In Memoriam Kuan-Teh Jeang (1958-2013): Retrovirologist Par Excellence and Founding Editor of *Retrovirology*

Karen Beemon,^a Ben Berkhout^b

Department of Biology, Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, Maryland, USA^a; Laboratory of Experimental Virology, Department of Medical Microbiology, University of Amsterdam, Amsterdam, Netherlands^b

Kuan-Teh Jeang, M.D., Ph.D., (Teh) died suddenly and unexpectedly on the evening of 27 January 2013 at the age of 54, to the shock of his many friends and colleagues. Teh was an energetic and passionate virologist and a true scientist of the world. During his extremely productive research career at the NIH, he contributed to our understanding of the human retroviruses human immunodeficiency virus type 1 (HIV-1) and human T cell leukemia virus type 1 (HTLV-1) and their interactions with cells. He was also very active in disseminating scientific information to the international community. Teh founded the open-access journal *Retrovirology* in 2004 and was its editor in chief for 10 years. *Retrovirology* was the first open-access virology journal, and it has risen rapidly to have one of the highest impact factors of all virology journals, a source of great pride for Teh. A *Frontiers in Retrovirology* conference commemorating the 10th anniversary of *Retrovirology* will be convened in Cambridge, England, in September 2013 in Teh's honor.

Teh was an active member of the *Journal of Virology* (JVI) editorial board for 15 years, as well as a founding editor of *Cell and Bioscience*, an associate editor of *Cancer Research*, and an editorial board member of many other journals. He also published dozens of papers in JVI. Despite his busy schedule, Teh rarely declined a

request to review for JVI, and his reviews were always thoughtful, insightful, and prompt. He also edited six books and coorganized numerous international meetings in China, France, England, and the U.S. Teh received numerous awards, among them the Norman P. Salzman Memorial Mentoring Award in Virology in 2005 and the Dale McFarlin Award from the International Retrovirology Association in 2011. He was elected an Academician of Academia Sinica in 2008 and a Fellow of the American Academy of Microbiology in 2011.

Teh was a strong and early proponent of open-access publishing and was named Open Access Editor of the Year in 2010 by Biomed Central. He also promoted diversity in scientific publishing, and the *Retrovirology* editorial board was truly international. Teh was also a strong advocate for more leadership positions for Asian-American scientists. He served as president of the Society of

Published ahead of print 3 April 2013

Address correspondence to Karen Beemon, jvibeemon@jhu.edu.

Copyright © 2013, American Society for Microbiology. All Rights Reserved.

doi:10.1128/JVI.00823-13

Chinese Bioscientists in America (SCBA) in 2011-2012. He also helped create the SCBA journal, *Cell and Bioscience*, in 2011 and was founding editor. Teh's daughter, Diana, took the photograph above at the SCBA Conference in Guangzhou, China, in 2011.

Teh was born in 1958 in Taichung, Taiwan, the youngest of three brothers. His family moved to Libya when he was 5 and to the U.S. (Texas) in 1970, after Qaddafi seized power in Libya. Ambitious from an early age, Teh started college at MIT when he was 16. After two years there, he transferred to the Johns Hopkins University, where he received his B.A. in 1979 and his M.D. and Ph.D. in 1984 in an accelerated program. His Ph.D. thesis work on cytomegalovirus gene expression was carried out in the laboratory of Gary Hayward at the Johns Hopkins School of Medicine. Teh did his clinical residency at Iowa.

In 1985 Teh became a medical staff fellow at the NIH in the lab of George Khoury, who became his role model. In the Khoury lab, Teh studied viral transcription and enhancers and began to work on HTLV-1. After Khoury's untimely death in 1987 of lymphoma, Teh moved to the Laboratory of Molecular Microbiology at NIAID. He served as chief of the Molecular Virology Section there for nearly 20 years. He cofounded the Khoury Lectureship Series at the NIH and was honored to give the 2012 George Khoury Lecture last October on "Nuclear Damage and Aneuploidy: Human T Cell Leukemia Virus Transformation of Cells." Like his mentor, George Khoury, Teh was a fantastic mentor and leaves a legacy of more than 40 postdocs, who now have positions in the Netherlands, Italy, France, Spain, Japan, Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Canada and throughout the U.S.

Teh worked at the bench until 2004, when he founded *Retro-*

virology. He also collaborated extensively and had a real talent for bringing people together. He published over 250 scientific papers and many reviews, book chapters, and editorials. His cutting-edge work has been cited more than 14,000 times and focused mainly on human retroviral transcriptional regulation and the mechanisms of transformation by HTLV-1. His lab made the seminal discovery that the HIV-1 TAR element at the 5' end of the transcript is an RNA hairpin that acts as an RNA enhancer activated by Tat. This finding changed our ideas about transcriptional regulation and led to the development of RNA therapeutics for AIDS. He also pioneered studies on the role of microRNAs and long non-coding RNAs in retroviral replication. Another major research area concerned the mechanisms of transformation by HTLV-1. Teh showed that the HTLV-1 transcriptional activator Tax induces genomic instability that contributes to oncogenesis in infected T cells by disrupting the DNA damage response, mitotic checkpoints, and centrosomal duplication.

In addition to his career in science, Teh was a family man, married for almost 30 years to Diane Jeang, whom he met as a fellow graduate student at Hopkins. He is survived by his wife, who is a D.V.M. and a consumer safety officer at the FDA, and three children, David, Diana, and John.

Although Teh worked very hard 7 days a week, he also enjoyed making breakfast for his family, running four miles daily, traveling, and playing tennis and chess. His tennis gear was always ready in his car trunk. He was witty and humorous and a great speaker, with many keynote talks to his credit.

With Teh's passing, virology has lost an enthusiastic champion and a major voice for its cause.