

Draft Obituary for Dr. Ralph Feigin

Dr. Ralph D. Feigin, one of the most renowned and revered figures in pediatric medicine and a fervent advocate for children's health, died today (August 14, 2008) following a courageous battle with lung cancer. Dr. Feigin was 70.

He is survived by his wife and partner, Dr. Judith Zobel Feigin; his children, Susan Feigin Harris and her husband Jon Harris; Michael Feigin and his wife Barbara M. Feigin; and Debra Feigin Sukin and her husband Dr. Steven Sukin; and his six beloved grandchildren.

For more than 31 years, Dr. Feigin served as Physician-in-Chief at Texas Children's Hospital and Chair of the Department of Pediatrics at Baylor College of Medicine. He also served Baylor College of Medicine as its President from 1996-2003. Under his visionary leadership, both institutions expanded dramatically and grew significantly in national and international stature, gaining prominence for pediatric patient care, basic research and training.

Dr. Feigin remained highly active in all three arenas until his death. He personally interviewed every aspiring pediatrics resident and conducted morning rounds at Texas Children's Hospital daily.

He was a tireless advocate for children in this country and around the world. His support led to greater immunization rates locally and across the nation. His advocacy for the Children's Health Insurance Program helped make that program a reality, giving millions of U.S. children the chance to have a medical home and better health. That lasting gift benefits the nation as a whole. He also supported the establishment of the Baylor Pediatric AIDS Initiative, a program that insures care for children with HIV/AIDS around the globe.

Even more profound than his contributions to pediatric medicine, Dr. Feigin will be remembered for his warmth, accessibility, unwavering commitment to excellence and extraordinary dedication as a teacher, mentor and personal friend. He affected and shaped the lives of thousands of students, training half the practicing pediatricians in Harris County today.

Ralph David Feigin was born in New York City on April 3, 1938. He received his A.B. degree from Columbia College in New York City in 1958 and his M.D. degree from Boston University School of Medicine in 1962. He completed a Pediatric Internship at the Boston City Hospital from 1962–1963 and served as a Pediatric Resident at the Boston City Hospital from 1963–1964 and at the Massachusetts General Hospital from 1964–1965. He subsequently completed a Research Assignment with the United States Army Research Institute of Infectious Diseases in Frederick, Maryland from 1965–1967. From 1967–1968 he served as Chief Resident of the Children's Service at the Massachusetts General Hospital.

Dr. Feigin joined the faculty of the Washington University School of Medicine in St. Louis, Missouri as an Instructor in Pediatrics in 1968. He was promoted to Assistant Professor of Pediatrics in 1969, Associate Professor in 1972, and Professor in 1974. He served as Director of the Division of Infectious Diseases in the Department of Pediatrics from 1973–1977 and as Director of the Bacteriology and Serology Laboratories at the St. Louis Children's Hospital from 1972–1977.

In July of 1977, Dr. Feigin was appointed and served as the J.S. Abercrombie Professor of Pediatrics and Chair of the Department of Pediatrics at the Baylor College of Medicine and Physician-in-Chief of Texas Children's Hospital until his death. In 2007, Dr. Feigin was selected to receive the John Howland Award from the American Pediatric Society, the highest and most prestigious award conferred by the American pediatric community for lifetime contributions that have improved children's health care worldwide. In that year, Dr. Feigin also received the John P. McGovern Compleat Physician Award and in 2008, was honored with the Children's Miracle Achievement Award. He has also been awarded the Distinguished Alumnus Award from Boston University School of Medicine; the Joseph W. St. Geme, Jr., Leadership Award, given by vote of all of the major clinical and research national pediatric organizations, (the Ambulatory Pediatric Association,

American Academy of Pediatrics, American Board of Pediatrics, American Pediatric Society, Association of Medical School Pediatric Department Chairmen, Association of Pediatric Program Directors; and Society for Pediatric Research), all of which he served as President; the Distinguished Physician Award from the Pediatric Infectious Disease Society; and the 1997 American Academy of Pediatrics Medical Education Lifetime Achievement Award. In 1995, Dr. Feigin was elected to membership in the National Academy of Sciences Institute of Medicine, and in 1998, received an honorary degree, Doctor of Humane Letters, from Boston University at the 150th Anniversary Celebration of the Boston University School of Medicine. Dr. Feigin won the Senior Class Outstanding Teaching Award at Baylor College of Medicine so many times that, in 1984, he was elected to the Outstanding Faculty Hall of Fame, and his name was retired from competition.

Dr. Feigin felt that it was extremely important for him to serve the scientific community at large and gave of his time and energy to every organization that had a leadership role in academic pediatrics, and he did everything he could to further the support of students who were accelerating basic and clinical research. Dr. Feigin trained more than 2,000 pediatricians and pediatric specialists. Of those, 2 went on to become medical school deans, 22 became associate medical school

deans, 10 became pediatric department chairs, and 180 became section heads of pediatrics.

Dr. Feigin was an internationally renowned expert in pediatric infectious diseases and has published over 500 articles or chapters in journals and books. In addition, he was the co-author and co-editor of numerous seminal textbooks in the fields of pediatrics and infectious disease, including: *Textbook of Pediatric Infectious Diseases* and *Oski's Pediatrics: Principles and Practice*. He was Associate Editor for Pediatrics, the official journal of the American Academy of Pediatrics and Editor, Pediatrics Division, for UpToDate, Inc. He served as Editor-in-Chief for the journal Seminars in Pediatric Infectious Diseases from 1989 until 2007. In summer of 2008, members of the Committee on Infectious Diseases of the American Academy of Pediatrics dedicated the 28th Edition of the *Red Book* to Dr. Feigin in recognition of his tremendous contributions to many editions of the Red Book and to the field of pediatric infectious diseases.

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