

Dr. Prabodh K. Gupta (1937-2020)



AIPNA fondly remembers late Dr. Prabodh Gupta, MBBS, MD, an AIPNA member and Emeritus Professor of Pathology and Laboratory Medicine at the University of Pennsylvania and a legend in the field of Pathology and Cytopathology.

Born in India, Dr. Gupta received his medical degree and pathology training at the All India Institute of Medical Science in New Delhi. He completed his training and clinical fellowship at the Massachusetts General Hospital in Boston and the Johns Hopkins Hospital in Baltimore. Subsequently, he returned to India and established a cytopathology laboratory in New Delhi. He then joined the faculty at Johns Hopkins, working with Drs. John Frost and Yener Erozan. He started his career at the University of Pennsylvania Medical Center in 1988 as Professor and Director of Cytopathology and Cytometry. He served the Department of Pathology and Laboratory Medicine as Director of Cytopathology with excellence and distinction for over 25 years.

A member of the American Society of Cytopathology for almost five decades, Dr. Gupta served on numerous committees and chaired several including the Budget and Finance, Awards, Editorial and Publications, and Nominating Committees. He served as a member of the Executive Board (1987-97), Vice President (1993-94) and President (1995-96). During his presidency term he laid out the framework

for the electoral process, which has given a broader segment of the ASC membership an opportunity to participate in the governance of the Society. In recognition of his great contributions to the field of cytopathology, Dr. Gupta received the highest honor of the ASC in 2001, the Papanicolaou Award.

Deeply committed to the education of trainees and staff, he created a line of multiple generations of world class pathologists, cytopathologists, and cytotechnologists. To acknowledge his dedication and longstanding service to the Department, the HUP Cytopathology signout room was renamed in honor of Prabodh K. Gupta in 2015. A testament to his clinical expertise is being listed among the top 1% pathologists in the country by US News and World Report and as an America's Top Physician numerous times, and being named a "Super Doctor" in Philadelphia in 2013.

Here we share some anecdotes and personal stories from AIPNA members about Dr. Prabodh Gupta as we take inspiration from his highly accomplished yet humble life -

*"Dr Gupta was visiting as a faculty for the annual Hopkins course in 1998 (where I was a cytology fellow). I was struck by the deep love and friendship that extended beyond cytopathology, between Dr. Gupta and my mentor (Dr. Yener Erozan at Hopkins) and brought home the simplicity, humbleness and joy of work that suffused their personalities. And during the microscopy session, I recall that once when Dr. Gupta put a Pap smear on the stage--the entire registrant body seemed to move away from where they were, jostling to be next to him and listen on to his words of wisdom! It was like they could not help it and were drawn to a lamp. Those were simple times. A great but humble man looking at a slide on a single headed microscope. No fancy telepathology equipment or attached monitors etc. But when he spoke, everyone took notes." By Dr. Srinivas Mandavilli, M.D.*

*"I knew Prabodh since 1980. He willingly became a member of the 'Friends of India' informal group put together by me to plan voluntary teaching sessions in India. Later I used to meet him at the annual conference of ASCP. In the off hours during the conferences, I enjoyed his company over a drink and yes, what a jolly good and lively fellow he was, besides being an accomplished Cytopathologist. Because of his busy schedule and his individual voluntary teaching sessions in India he could not join us in the ICP-AIPNA courses, but he kept in touch with me to know about the activities." – By Dr. Vijay Joshi, M.D.*

*"It was interesting to listen to him (from our offices) from several months before leading up to our trip to Paris. We were staying in the same hotel (Darshana and I, Prabodh and Jeane and Yener) for IAC conference – a short walking distance from Hotel to convention center close to Arc De Triumph. Had a wonderful time going*

sightseeing with him. At this IAC conference he received the Maurice Goldblatt award and gave a talk on his life journey - From Patla to Paris.” – By Dr. Nirag Jhala, M.D.

*“I came to know Prabodh in 1971 when I was a resident at AIIMS and he had returned to India after his training at Boston. Initially I sought him to get advice about my desire to come to the US to gain research experience. It soon evolved into friendship. I was awestruck by his kindness and genuine desire to help. His advice was very valuable in preparing me for research opportunities in the US. From that time onwards he remained my mentor. Whenever I had academic success he would call and congratulate me. Despite his own stature, he remained humble and caring. The last time I met him was at the retirement celebration of his career at University of Pennsylvania. It was held in an ornate hall in Philadelphia and was full of people. I suspect there were more than 200 people at this reception. Many of us spoke to offer our tributes. We remained in touch almost till the very end. The last text message I sent to him was about 3 weeks before his sudden death. He will be missed by many.” – By Dr. Vinay Kumar, M.D.*

*Dr. Clevenger who is well known for his translational research in breast cancer and trained with Dr. Gupta as his fellow said – “There are 3 things you can say about Dr. Gupta – 1. You had to know actinomyces cold, 2. You had to gear up every day for your “review” of 20+ full trays of pap smears and 3. Behind every great man is a great woman – Jean was a wonderful partner for Prabodh and was extra kind to us fellows”.*