulldogs, his most recent Bulldog "Genug", one of a long line of that breed, was a runner up to be chosen as the mascot for Yale University Athletics.

Generous with his time and abilities, cheerful and selfless, he was a loyal friend to many as well as a devoted husband to his wife Rise and a loving father to his children Andrew and Karen. We share with them their loss and express our gratitude for sharing Norman with all of us. His passing is an irreplaceable loss for his family and for us. We will keep his legacy, his leadership, his keen intellect, and his friendship in our memory. Knowing him has enriched our lives, and the Yale School of Medicine, his patients and the world of academic pediatrics will sorely miss him.

Michael Kashgarian, M.D.

Professor of Pathology and

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