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In Memoriam

Charles G. Orosz, Ph.D. January 9, 1949–August 7, 2005

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In early August, the transplantation community lost one of its most important mentors and most original thinkers at the very young age of 56. Charles G. Orosz was the patriarch to a loving family and to the medical community; he is survived by his wife, Nancy, and children, Matt, Kate and Molly, as well as by a great number of investigators that he mentored during the early (and sometimes, later) stages of their careers in transplantation biology. He was known by many as a kindred spirit.

Following his undergraduate degree, Charley served 2 years' active service in the U.S. Navy as a Quartermaster and was discharged with Honor in 1973. He performed his Ph.D. research in Jim Finke's lab at the Cleveland Clinic investigating mechanisms generating the development of cytotoxic lymphocytes. He went on to Fritz Bach's lab at the University of Wisconsin in 1978 to begin his career in transplant immunology and then moved to the University of Minnesota. In 1983, he began his academic career in the Departments of Surgery and Pathology at the Ohio State University, where he pioneered the use of limiting dilution analysis to probe T-cell mobilization *in vivo*. Charley was the first to explore the complexity of the *in vivo* compartmentalization of the allograft-induced immune response and the role that the graft's vascular bed played in the process. Promoted to Professor at Ohio State in 1995, he worked with great distinction; he was instrumental in the development and establishment of the Ohio State University Comprehensive Transplant Center and became the Deputy Director of Research at its initiation.

Charley's research explored many areas of transplant biology. Fascinated by the nature and intensity of the allograft-induced immune response, he developed techniques to monitor the response systemically as well as within the graft. He was also very interested in how the alloimmune response was regulated. This led to his development of the 'trans-vivo DTH assay' that is being used in many laboratories to monitor the presence of donor-specific reactivity and its regulation in transplant patients. More importantly, he realized that problems of allograft acceptance versus rejection involved biochemical and physiological processes that were outside the focus of mainstream research in transplantation. With his remarkable insight, Charley realized that the consequence of alloreactivity and tissue injury led to wound healing and remodeling of the graft, resulting in the development of fibrosis and vasculopathy. During the Hume Lecture, which he gave at the 1998 American Society of Transplant Surgeons Annual Meeting, Charley proposed that investigators needed to go beyond looking at the induction and activation of individual components of the alloimmune response and to begin looking at the activity of networks of allograft-induced components of the response. The complexity of the immune response to allografts became the major focus of his work from that time on.

Charley Orosz was much more than an accomplished investigator in transplantation science. He cared very deeply about the course and progress of the field of transplantation and demonstrated his commitment through service and endless energy. He served as a member of a NIH study section as well as an ad hoc member of many study sections and review panels. He was on the editorial boards of many journals and authored numerous commentaries and review articles. He was the Chair of the Basic Sciences Committee of the American Society of Transplantation and was a member of the Immune Tolerance Network Review Board since its inception. As Director of the Tissue Typing Laboratory at Ohio State, Charley was also deeply committed to the improvement of diagnostic evaluation of transplant patients. He was a member of the Board of Directors of the American Society for Histocompatibility and Immunogenetics (ASHI) from 2001 to the present and was the President of ASHI this year. In consideration of his many contributions to ASHI and to the field of transplant diagnostics research, Charley was bestowed ASHI's Distinguished Scientist Award this year.

In our minds, one of Charley's greatest accomplishments was his commitment to and success in mentoring scientists working in transplantation biology. He trained many people as undergraduate and graduate students as well as Ph.D. and M.D. fellows, continuing to assist their career development once they had left his laboratory. Furthermore, he took an interest in people outside of his laboratory who were getting their careers up and running. By bringing young investigators together to establish productive collaborations, he selflessly pursued the goal of helping

junior investigators and furthering the field. Always generous with his time, he served as a sounding board for the ideas of many. Webster defines 'mentor' as a trusted counselor or guide—Charley personified this definition.

An outstanding facet of Charley's personality was his creativity. A gifted artist and a craftsman, he made Christmas presents for each member of his laboratory each year. However, this creativity was not limited to his hobbies—he used it very effectively in his career as well. He did not want to limit thinking and investigation to alloreactive T cells and mainstream issues in transplantation. He clearly thought 'outside of the box'. For instance, he was extremely interested in how the allograft responded to injury and immunological attack, as opposed to focusing only on players of the immune response. He realized that this response was critical to long-term graft outcome. To this end, Charley reached out to investigators in other disciplines to facilitate a cross-fertilization of ideas and to bring fresh thought processes to the field of transplantation. He organized the First International Symposium on the Etiology and Pathobiology and Transplant Vascular Sclerosis. He also proposed the establishment of an annual regional transplant immunology meeting which would facilitate interactions and the free exchange of ideas and technologies between labs. This idea evolved into the annual Erie (now Great Lakes) Transplant Forum, which will hold its sixth meeting this fall. Charley was clearly the driving force behind the organization of this regional meeting and his enthusiastic participation will be missed.

Professor Charles Orosz touched many, many people both professionally and personally. The transplantation community has lost a great scientist, mentor and dear friend. As we remember what he gave and taught us, we are faced with the challenge to continue to think about problems in the field beyond the bounds of narrow focus and to generously provide attention to our trainees and colleagues with the dedication and enthusiasm that Charley personified.