

Memorial: Prof. Dr. Burhan (Mehmet Burhanettin) SAY (1923-2014)

Prof. Dr. Burhan SAY, one of the founding members of the Turkish Society of Hematology, died at 91 years of age in Tulsa, Oklahoma, USA, from multiple organ dysfunction on August 3, 2014.

Dr. Say was born in İstanbul on February 26, 1923 as the second child of his family. He attended elementary school in İstanbul, continued his education at Ankara Atatürk Lisesi, and graduated from the İstanbul Medical Faculty in 1946. He accomplished his pediatric residency at the Ankara (recently called Sami Ulus) Children's Hospital between 1947 and 1950. He repeated his pediatric residency between 1950 and 1953 at Hubbard Hospital in Nashville, Tennessee (USA), did a pediatric hematology fellowship at St. Christopher Hospital for Children under Chief Waldo Nelson at Temple University (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, USA) between 1953 and 1954, and served as an assistant professor of pediatrics at Meharry Medical College (Nashville) between 1954 and 1957. In 1957, he returned to Ankara and joined the İhsan Dođramacı (previously called Hacettepe) Children's Hospital of the Ankara University Medical Faculty in 1958. He served as a pediatric consultant at İhsan Dođramacı Children's Hospital for a year and became an associate professor in 1959; he completed his docent thesis on coagulation dysfunctions in malnourished children. He became chief of pediatric hematology in 1962 at the same institution and professor of pediatrics and hematology in 1964 at the Hacettepe Medical Faculty (of Ankara University and then Hacettepe University).

He continued his medical genetics education at Boston Children's Hospital (Harvard University) between 1966 and 1968 with a Fulbright scholarship. He then returned again to İhsan Dođramacı Children's Hospital, where he established the first pediatric genetics section in Turkey.

He returned to the USA in 1973 to the Oklahoma Pediatric Center as a director of the medical genetics section until 1982. Then he became the director of the H.A. Chapman Institute of Medical Genetics and clinical professor of pediatrics at Oklahoma University's Tulsa Medical Center until his retirement in 2005.

Dr. Say joined the Turkish Board of Pediatrics in 1950, American Board of Pediatrics in 1956, and American Board of Medical Genetics in 1982. He received the Dođramacı Science Achievement Award in 1975. Dr. Say was a member of the American Pediatric Society, American Association for

Achievement for the Advancement of Science, American Society of Human Genetics, American Medical Association, American College of Medical Genetics, Great Plains Clinical Genetic Society, Oklahoma Medical State Society, Tulsa County Medical Society, Turkish National Pediatric Society, International Hemophilia Society, Turkish Society of Hematology, European Teratology Society, and European Society of Pediatric Hematology and Immunology. He was also a member of the Executive Committee of the Great Plains Genetic Society Network, Board of Directors of the Children's Medical Center of Tulsa, Board of Directors of the H.A. Chapman Institute of Tulsa, Executive Committee of the H.A. Chapman Institute of Tulsa, Board of Directors of the Tulsa Association of Retarded Children, and Advisory Board of the March of Dimes in Tulsa.

He published over 275 articles (about 80 in Turkish) and wrote chapters for four books.

Dr. Say married Jean (Eugenia Elizabeth Jackson) in 1955, who died about 20 years ago. They had two sons.

Dr. Say's wisdom, tolerance, and love for his patients and friends were extraordinary. He never showed anger to anyone. He had a very intellectual mind and practical approaches to daily life and patient care. He was a role model in teaching and pediatric care. He was a brilliant pediatrician, hematologist, educator, and rejuvenator in clinical genetics. He diagnosed his own heart attack a day after having a medulla spinalis structure operation and called a nurse. The nurse replied that he was not a physician but rather a patient at that moment. Dr. Say replied to her: "Please call the doctor immediately, telling him his patient is having a heart attack."

He was also a great patriot and a helping hand to all Turkish physicians and researchers, giving them opportunities at his institution and helping them to continue their educations at appropriate institutions by arranging suitable conditions for them. He love to learn and share anecdotes. Everyone coming to him loved and respected him, especially my children. I lost my big brother; I wish him the best. I already miss his wonderful personality and thought-provoking anecdotes.

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