



Alex Margulis, MD, FACR

Dear Friends and Colleagues:

It is with a heavy heart that we share news that our former Chairman and friend, Dr. Alex Margulis, passed away peacefully at his home in New York late last night. He is survived by his loving wife, Dr. Hedvig Hricak, his son Peter, and his grandchildren.

Alex, as he preferred to be called, was a visionary leader who left an indelible footprint in the field of Radiology. He was beloved by physicians at UCSF, and carried a profound voice in the imaging community that resonated deeply both nationally and internationally. He touched the lives and careers of innumerable radiologists and scientists, and enriched us all with his humor, leadership and sagacious support of imaging science. He served at the helm of UCSF Radiology for 26 years of chairmanship that spanned 1963 to 1989, leading the department through an extraordinary era of rapid innovation in imaging. His overwhelming impact on the careers of countless radiologists in the United States and abroad and on the health of individuals everywhere cannot be overstated.

Alex was born March 31, 1921 in Belgrade in the former Yugoslavia. He was a student at the time of the German invasion in 1941. Alex did not relish talking about the war, but many of the lessons in leadership he learned as an officer he later shared with those who had the good fortune to be exposed to those that he mentored: "Be first in line on the battlefield but last in line for chow." After World War II, Alex came to the US, where he attended Harvard Medical School graduating in 1950. Following a residency in Diagnostic Radiology at the University of Michigan he joined the faculty at the University of Minnesota in 1954. He became a US citizen and served in the US Army Medical Corps at Fort Bragg, North Carolina. There he was a clinical radiologist and also served as chief of medical education. As such he was responsible for management of all of the hospital's medical programs, foreshadowing his later leadership career. After his military service he joined the faculty at Washington University in St Louis as an Assistant Professor, quickly rising through the ranks to full professor in 1961.

Alex was recruited to UCSF to chair the Department of Radiology in 1963 and served in that capacity for 26 years. During his tenure, UCSF rose to international prominence in imaging research, clinical care and education. His influence was felt throughout medicine. Many recall the plethora of articles authored by UCSF faculty in each month's edition of Radiology and other journals. Innumerable radiologists and scientists were trained and mentored by Alex and went on to take on the most important leadership positions at academic institutions across the U.S. and abroad. Alex was especially instrumental in his contributions towards building the fields of magnetic resonance imaging and molecular imaging. He enjoyed a unique aptitude for visualizing the future of what imaging and image-guided therapy would ultimately bring to clinical medicine and to the scientific community.

Following his extraordinary service as Chair of UCSF Radiology, Alex continued to provide institutional guidance as the Associate Chancellor (1989-1993) and then as Special Consultant to the Chancellor (1993-1999). In 2000, his wife, Dr. Hedvig Hricak, became the Chair of Radiology at Memorial Sloan Kettering in New York. Alex moved from San Francisco to join his wife in New York and became a Clinical Professor of Radiology at The Weil Medical College of Cornell University, where he continued as a crucial force to shape the field of Radiology until his passing.

UCSF was deeply important to Alex; he maintained close ties over the years returning for visits to his home in Tiburon, attending the gala event of the UCSF Department of Radiology and Biomedical Imaging's alumni organization – the UCSF Margulis Society –and serving as friend, mentor and colleague to many members of the UCSF faculty. Most importantly Alex was adored by his many resident trainees, who to this day revere him as a friend and mentor. “You will call me Alex,” were his first words to new residents upon starting their training. They viewed him as an avuncular father figure, always willing to help and encourage them in their endeavors during training and after leaving UCSF. In one-on-one encounters with his young faculty, Alex was consistently nurturing and available for counsel, whether issues that arose were personal or professional. He imparted invaluable wisdom on how to achieve goals, inspire others, and constructively interact with both colleagues and competitors.

Alex's leadership was fundamental to meteoric rise of the field of Radiology within academic medicine. He took risks and invested in untested ideas, supporting the dreams of his faculty

who went on to make astounding contributions to imaging in modalities including CT, MRI, ultrasound, ultrafast CT, PET CT, and SPECT CT. Under the aegis of Alex's hand, the department acquired the second head CT scanner in an academic institution in the United States, produced at that time by EMI. In 1971, it was an enormous risk of unproven technology, at a cost of close to \$500,000 (\$3.5 million today). The high profile of the ensuing research and publications, and the subsequent acquisition of a large bore EMI body scanner, convinced General Electric to install its prototype rotating-gantry scanner at UCSF. It became a mutually rewarding relationship for both GE Medical Systems and UCSF. Alex again undertook significant risk in his support for Leon Kaufman, PhD and Larry Crooks, PhD and their remarkable efforts to create the first commercially-available MR unit employing a supercooled magnet. Through this period of unparalleled discovery and innovation, Alex put the UCSF Department of Radiology on the map. The department gained international renown as UCSF rose to become a "required" destination for all leaders interested in enhancing the roles of digital imaging techniques. Alex was regarded by all as a master negotiator. There were simply none better! His competitive nature will be remembered well by all who encountered him on the tennis court. It was often a command appearance – he insisted that you meet him courtside by 6:30 or 7:00 am, depending on the sunrise! He may not have always been fast, but he was certainly an incredibly clever and intense competitor.

Alex was a founding father in gastrointestinal radiology and generously shared with Dr. Richard Marshak the early leadership of the new Society of Gastrointestinal Radiology that later merged with the Society of Uroradiology to become the Society of Abdominal Radiology (SAR). He was a co-founder of both the International Society of Magnetic Resonance in Medicine (ISMRM) and the International Society for Strategic Studies in Radiology (IS3R). He served as President of the Association of University Radiologists (AUR), the Society of Chairmen of Academic Radiology Departments (SCARD), and the California Academy of Medicine. During his academic career, he published more than 280 manuscripts and 21 books including his seminal work *Alimentary Tract Radiology* – the very first textbook on gastrointestinal radiology.

Alex's awards are too numerous to count. Several distinctions that were especially meaningful to him include eight honorary doctorates, the J. Allyn Taylor International Prize in Medicine, the University of California Medal, and the Gold Medal of the Radiological Society of North America. He was a member of the Institute of Medicine of the US National Academies, and a

foreign member of the Russian Academy of Medical Sciences and the Serbian Academy of Arts and Sciences. In 2014, he was appointed to the rank of Chevalier of the French Legion of Honor by the President of France for his role in educating most of the present leaders of French radiology during his years at UCSF.

Alex will be dearly missed by his many friends and colleagues at UCSF, Weill Cornell Medical College and throughout the world. He will be remembered as a brilliant, visionary, generous and caring leader who helped to elevate the UCSF Department of Radiology and Biomedical Imaging to pre-eminent international stature.

The UCSF Department of Radiology and Biomedical Imaging, together with the UCSF Margulis Alumni Society founded in his honor, will be holding a memorial service in the fall to celebrate Alex's remarkable life. More information will be shared when plans have been finalized.

William Dillion, MD, Susan Wall, MD,

David Norman, MD, FACR, and Christopher Hess, MD, PhD