

Tribute to Dr. Jerry Tenenbaum

By Heather McDonald-Blumer, MD, MSc, FRCPC

Dr. Jerry Tenenbaum passed away on Thursday, July 6th, 2017. He succumbed to complications following surgery in late June. Jerry was known as a passionate rheumatologist who unreservedly threw himself into his work as a clinician, teacher, educator and mentor. He was a larger-than-life presence and he will be sorely missed.

Jerry was born in Germany and immigrated to Canada before his first birthday with his family settling in Toronto. He completed his undergraduate and medical school training at the University of Toronto (U of T), where he was admitted to the Alpha Omega Alpha Honour Medical Society. Jerry continued at U of T, completing his internal medicine training and his rheumatology residency, before moving to the University of Miami to complete two years of basic research in articular cartilage/osteoarthritis. He returned to Toronto to take a staff position in 1979.

While Jerry continued his research activities during his early career at U of T, he became increasingly involved in teaching, education and education administration. He held key leadership roles including those of Associate Dean of Continuing Medical Education, Director for Internal Medicine and Subspecialties and Director of the International Medical Graduate program for Ontario. He was recognized for his contributions and was granted Professor of Medicine status in 2002. He received multiple awards for his teaching excellence, including *Mount Sinai Hospital (MSH) Clinical Teacher Awards* on multiple occasions, the *Anderson Award* for outstanding contribution to the educational mission of MSH and UHN, the *Aikens Award* for Undergraduate Education and the *Department of Medicine Teacher of the Year Award*.

Jerry has spent the latter part of his career and life working in both Toronto and Victoria. He continued to see his



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patients in both offices – somehow managing the “commute” with apparent ease and grace. He also continued to teach within the Divisions of Rheumatology in Victoria and Toronto. He maintained his relationship with the U of T and was also appointed an Adjunct Professor in the Division of Rheumatology at the University of British Columbia. He has had an important and palpable impact on several generations of rheumatologists across the country.

Outside of medicine and rheumatology, Jerry was a great historian of all things related to the contemporary music scene and, in particular, was a Bob Dylan fan like no other. He was equally passionate and supportive of the Maple Leafs, and his optimism for their eventual comeback was ever present. But greater than all of these was Jerry's love of his family, who made him light up like nothing else. In addition to his mother, two sisters, and a large and connected extended family, Jerry leaves behind his partner, Lucretia van den Berg and Jerry's two sons and their families.

As one of Jerry's nephews so aptly said, “[Jerry] will be remembered for his work ethic, dedication to his patients and to teaching, promotion of his specialty, and amongst other things, his booming voice.”

The rheumatology community will most certainly miss Jerry's presence and contributions.

Heather McDonald-Blumer, MD, MSc, FRCPC
Division Director,
Rheumatology
University of Toronto
Toronto, Ontario