

**MEMORIAL RESOLUTION OF THE FACULTY
OF THE UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON**

ON THE DEATH OF PROFESSOR EMERITUS RICHARD C. WOLF

Richard C. Wolf, emeritus professor of physiology, was born in Lancaster, Pennsylvania in 1926 and died in Madison on January 14, 2001 as a result of complications from surgery. He received his B.S. degree from Franklin and Marshall College in Lancaster and his Ph.D., in 1954, from Rutgers University. There he began his work on steroid hormones and growth hormones, which were to be the focus of his scientific career. After two years as a post-doctoral fellow at Harvard University, where he did his first studies on primates, Dick was recruited to the University of Wisconsin in 1957 as assistant professor of physiology. He was quickly promoted to tenure as associate professor and ten years later (1971), as professor of physiology, he became chair of the department, succeeding the distinguished W.B. Youmans. He performed exceptionally in that role and was responsible for hiring several faculty and for leading the transition from an almost exclusively teaching department to one that combined teaching with excellence in research. Dick recognized and acted on the need to improve the research standing of the department and to complement its traditional systems orientation with new focuses in molecular and cellular physiology and biophysics.

In his own research program, Dick concluded as early as the mid-1950's that non-human primates must be studied in order to fully understand human reproduction. To this end Dick established his laboratory at the UW Primate Center, where he trained many students and performed the research that produced more than 150 peer-reviewed publications on the endocrinology of reproduction. Among Dick's many significant scientific contributions:

- he established the rhesus monkey as an experimental model for the study of human pregnancy;
- he determined the effects of radiation on adrenal function in the infant primate and devised protective measures;
- he developed novel techniques and assays to monitor and assess ovarian corpus luteum activity and steroid metabolism in the pregnant rhesus monkey;
- he and his colleagues published a series of classic experiments throughout the 70's and 80's quantifying the hormonal regulation of ovarian folliculogenesis.

Several of Dick's graduate students described the meticulous attention to detail and methodologic accuracy that he emphasized throughout these studies. Dick was a "work-horse" scientist who fully appreciated the enduring value of carefully obtained data. He was also widely respected as a mentor who viewed and treated his graduate students as colleagues. His students' needs and education were his top priorities and ego was never a consideration.

Dick devoted an extraordinary amount of his time to leadership and support of the university community. Besides chairing the Department of Physiology, he chaired several influential committees in the Medical School, including the Educational Policy Council, the First Year Committee and several search committees. He was a superb teacher at the undergraduate level and in medical physiology, known for his organization, precision and approachability. In 1971, the School of Pharmacy named Dick the Outstanding Professor of the Year.

Dick Wolf's greatest single professional contribution to both UW-Madison and his field was his seminal role in the Endocrine Reproductive Physiology Research and Training Program based in the Primate Center. Dick was one of the founders of the program in 1963 and served as its director from 1968 to 1986. It was his goal in this venture to bring together scientists from many disciplines across the UW campus to focus on problems of reproductive physiology, emphasizing the use of the primate model.

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Dick's unselfishness and his uncanny ability to promote a spirit of camaraderie and cooperation were essential to this magnificent program, which continues to this day. During Dick's tenure, over 200 graduate and post-doctoral students in multiple disciplines and from throughout the world were mentored and financially supported by this hugely successful venture. Dick had a deep passion for this program and spent countless hours addressing programmatic issues and student needs, often to the detriment of his own research. This type of cross-disciplinary, cooperative venture epitomizes the collaborative approach to scientific research and teaching science that has contributed greatly to the excellence and strength of UW-Madison. As a career-long Badger, Dick Wolf embraced these principles to the benefit of students, science and the UW.

Dick was married to Marilyn Wolf for almost 50 years and was devoted to her and their two sons, Mark and Eric, and their grandchildren Kevin and Erin. He was an admirably ethical person who at every turn acted on his concern for the welfare and success of others. He enjoyed simple pleasures—good companions, good food, good books and golf. Through thick and thin, Dick was a great fan of Badger hockey and football. His very warm and caring nature and his personal integrity generated a supportive collegial atmosphere in the Department of Physiology that persists to this day. The excellence of teaching and research in the department, together with his outstanding research contributions and the insights and understanding gained by the thousands of students he taught, are Dick Wolf's legacies to our community.

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