TRIBUTE

David Knill: A Role Model in Science, and in Life

I had the great privilege to be David Knill’s colleague and friend, as well as his department chair. Dave’s passion, integrity, and collegiality showed through in all facets of his life.

Dave died in October in the prime of his career as a professor of brain and cognitive sciences and associate director of the University’s Center for Visual Science.

As a scientist, he was brilliant. He had a remarkable ability to see the core issues in a scientific question, and he was incredibly successful at developing simple theories and models that could account for a broad array of phenomenology regarding human behavior.

Dave will be remembered by his colleagues as a pioneer in applying the principles of Bayesian inference to problems in human perception, as a pioneer in applying the principles of Bayesian inference to problems in human perception, and a coach that has transformed the field. His integrity and transparency are a model for all young scientists to emulate.

Dave gave freely of his time and expertise—several of his colleagues around the world have contacted me to describe instances in which Dave went out of his way to provide them with useful feedback and suggestions.

Dave was passionate about educating students. Among his important contributions to the graduate program in brain and cognitive sciences, Dave developed a course to teach PhD students how to write grant proposals and how to navigate the grant submission process. Dave was a caring and devoted mentor to the graduate students and postdoctoral fellows in his laboratory, helping them through life challenges as well as scientific hurdles.

Perhaps most importantly, Dave always put family first. He was so proud of his sons, Ari and Josh, and he always had a big smile when talking about them. I enjoyed hearing stories about soccer games and bowling tournaments, among his sons’ many accomplishments. Dave knew how to maintain balance of work and family in his life, something to which we can all aspire.

David Knill’s time with us was far too short, but his impact will be disproportionately large upon the many people who benefitted from his personal and scientific influence.

—GREG DEANGElis

DeAngelis is a professor of brain and cognitive sciences, biomedical engineering, and neurobiology and anatomy, and chair of the Department of Brain and Cognitive Sciences at Rochester. The Department of Brain and Cognitive Sciences has established a website for friends, students, and colleagues to share remembrances of David Knill at www.forevermissed.com/david-knill/#about.
TRIBUTE

J. Daniel Subtelny: Orthodontics Pioneer

We all realized just how highly regarded J. Daniel Subtelny was on September 27, when hundreds of alumni, faculty, administrators, and friends arrived in Pittsford, New York, to celebrate his life. People came from Hong Kong, Iceland, Mexico, Korea, Canada, and all points in the United States to honor a man who dedicated his life to the profession of orthodontics as a practitioner, researcher, and educator.

It was standing room only during the memorial service. Sub, as he was known to most of his colleagues, was eulogized by several friends and family members. Everyone recalled his love for his wife, Joanne, with whom he wrote his early books on cleft palate treatment, as well as his zest for life, for learning, and for the Department of Orthodontics—which he chaired for 55-plus years. While Sub was the only individual to have received all four of the highest honors in the profession of orthodontics, he will be remembered for his devotion to helping us be better orthodontists and people. His legacy lives on in the hundreds of former residents he educated, supervised, and guided the research of—resulting in the publication of scores of important contributions to our literature.

His memorial celebration was punctuated by reminiscences of his Socratic method of teaching, his famous “Hot Seat,” and how it forced you to think about the questions you would face as a practitioner and your answers to them. Sub would always ask, “And what else?” until you were mentally pushed off balance and had to consider other options.

Active at the age of 92 when he died September 17, he was a vibrant educator until the end.

He will be remembered through the J. Daniel Subtelny Endowed Chair and Professorship, established by the Eastman Orthodontic Alumni Association and the University, which has been created to preserve his educational legacy in orthodontics, and, we hope, to capture the same verve and spirit that he showed in his remarkable career.

—Michael Spoon ’91D

 Spoon is an assistant professor in the Division of Orthodontics and Dentofacial Orthopedics at the Eastman Institute for Oral Health.

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