



IN MEMORIAM

Stanley van den Noort
Professor of Neurology
UC Irvine
1930 - 2009

Dr. Stanley van den Noort was the ultimate clinician- scientist, teacher and mentor. Simply put, he was not only the greatest neurologist I have known, but the greatest physician, I have had the pleasure to meet. He was world renowned for his clinical and scientific expertise in the human autoimmune demyelinating disease, multiple sclerosis (MS). Dr. van den Noort He received his M.D. from Harvard Medical School in 1954, followed by a Neurology residency and post- doctoral research training in Neurochemistry at Boston City Hospital. After 8 years on the faculty of Case Western Reserve University, Dr. van den Noort moved to UC Irvine in 1970 as Professor of Neurology. In short order, Dr. van den Noort was appointed Dean of the College of Medicine, serving 13 years from 1973 to 1986. In an unusual career step, but in continued service to the University, Dr. van den Noort then served as Chair of Neurology from 1986-1998. Dr. van den Noort 's academic accomplishments were numerous and include over 60 peer reviewed publications, 18 book chapters and serving as Principal Investigator on numerous NIH and society grants. He served as Chair of the Steering Committee (Betaseron) and the Safety and Advisory Committee (Copaxone) for two of the most pivotal therapeutic clinical trials in MS; both drugs now serve as primary Multiple Sclerosis therapies. His service to the community was also remarkable, serving on the advisory board of over 20 societies, including Chairman of the National Medical Advisory Board of National Multiple Sclerosis Society as well as Chairman of the International Federation of Multiple Sclerosis Societies.

However, this remarkable listing of accomplishments only partially conveys the true greatness of Dr. van den Noort. He combined incredible clinical skill and scientific discovery with unparalleled compassion and commitment to his patients. I doubt that I will see the likes of him again in clinical medicine. A small but telling example is the first day that I started my clinical activities at UC Irvine. I was in the Multiple Sclerosis clinic with Dr. van den Noort. It was ~6pm on a Friday afternoon after a long and full day of patients. A nurse came and told Dr. van den Noort of a patient with new symptoms. Without hesitation Dr. van den Noort directed the nurse to bring the patient into the clinic. It took another ~60 minutes for the patient to arrive. At the end of the visit, now close to 8pm, Dr. van den Noort provided both his pager and home phone numbers to the patient, instructing the patient to call over the weekend with any concerns. My jaw dropped. I was just out of residency training and the idea of providing one's pager and home phone number to a patient was a completely foreign concept. I soon realized that this was standard practice for Dr. van den Noort and his patients loved him for it.

Dr. van den Noort's clinical knowledge was unparalleled. He had such a detailed understanding of neurophysiology and methods to manipulate neuronal activity with medication; he routinely developed unique and highly effective drug combinations that relieved myriad neurological symptoms.

Another of Dr. van den Noort 's great virtues was his passion for scientific discovery and for protecting and supporting younger faculty. By helping to cover my patients when I was in my laboratory, he provided me the freedom and protected time to grow and develop my research. I can say without hesitation that without Dr. van den Noort, I would not have developed into the clinician- scientist that I am today.

Dr. van den Noort is survived by his wife of 55 years, June, five children and 8 grandchildren.

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