
**Memorial Resolution of the Faculty of the University of Wisconsin-Madison
On the Death of Professor Emeritus Donn D'Alessio**

Professor of Population Health Science Donn D'Alessio, aged 82, died December 20, 2016 at his home in Madison. Donn's considerable contributions to the UW School of Medicine and Public Health spanned over three decades as a scientist, mentor, clinician, and department chair.

Donn received his MD from Cornell, completed a residency at UW and Illinois, received further training at the Center for Disease Control, and then returned to the UW Department of Medicine--Infectious Diseases in the mid-1960s. He began his UW career collaborating with Wisconsin Lab of Hygiene colleagues Alfred Evans and Elliot Dick examining the transmission of rhinovirus, influenza, and enteroviruses. His most significant scientific contributions stemmed from his collaborations with Catherine Allen, PhD with their examination of the seasonality of incident cases of Type 1 diabetes, as well as their investigation of Group B Cocksackievirus and Type 1 diabetes. This work led to the creation of the legacy Wisconsin Cohort, the Wisconsin Diabetes Registry Study. Donn, as principal investigator, teamed with Catherine, Mari Palta, PhD, Ron Klein, MD, MPH, and Steven Duck, MD to conduct their novel, NIH-supported prospective study of children, adolescents, and adults with Type 1 diabetes. Followed from diagnosis, their early investigations provided key evidence on the contemporary incidence of acute and chronic diabetes complications and their relationships to glycemic control, as well as on early markers for the development of eye and nerve complications associated with Type 1 diabetes.

Donn was Preventive Medicine (now Population Health Science) longest-serving department Chairman from 1981 to 2000. He assumed this role following the untimely death of John Rankin, MD (chair 1968-81) and at a time when the very existence of the department was under threat. Under Donn's "quiet leadership" the department expanded its faculty throughout the 1980's and early 90's to include epidemiology, biostatistics, and health care policy researchers while maintaining close ties with physiologists (John Rankin Laboratory of Pulmonary Medicine), the Laboratory of Hygiene, and State Department of Health. He spearheaded the formation of a unique MS/PhD degree in Population Health which was formally initiated in 1997, geographically united the faculty, and oversaw department research funding which ranked in the upper echelon of UW departments and included four long-standing, NIH-funded, population-based cohort studies.

Donn's colleagues commented on his multi-faceted leadership style with the following: "100% of the time positive", "always supportive", "passionate researcher and mentor", "excellent listener", "good friend", "always had my back", and "dapper and congenial in his wry way". Donn continues to be missed by his colleagues and students as a friend, mentor, and leader.

Donn is survived by his wife, Julie Hayward, three sons David (Traci), Mark (Kristin), and Greg, two step-daughters, Anne Latowsky (David Rohrbacher) and Claire Latowsky, six grandchildren, and two step-grandchildren.

Memorial Resolution Committee
Jerome Dempsey
Marty Kanarek
Tamara LeCaire
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