



IN MEMORIAM

Jerome S. Tobis, M.D.
Professor of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation, Emeritus
UC Irvine
1915 – 2012

The University and many of us personally lost a dear friend and extraordinary colleague when Jerome S. Tobis, Professor Emeritus of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation and Research Professor Recalled, died on February 3rd 2012. Jerry served the last 42 of his 96 years at the University of California, Irvine, and there was no one more dedicated to UCI, more productive in retirement, more creative, more gracious, more complimentary, and more skillful in entreating others to work in the cause of UCI, the School of Medicine, and its faculty, including the clinical faculty.

Jerry was born July 23, 1915, was raised in Syracuse, moved to Brooklyn in the great depression, and following a free public education, graduated from the City College of New York in 1936. He attended medical school in Edinburgh and at the Chicago Medical School where he graduated in 1943. He was one of the early diplomats of the American Board of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation, was Professor of Rehabilitation Medicine at New York Medical College and Albert Einstein College of Medicine, and Chairman of the Department of Rehabilitation at the New York Medical College and the Montefiore Hospital Medical Center.

In 1970, Jerry joined the UCI faculty as Professor and founding Chairman (until 1976) of the Department of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation. Following a sabbatical in 1979 in geriatrics at the University of Birmingham, England, he was founding Director of the Program in Geriatric Medicine and Gerontology at UCI. In 1986 Jerry became Research Professor, and following retirement was recalled annually. Jerry chaired the Ethics Committee at the UCI Medical Center from 1986 to 2000 and remained an active and revered member to the time of his death. He also founded the Ethics Journal Club, but taught ethics by example throughout his career.

Jerry founded an inpatient rehabilitation service for children in New York City in 1953, and established the first inpatient program for cardiac rehabilitation at the Montefiore Medical Center in 1963. He was co-author of a 1970 book "Cardiac Rehabilitation," the first on the subject.

He studied rehabilitation in nursing homes, musculoskeletal manipulation, psychobiologic interventions for aging, traumatic brain injury, and reduction of falls in the elderly. He was the principal investigator for the first scientific (well- controlled, double- blind) study to show the effectiveness of spinal manipulation in improving lower back pain. He wrote over 100 articles and several books including, as coeditor, a 2007 book on the religious, ethical, and political issues of the stem cell debate. He received a number of NIH awards which attested to the excellence of his research.

Amongst numerous honors Jerry was Physician of the Year for his work in rehabilitation in New York, President and subsequently Distinguished Clinician of the American Academy of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation, Distinguished Alumnus of the Chicago Medical School, Faculty member of Alpha Omega Alpha, and he received the Student Council Award for Outstanding Faculty Member of the College of Medicine, the Paul H Silverman Award for Ethics in Science, the Outstanding Emeritus Award, and most recently the Founders Award of the Susan Samueli Center for Integrative Medicine.

To summarize Jerry was a true triple threat in academic medicine: A superb teacher, an outstanding investigator, and he provided excellent care to patients, all to the very week of his death at age 96. He helped to found the Medical Committee for Civil Rights, and was an active list- advocate of universal single- payer health care. A remarkable man, a remarkable career.

E. J. Quilligan, M.D.

Ron Miller, M.D.