As many of you have heard, Dr Robert J Hall passed away on July 3, 2018. Some of you were fortunate to attend his funeral on July 12th at St Michael the Archangel Catholic Church. It was inspiring to see many generations of cardiologists he had trained and, therefore, many lives he had touched. The pictures and eulogies were a beautiful glimpse of the man, who had been such a pillar of the Texas Heart Institute through its formative and most productive years. If you did not have an opportunity to read his obituary, you can find it here.

He was truly an officer and a gentleman for our country, as well as an adored husband and father.

Dr Robert J Hall became the first Medical Director of the Texas Heart Institute when he arrived in Houston in 1969. With Efrain Garcia, he was a cofounder of one of the most prestigious clinical practices in the medical center, Hall-Garcia Cardiology. As an amazing teacher, he served as the first director of cardiology education at Texas Heart Institute/St Luke’s Episcopal Hospital. When I was a medical student, he taught the heart sound lectures to the core clerkship students rotating through St Luke’s. He declined being awarded the Attending Teaching Award so many times that, in 2002, the fellows named the best Cardiology Teaching Attending of the Year award after him. Past Robert J Hall Teaching Award recipients include:

2000 – Zvonimir Krajcer
2001 – Ali Massumi
2002 – Andrew Civitello
2003 – Kamal Gupta
2004 – Pranav Loyalka
2005 – Warren Moore
2006 – Mehdi Razavi
2007 – J Michael Wilson
2008 – Surendra Jain
2009 – Arup Achari
2010 – Gerardo Kalife
2011 – Mohammad Saeed and Raymond Stainback
2012 – Ali Massumi and Neil Strickman
2013 – Mehdi Razavi
2014 – Ali Massumi and Mohammad Saeed
2015 – George Younis
2016 – R David Fish
2017 – Stephanie Coulter
2018 – Reynolds Delgado

Dr Hall was also Editor-in-Chief of the Texas Heart Institute Journal for over 2 decades, and a reflective Journal article by Dr Denton Cooley in 2002 summarized Dr Hall’s achievements until his retirement. You can read that article here.

The conference center in the Denton A Cooley building is named for Robert Hall, and it is fitting that these master clinicians, cardiologist and surgeon, will forever stay together in the memories of patients and providers when cardiac care, education, and research are considered. The Texas Heart Institute Cardiac Society has been blessed to have him as one of our historical father figures, and countless clinicians and patients have benefited from the progress in education and advances he brought to the treatment of cardiovascular diseases.
The Yin and Yang of Cardiology Chiefs, Med/Peds Cardiology, THI Class of 2006

Training in a cardiovascular disease fellowship can be challenging. Completing two cardiology fellowships in adult and pediatric cardiology is an achievement. Such is the case for THICS’s two pioneers, Wayne Franklin and John Lynn Jefferies who from 2001 to 2006, completed a five-year training experience after combined internal medicine-pediatrics residencies. Upon completing their fellowship, both stayed at Texas Children’s Hospital as faculty and embarked on different paths.

Dr Jefferies worked in the realm of pediatric advanced heart failure and cardiomyopathy, exploring novel genetic therapies for early-onset cardiac conditions. He helped run the cardiovascular genetics clinic at Texas Children’s Hospital before moving to Cincinnati to continue that work. Dr Franklin founded the Texas Adult Congenital Heart Program, a subsection of pediatric cardiology aimed at caring for adult survivors of cardiac conditions—some requiring life-saving operations, and many needing repeat interventions. He expanded his care to TCH’s Pavilion for Women, organizing the adult medicine services at the maternity hospital.

The year 2018 marks another milestone in both of their careers. In June, Dr Jefferies was named Chief of Cardiology at the University of Tennessee Health Science Center, the same program from which he obtained his medical degree, and co-director for the newly formed UT Methodist Institute for Cardiovascular Science. In September, Dr Franklin starts as Co-Director of the Heart Center and Chief of Cardiology at Phoenix Children’s Hospital. No doubt, their leadership, forged through THI fire, will help these programs soar to new heights.

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Upcoming Events

SEPTEMBER 28, 2018
Robert Hall, MD Memoriam Celebration

OCTOBER 5-6, 2018
THI International Symposium on Cardiovascular Regenerative Medicine

OCTOBER 20-21, 2018
14th Annual Diabetes Symposium for Primary Care Physicians

DECEMBER 14, 2018
Cardiology Fellows Annual Holiday Party