Special Issue in Honor of Robert B. Nussenblatt, MD, MPH

Chi-Chao Chan,^{1,2} Khalid F. Tabbara,³⁻⁵ and H. Nida Sen¹

THIS SPECIAL ISSUE serves as a Festschrift in honor of Robert B. Nussenblatt, MD, MPH (1948–2016), a pioneer in uveitis and ocular immunology. Dr. Nussenblatt was a world-renowned ophthalmologist, laboratory and clinical investigator. He was also our teacher, mentor, colleague, and friend. Dr. Nussenblatt held a medical degree (MD) from the State University of New York, Downstate College of Medicine (1972) and a master's degree in public health (MPH) from Johns Hopkins University (2007). After he completed his residency in ophthalmology at New York University, he came to the National Eye Institute at the National Institutes of Health (NIH) for a postdoctoral fellowship in 1977 and subsequently remained at NIH for his entire career (see Introduction by Gery).^{1,2} Dr. Nussenblatt applied knowledge gleaned from his passionate clinical practice to inform his basic research and develop therapies to be tested back in the clinic. This special issue contains 14 articles written by his colleagues, friends, former fellows, and students who pay tribute to his influence not only as an outstanding physician scientist but also as a mentor known both for his visionary translational research and his warm generosity. The article by Smith records the history of cyclosporine, the first immunomodulatory medication specifically targeting T lymphocytes that was systematically studied as a treatment for noninfectious uveitis. Thanks to Dr. Nussenblatt and his colleagues, systemic immunosuppression is now the standard of

care for management of noninfectious uveitis. The cyclosporine story exemplifies the environment of innovation and collaboration that he fostered. Other articles present and discuss advances in the diagnosis and treatment of ocular inflammatory and related diseases, both infectious and noninfectious, with a focus on novel approaches in disease mechanisms and management. One can find Dr. Nussenblatt (Bob)'s footprints of wisdom in all of them.

References

1. Snyder, A. Robert Nussenblatt. *Lancet*. 388:24, 2016.
2. Sen, H.N., Belfort, R., Jr., Chan, C.C., Lee, R.W.J., Rosenbaum, J.T., and Holland, G.N. Obituary. Robert B. Nussenblatt, MD, MPH (1948–2016): extraordinary clinician-scientist and educator. *Am J Ophthalmol*. 169:300–302, 2016.

Address correspondence to:
Dr. Chi-Chao Chan
Laboratory of Immunology
National Eye Institute
National Institutes of Health
10 Center Drive, 10/10N222
Bethesda, MD 20892-1857

E-mail: chanC@nei.nih.gov

¹Laboratory of Immunology, National Eye Institute, National Institutes of Health, Bethesda, Maryland.

²Zhongshan Ophthalmic Center, Sun Yat-sen University, Guangzhou, China.

³The Eye Center and The Eye Foundation for Research in Ophthalmology, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.

⁴Department of Ophthalmology, College of Medicine, King Saud University, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.

⁵The Wilmer Ophthalmological Institute of The Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine, Baltimore, Maryland.