



IN MEMORIAM

Eli Gold, M.D.
Professor of Pediatrics, Emeritus
University of California, Davis School of Medicine
1920 — 2001

Dr. Eli Gold died in April of 2001 from complications of lymphoma at his home on Mercer Island, Washington. He is survived by his wife of 58 years, the former Adeline “Addie” Morson, and two sons, Jeffrey and Steven and their respective families. Dr. Eli Gold was a significant figure at the University of California Davis Medical Center. He combined great clinical astuteness with an ability to teach. He is well remembered as a vigorous, lively, congenial and generous man by his students, friends and colleagues.

Eli was born in New Haven, Connecticut and was educated in the New England public school system, eventually receiving a B.S. degree in bacteriology from the University of Connecticut in 1942. His education was interrupted by service in the U.S. Army, 1942-46. He made use of his bacteriology skills in a variety of stateside postings, eventually ending up with the US Army Respiratory Commission. He resumed his education and graduated from Western Reserve School of Medicine in 1950. He completed his postgraduate medical training in pathology and pediatrics in Boston at Children’s Hospital.

He returned to Cleveland in 1950 where he pursued a career in academic pediatrics. Over a 24- year period he rose in rank from instructor to full professor establishing himself as an infectious disease specialist, a gifted clinical teacher, and a child health advocate. He developed liaisons with the local Medical Society. In pursuing his own pediatric research interests, involving varicella zoster and cytomegalovirus, Dr. Gold also mentored several future pediatric chairmen in their respective fields of research. He was one of several very accomplished pediatricians whose mutual creativity was associated with the golden age of Pediatrics at the Cleveland Metropolitan Hospital and the Case Western Reserve School of Medicine.

He left Cleveland in 1974 to take on the challenges provided by the position as professor and chair of pediatrics at UC Davis. Pediatrics existed as a division within the Department of Medicine with a minimal faculty and few subspecialists, a small number of pediatric housestaff, and few pediatric beds. Dr. Gold negotiated a separate departmental status, thus facilitating administrative access to both the School of Medicine and hospital thereby gaining improved advocacy for children. More than a doubling of the pediatric faculty with diversity in subspecialty services and the expansion of the clinical programs resulted in the recognition of the department as an important pediatric referral center for Northern California. A Primary Care grant permitted further expansion of General Pediatrics and a doubling of the numbers of pediatric house officers. Dr. Gold’s reorganizing of pediatric training for students and housestaff resulted in an attractive training program with national recognition. He initiated a Child Life Program and encouraged support of the Child Abuse Services Council. Dr. Gold fostered liaisons with the Sacramento Pediatric Society and other community, county and statewide organizations concerned with the needs of children. His leadership skills put pediatrics on a solid footing as it embraced the stated departmental goals of excellence in patient care, education, and research.

Eli loved to be busy and despite long hours at the medical center, he returned home to begin working again on his outside interests.

He was a dedicated Davis swimmer and a devoted kosher pickle maker; a skill he developed while working in his parent's grocery store. Fascination with gardening also began in childhood and flourished in Davis where he quickly ran out of gardening space at his first home requiring a move to accommodate this passion. His venture into hydroponics to assure winter harvests, suffered a sudden setback when his shed and all his equipment, including his rototiller, were consumed by fire when his apricot drying project caused spontaneous combustion.

On a regular basis, Eli and Addie would arrange dinners for the department, successfully encouraging a deep sense of fellowship. As staff numbers increased, they divided the faculty into two groups, which led them to speculate whether they were on the A or B list. His years as department chairman at UC Davis were exciting. His encouragement of faculty and dedication to his department resulted in camaraderie.

Upon retiring to Seattle, Dr. Gold continued to work as clinical professor of pediatrics at Children's Orthopedic Hospital and Harborview Hospital. He was actively involved in the community, became a master gardener and a mediator in small claims court. Addie and Eli were devoted to one another and were genuinely interested in the lives of those with whom they worked and socialized.

One year after Eli's death, an endowment fund was initiated by a local Sacramento pediatrician with strong clinical teaching ties to the Department of Pediatrics, to honor Dr. Gold's accomplishments. Details regarding the Eli Gold Endowment Fund are available through Karen Charney, UC Davis Children's Hospital Advancement Officer, 4900 Broadway, Suite 1150, Sacramento, CA. (Phone number: 916-734-9618)

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