In Memoriam

Thomas S. Frank, M.D., 1957–2002

Our dear friend and colleague, Thomas S. Frank, died unexpectedly on July 10, 2002 as a result of a cardiac arrhythmia. Tom was well known to all of us, having been a founding member of AMP, a faculty member in pathology at the University of Michigan, and, more recently, Medical Director and Vice President for Medical Services at Myriad Genetic Laboratories in Salt Lake City. Tom is survived by his wife and two young sons. He will be greatly missed by the molecular pathology community.

Tom was born in Cincinnati, Ohio, and grew up in a suburb of St. Louis, Missouri, where he was acknowledged as the “most talented” senior in his class yearbook. After obtaining a B.A. in biochemistry from Northwestern University, Tom did his M.D. training at Washington University School of Medicine, followed by a residency in anatomical and clinical pathology and a year of surgical pathology fellowship at the University of Pennsylvania. Tom also managed to squeeze in a year of basic molecular biology training at Penn.

Tom's professional career is entwined with the Association for Molecular Pathology (AMP). Many of us who counted Tom as a friend and colleague met him through this organization. He was an influential founding member, and because of him the organization was quick to recognize the revolutionary (at that time) new application of molecular diagnostic techniques for predisposition testing of familial cancers. Tom's influence was truly global. Those of us involved in any aspect of *BRCA* testing relied on his expertise and wise counsel to help us with difficult cases, complex pedigrees, unusual DNA sequence results, and the many ethical dilemmas surrounding them. Tom had an unparalleled scientific and societal understanding of this testing, and the ability to convey its intricacies. To hear one of his lectures on the subject or receive his prompt call back addressing an urgent question in that soothing voice of his were among the great rewards of working in this field. This combination of skills is not easily replaced, which is one reason why Tom's loss has sent shock waves through the clinical genetics community just as it has through the molecular pathology community.

But as great as this loss is to us professionally, it is the close personal friendship with Tom that will be missed most. Tom's personal qualities—gentleness, humor, compassion, and energy—were well known to all who came in contact with him. This same gentleness and compassion was also extended to the high-risk cancer patients he advised, their

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counselors and physicians, and the world at large. Tom had a boundless enthusiasm for life, family, and medicine. One look at his photo will give you a sense for his personal warmth and energy, reminding one of an enthusiastic cherub from a Renaissance painting. He brightened every room he walked into, and scarcely can be remembered without a smile on his face.

AMP is still a young organization, and to lose one of our own in this way, especially someone equivalently young on a human scale and so professionally vital and widely loved, is tragic beyond words. Tom's life and work and untimely death will be long remembered by all of us associated with AMP. Perhaps the most lasting memorial of Tom that we can provide is the incorporation of his love of molecular pathology and his compassion for patients and colleagues into our own daily work, and, as we do, to think of his inimitable smile and self-effacing demeanor, so that perhaps a bit of that magic will shine upon those with whom we work and serve.

Donations may be made in Tom's memory to the following organizations:

The Sudden Arrhythmia Death Syndromes (SADS) Foundation, 508 E. South Temple, Suite 20, Salt Lake

City, Utah 84102. Toll-Free: 800-786-7723, 1-800-STOP-SAD, Local: 801-531-0937, Fax: 801-531-0945. For online donations, contact <http://www.sads.org/donations.html>.

The Children's Center, 1855 East Medical Drive, Salt Lake City, Utah 84112. Tel: 801-582-5534.

Additionally, Myriad Genetics, Inc. has established an undergraduate scholarship fund at the University of Utah in Tom's memory. Contributions may be sent to:

Thomas S. Frank Memorial, Development Office, University of Utah, 201 Presidents Circle, Room 304, Salt Lake City, Utah 84112-9902.

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