



## **In Memory of William Ernest Dismukes, MD**

**1939-2017**

William Ernest Dismukes, M.D., Professor Emeritus at the University of Alabama at Birmingham School of Medicine, passed away peacefully in Birmingham on June 19, 2017, following a prolonged illness. Dr. Dismukes is survived by his three children Amy Littleton, Jay Dismukes, and Scott Dismukes, their spouses, and 7 grandchildren.

“Dr. D”, as he was affectionately known, joined the faculty at the University of Alabama in Birmingham in the Division of Infectious Diseases in 1971, where he quickly emerged as a skilled clinician, teacher, investigator, and administrator. He served as Director of the Division of Infectious Diseases from 1990 until his retirement in 2006.

He also served as Infectious Diseases Fellowship Training Director from 1980- 1996. During that time he also served as Director of the Internal Medicine Residency Training Program, and Interim Chairman of the Department of Medicine at UAB on two separate occasions.

Bill was the original principal investigator (PI) of the NIAID Mycoses Study Group (MSG), and was responsible for leading the NIAID MSG for almost 30 years, from 1978 through 2006. Under his leadership, the MSG was involved in the publication of over 130 manuscripts, book chapters, reviews, and editorials, in addition to over 100 abstract presentations at national and international meetings. Bill’s interests in clinical mycology were very broad, and are reflected by the group’s most notable achievements that occurred under his leadership, including the first large randomized treatment trials for cryptococcal meningitis, histoplasmosis, coccidioidomycosis, blastomycosis, and candidemia/ invasive candidiasis. The culmination of his tenure was highlighted by the initiation of the first combination study for the treatment of invasive aspergillosis under the aegis of the MSG. Many of these MSG sponsored studies became and remain a gold standard to which many other clinical trials in infectious diseases are compared to the present day. Indeed, one could argue that these studies taught many of us in clinical research how to properly design and conduct a statistically sound randomized study in infectious diseases.

Throughout his professional career, Bill received countless honors recognizing his gifts as a teacher, clinician, and researcher. He was named among the Best Doctors in America from 1993 through 2003, and was recognized as the Best Clinical Teacher in the Department of Medicine on numerous occasions. He was active in the American College of Physicians, he was elected to Master in the ACP in 1996, and was elected as the Governor of the Alabama Chapter, serving from 1999-2003. In recognition of his contributions to the treatment of invasive fungal infections, Bill received the American Society of Microbiology Aventis Award in 2001. Finally, at his retirement from UAB, an endowed professorship was created in his name to honor his legacy.

Of supreme importance to Bill in his professional life was his role as a mentor for young and aspiring physicians. In over 35 years as a member of the Department of Medicine and Division of Infectious Diseases at UAB, Bill mentored and shepherded countless students, residents and fellows towards successful and fulfilling careers in medicine. Some he led into purely clinical roles, others into clinician educator roles, and others into clinical research. He did so unselfishly, always putting his trainees' interests before his own. His efforts were not limited to those at UAB, but extended to many colleagues and friends at distant institutions.

Dr. Dismukes will be remembered for many of his academic contributions, especially those he made towards developing clinical mycology into a viable academic pursuit. In looking at Bill's career, it is important to acknowledge that he, together with his colleagues, helped to put clinical mycology "on the map". For those of us fortunate enough to work closely with Bill, we will forever appreciate by his candor coupled with kindness, his giving heart, warmth, genuine concern for his colleagues, and loyalty as a friend. He will be deeply missed by all of us whose lives he touched.