

Sanjiv Sam Gambhir

Sam moved from India to the United States with his family at a young age. He was an exceptionally brilliant student and matriculated at Arizona State University at the age of 15, graduating BS summa cum laude and inducted into Phi Beta Kappa.

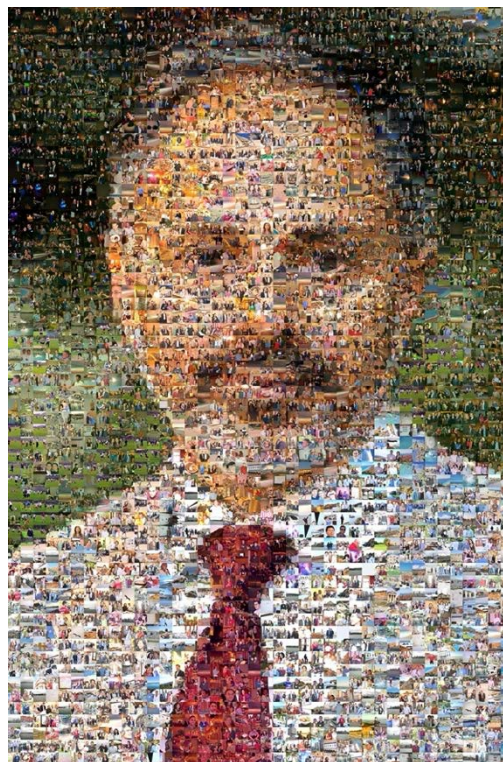
Professor Stuart Lindsay who was one of Sam's physics teachers at ASU described his recollections of him "I first knew Sam as an undergraduate in the first class I taught at ASU, back in 1979 when Sam was a senior at the tender age of 16. He politely corrected my mistakes and I used his homework sets as my grading template."

Sam was accepted to the MD-PhD Medical Scientist Training Program at the University of California Los Angeles (UCLA), graduating PhD in biomathematics in 1990 and 3 years later received the gold medal as the outstanding medical student when graduating MD.

The combined education and training in physics, biomathematics and medicine made his choice of Nuclear Medicine very fitting. He completed a residency in Nuclear Medicine at UCLA and entered the academic ranks there as an Assistant Professor of Molecular & Medical Pharmacology in 1994. He embarked on his career as an investigator, clinician and educator each of which is described below. Sam was promoted to tenured Professor in 2003 and in the same year was selected to be Chief of the Division of Nuclear Medicine and Director of the Molecular Imaging Program at Stanford (MIPS) with the title of Professor of Radiology. Six years later he received the endowed Virginia and D.K. Ludwig Professor for Clinical Investigation in Cancer Research.

Sam's arrival at Stanford University meant a new era for both clinical and research activities in Nuclear Medicine and Molecular Imaging. While at Stanford he mentored more than 150 graduate students and was a role model to all. His work ethic was Herculean, organized, focused, attentive to detail. His communication with trainees was supportive and nurturing as he individualized research pathways that would help with their future careers. Dr Gambhir inspired generations of young physicians and laboratory scientists to be better clinical and basic researchers.

In the course of basic science and clinical research he, along with his colleagues, published almost 700 peer-reviewed papers in diverse prestigious journals. Illustrations from several articles were highlighted on journal covers. Sam along with Peter Ell edited the comprehensive textbook Nuclear Medicine in Clinical Diagnosis and Treatment; he was an



author of Molecular Imaging Principles and Practice and the sole author of Molecular Imaging: A Primer.

Professor Gambhir won many honors and awards locally, regionally, nationally and internationally. He was elected to the National Academy of Medicine in 2008, the American Association for the Advancement of Science in 2014, and the National Academy of Inventors in 2016.

Sam was an inspiring educator. This is epitomized by being awarded the Basic Science Teaching Award by the Radiology residents at Stanford in 2018, a very rare recognition for the head of a large clinical department. He always managed to make students strive to learn, often with a hint of irresistible humor. Over 2 decades he lectured to large audiences at venues throughout the world and his ability to take very complex subjects and make them interesting and understandable was widely acknowledged and appreciated.

The majority of scientists and physicians across the globe “knew” Professor Gambhir through his scientific publications and presentations. However, those who really knew the person did so through personal contact. If we had to define Sam in one word it would be “class”. He was always a gentleman, no matter how busy he was, he always had time to speak with anyone. He was modest, thoughtful, sensitive, gracious and generous. Each year Sam and Aruna held a welcoming party for incoming residents and fellows in their beautiful home in Portola Valley where the new trainees could meet faculty under a happy, non-threatening environment that set the scene for their upcoming years.

Sanjiv Sam Gambhir will be remembered affectionately by everyone who came in contact with him, through the huge body of his published research, the legion of medical and laboratory scientists he trained and nurtured and now the Sanjiv “Sam” Gambhir Award at the EANM Annual Meeting.