Biographical Feature

Josephine Morello, Ph.D.

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She was “a true pioneer in the profession and field of clinical microbiology” and “an incredible mentor for so many from young professionals in the field to medical students to nursing students—the list could go on and on.” These statements were only a few of the phrases that came to colleagues’ minds when asked to describe Josephine A. Morello, Ph.D., D(ABMM). “Jo,” as she likes to be called, was born, raised, and educated in Boston, MA, and attended Simmons College, where she received her baccalaureate degree in 1957. (As an aside, Jo’s tried-and-true noteworthy Boston accent was a trademark!) She went on to Boston University, where she received her master’s degree and then her Ph.D. in 1962. Subsequently, Dr. Morello held various positions at Simmons College and Boston University School of Medicine as well as a research associate at Rockefeller University in New York City. However, she began her lifelong career in clinical microbiology as a postdoctoral resident in medical microbiology for 2 years (1966 to 1968) in the College of Physicians and Surgeons at Columbia University in New York.

After completing her postdoctoral work in clinical microbiology under the tutelage of Dr. Paul Ellner, Dr. Morello became a diplomate of the American Board of Medical Microbiology in 1969. The significance of her certification cannot be underestimated. As noted by Paul Granato, Ph.D., a lifelong colleague and friend of Dr. Morello, “In doing so, Dr. Morello represented the first of her gender to be accepted into an approved clinical microbiology training program and soon after, became the first woman to earn certification by the American Board of Medical Microbiology in 1969. Given these achievements, Dr. Morello represented a true pioneer in the profession and field of clinical microbiology.”

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Dr. Morello assumed her first position as an assistant professor of microbiology at the College of Physicians and Surgeons at Columbia University. Subsequently, she was recruited to the University of Chicago in 1970, where she assumed the position of director, clinical microbiology laboratories, at The University of Chicago Hospitals, a position that she would hold until 1994. During her tenure at the University of Chicago, Dr. Morello was promoted to associate professor of pathology and medicine in 1973 and professor, pathology and medicine, in 1978. Anyone who has ever worked with Dr. Morello knows and respects her attention to detail, perseverance, and dedication to her discipline. These exemplary qualities were recognized by the university when Dr. Morello was made both director of the hospital laboratories at the University of Chicago Hospitals and vice chair of the Department of Pathology in 1993, positions that she would hold until her retirement from the University of Chicago in 2001.

Dr. Morello has had a distinguished career with many achievements. Her long and productive scholarly work included peer-reviewed publications on pathogenic *Neisseria* species and, importantly, sentinel work with automation for the clinical microbiology laboratory. Clinical microbiologists have reaped the benefits of her work in automation, as it has now become mainstream in clinical microbiology practice. In addition to this work, Jo Morello has authored numerous book chapters and textbooks.

While her research accomplishments were amazing, Dr. Morello's legacy in clinical microbiology goes well beyond this work. Described by Paul Granato as her "crowning achievements" were Dr. Morello's services as the founding editor in chief of *Clinical Microbiology Reviews* in 1987 and a founding coeditor of the *Clinical Microbiology Newsletter*. These achievements of Dr. Morello cannot be overstated. As so eloquently declared by Judith Domer, Ph.D., Dean Emerita, Appalachian State University, "Talk about an impact on the medical microbiological world! Who among us would not like to be remembered for being the founding editor of a journal that in 2012 (latest figures available for impact data) was ranked number 2 in the world of over 100 microbiological journals! Jo Morello was the founding editor and guiding force behind *Clinical Microbiology Reviews* for the first 10 years of its publication history." Those, including myself, who were fortunate to have worked with and to have been mentored by her on this journal were indeed most fortunate. Her editorial prowess and knowledge base have made these two publications an incredible educational resource for clinical microbiologists. As Mary Jane Ferraro, Ph.D., Director, Clinical Microbiology, Massachusetts General Hospital, shared, "Jo had high standards in everything she touched, from her clinical and administrative duties, to her many roles for ASM, and, of course, as an Editor-in-Chief. Although CMN was not a formal, peer-reviewed publication, she behaved in the same way as she did while editor-in-chief of ASM's *Clinical Microbiology Reviews*. She was not only rigorous about the quality of content, but also personally performed very detailed copy editing for everyone's issue. I became convinced that she had memorized all 240 pages of the *Council of Biology Editors Style Manual*. Always polite but firm and clear, she tried her best to whip the rest of us into shape, and we eventually succumbed because we respected her standards." I too owe so much to Jo Morello for sharing her incredible wisdom, her ability to organize, her endless patience and support, and, most amazing, her editorial skills. Similar thoughts were voiced as well by Lynne Garcia, M.S. "She is one of the major contributors to our field, and many of us owe a great deal to her for

her guidance, both professionally, and as part of a working group. We are grateful for her many contributions to the field of clinical microbiology and hope we have been able to continue her commitment to excellence."

Dr. Morello has received numerous awards and honors during her long and distinguished career, including Fellow, American Academy of Microbiology (1973 to the present), The Pasteur Award from the Illinois Society for Microbiology (1988), the American Society for Microbiology (ASM) Sonnenwirth Memorial Lecturer (1991), the Tanner-Shaughnessy Award from the Illinois Society for Microbiology (1992), the Gold Key Award, University of Chicago (2001), and Doctor of Human Sciences (Honorary) from Simmons College in 2007. However, regardless of how extraordinarily busy Dr. Morello was with her academic and service commitments at the University of Chicago and her significant editor responsibilities, she gave even more of her expert input and time for the American Society for Microbiology. She served on the American Academy of Microbiology Committees on Professional Affairs in Clinical and Public Health Microbiology, Postdoctoral Educational Programs, its board of governors, and the Distinguished Service Award Committee. She also served on the American Board of Medical Microbiology's Standard and Examination Committee, Microbiology Section, and was a board member. In addition to all these committees, Dr. Morello served on numerous ASM committees, including the Council Policy Committee, the Divisional Group Representative, the Annual Meeting Program Committee, and the Publications Board, to name just a few. Because of her herculean contributions, Dr. Morello was awarded ASM's first Distinguished Service Award and the Professional Recognition Award, American Board of Medical Microbiology. In addition to these numerous ASM activities, Jo Morello played key roles on an officer level for the Chicago Medical Mycological Society, the Illinois Society for Microbiology, the International Society for Clinical Laboratory Technology, the National Registry of Microbiologists Committee, and Sigma Xi at both the local and the national levels. This lengthy list of Jo Morello's contributions to the profession and discipline of clinical microbiology is not even all-inclusive.

To conclude, it is only fitting to mention Jo's lifelong partner for over 45 years, her husband, Robert Butz. It was due to a chance encounter in a parking garage near the University of Chicago that this wonderful and loving relationship began. As mentioned by Paul Granato, "Jo would be the first to admit that many of her professional successes and achievements would not be possible without the support and understanding of her devoted husband, Bob." Today, both Bob and Jo are enjoying their retirement in Florida. And I will ask, does it not surprise you that Jo Morello serves an essential and key role as editor emerita for the *Clinical Microbiology Newsletter* and is now the editor of a monthly publication for her retirement community? Suffice it to say, old habits are hard to break, which, in Jo's case, is a good thing.

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