In Memoriam

Karen Snow-Bailey, Ph.D., 1961–2006

It was truly a sad day for all of us on hearing of Karen Snow-Bailey's unexpected death on October 10, 2006. Karen was well known to so many of us, as she was an active member of the Association for Molecular Pathology (AMP). She is survived by her beloved family: her husband Richard, her son Nicholas, her parents, a brother, and two sisters.

Although born in England, Karen spent much of her life in New Zealand, a place of which she spoke frequently and always fondly. Karen's early education occurred at the University of Auckland, Auckland, New Zealand, where she received her B.Sc. in Biochemistry and Cell Biology in 1983 and her Ph.D. in Cellular and Molecular Biology in 1989. This was followed by postdoctoral training in the Department of Cellular and Molecular Biology in Auckland and in Clinical Chemistry (1989–1991) and Molecular Genetics (1991–1993) in the Department of Laboratory Medicine and Pathology at the Mayo Clinic, Rochester, MN. In 1993, Karen joined the medical staff at the Mayo Clinic, where she was responsible for codirecting the Molecular Genetics Laboratory in the Department of Laboratory Medicine and Pathology.

From the beginning, Karen had a presence in the laboratory that everyone could feel, appreciate, and enjoy—she was bright, enthusiastic, warm, gentle, and kind. She jumped into this new arena of Clinical Molecular Genetics without hesitation and made early and significant contributions to the field of fragile X syndrome. Her academic presence and productivity in the field continued to flourish. In addition, Karen made significant contributions to clinical practice and education both at Mayo and nationally. Her professional career was especially entwined with the AMP, an organization that she was deeply fond of and committed to. She served on and chaired numerous committees, and it was through this organization that she met many of her close friends and colleagues. It was also through this organization that many of us had the opportunity to work with and learn from her.

In 2002, Karen returned to New Zealand to be closer to family and became an international presence. Importantly, she began to have a tremendous influence in the development of diagnostic genetics services both in New Zealand and Australia. Taken from Prof. Stephen Robertson, NZ branch president of the Human Genetics Society of Australasia, "Karen served on the council and numerous committees for the Human Genetics Society of Australasia with competence and care for those she was representing. New Zealand genetics and, more widely, the Australasian community of clinicians and scientists

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engaged in the delivery of genetics services have lost a leader of great talent and ability."

Karen was a scientist, an educator, and an artist. She leaves many friends around the world, but especially in Rochester. We will all miss Karen as a colleague, as a mentor to many, as an individual that had a vision for the future, but most importantly, as a warm and compassionate friend who cared for others. Her loss to family, friends, colleagues, and the community is tragic beyond words. I share with you an ancient Gaelic verse spoken by Dianne Webster at Karen's memorial service:

Deep peace of the running wave to you.
Deep peace of the flowing air to you.
Deep peace of the quiet earth to you.
Deep peace of the shining stars to you.
Deep peace of the infinite peace to you.

Stephen N. Thibodeau

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