

Obituary

Salvatore Joseph Enna, Ph.D.



Sam Enna, Emeritus Professor of Pharmacology at the University of Kansas, Missouri, sadly died in his sleep on 15th June 2023.

Sam received his BA degree (1965, Biology) from Rockhurst University, Kansas City, Missouri and both his MS (1967, Pharmacology) and PhD (1970, Pharmacology) from the University of Missouri – Kansas City. Sam expanded his capabilities and network of collaborators through a series of postdoctoral appointments. His postdoctoral training in pharmacology was completed at the University of Texas Southwestern Medical School in Dallas (1970-72), at F. Hoffmann La Roche in Basel, Switzerland in Alfred Pletscher's lab (1973-74), and the Department of Pharmacology and Experimental Therapeutics at Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine in Baltimore under the wing of Dr. Solomon Snyder as a National Institutes of Health Fellow (1974-76).

Following training, he spent 10 years on the faculty at the University of Texas Medical School at Houston in the Departments of Pharmacology and Neurobiology. While at the University of Texas and during his lifetime he continued to consult for many of the leading international pharmaceutical and biotech companies. He became Senior Vice President and Scientific Director of Nova Pharmaceutical Corporation in Baltimore before advancing to Executive Vice President from 1990 to 1992.

On returning in 1993 to Kansas City, Sam became the Chair of the Department of Pharmacology, Toxicology and Therapeutics at the University of Kansas School of Medicine. He later joined the Department of Molecular and Integrative Physiology before being appointed Associate Dean of Research and Graduation Education and was ultimately granted Emeritus Professor status in 2020.

The breadth of his scientific interests across the vast GPCR and ion channel receptor landscape is evident by his substantive contributions to basic and clinical psychopharmacology. His significant contribution to GABA_A and GABA_B receptor pharmacology provided important insights into drug action across a number of CNS therapeutic modalities.

Sam held many elective offices in professional pharmacological societies and was the recipient of numerous prestigious national and international awards and honours. In addition to President of the American Society for Pharmacology and Experimental Therapeutics (ASPET), he served two terms as Editor in Chief of the *Journal of Pharmacology and Experimental Therapeutics*. Over the years, ASPET has bestowed on Sam the John Jacob Abel, the Torald Sollmann and the Otto Kraye Awards for his accomplishments. Sam completed two terms as Secretary General then became President of the International Union of Basic and Clinical Pharmacology (IUPHAR). He rarely missed a meeting of the Nomenclature and Standards Committee (NC-IUPHAR), which produces the Concise Guide to PHARMACOLOGY. For the last two decades, Sam has been Editor in Chief of *Pharmacology & Therapeutics*, *Biochemical Pharmacology* and, for 10 years, the *Advances in Pharmacology* book series, among others. Sam has been recognized with the Daniel H. Efron Award from the American College of Neuropsychopharmacology, and a PhRMA Foundation Excellence Award. As President Emeritus of British Pharmacological Society (BPS), I was delighted when Sam was Elected Honorary Fellowship in 2015 for his long association with the BPS members and IUPHAR.

Besides his pharmacology passion, enthusiasm to travel and being an avid reader, Sam was an accomplished Dad joke teller. His favourite persona was based on Groucho Marx, as one notable BPS member who spent sabbaticals in his lab would testify (Professor Dave Kendall).

His legacy and enthusiasm for pharmacology will live on through the legions of students, co-workers, and colleagues across the globe. He visited pharmacology societies on every continent except Antarctica but mused when the Antarcticans would organise one. Sam's creativity, infectious lovable character and his sense of humour endeared him to the wonderful KUMC/ IUPHAR staff (Rosa Meagher, Lynn Le Count, Leigh Ann Arbuckle, Jennifer McNichols) who will dearly miss his indefatigable 'Duracell Bunny' energy.

Sam was the ultimate mover and shaker so his list of over 200 publications, two dozen books, editorship of seven journals, along with his many honours and accolades reads like a Who's Who of outstanding pharmacology leaders and legends.

In homage to his Sicilian heritage, I would like to close with - *Sam non lasciare mai che l'erba cresca sotto I suoi piedi (Sam never let grass grow under his feet)*.

The British Pharmacological Society wish to send their sincere condolences to his devoted wife Colleen and their three children and two grandchildren.

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