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In Memoriam
FREDERIC S. FAY
June 5, 1943–March 18, 1997

Fredric S. Fay, 54, Professor of Physiology and Pharmacology at the University of Massachusetts Medical School and a member of the Center for Molecular Medicine, died unexpectedly March 18, 1997, in Halle, Germany where he was presenting a paper to the German Society for Cell Biology. He was born in New York city, the son of Claire and Herbert Fay. His parents emigrated from Germany in 1937 to escape Nazi oppression. He graduated from the Bronx High School of Science in 1961 and then attended Cornell University, where he graduated cum laude with distinction in all subjects and was elected to Phi Beta Kappa. Dr. Fay received his Ph.D. in Physiology at Harvard University, where he studied the mechanism of contraction of muscle cells as a Samuel A. Levine Fellow of the Massachusetts Heart Association. He then became one of the founding faculty members at the newly established University of Massachusetts Medical School in 1970. At UMMS, his seminal research on the function of smooth muscle cells provided the basis of modern understanding of how these cells contract and opened a new field of investigation that has attracted scientists around the world. He also pioneered the development of the digital imaging microscope, which allows researchers and clinicians to study living cells in new ways, paving the way for life-saving insights on how those cells work. His laboratory has received international recognition and has been visited by distinguished scholars from Europe, Asia, and the Americas. During his 27 years at UMMS, he mentored numerous medical students, graduate students, and postdoctoral fellows who have become faculty members at universities throughout the world. At UMMS, he was the first member to be recognized by the NIH with a Research Career Development Award. Dr. Fay received numerous awards and research grants, including the Telegram and Gazette 2000 Enterprise Award in 1991, the Admiral R. Earl Award of the Worcester Engineering Society, and the Glaxo Cardiovascular Award. His accomplishments include over 100 publications in leading scientific journals. He will be sorely missed by his wife, Dr. Madeleine Fay, Endocrinologist, Fallon Clinic; his sister, Louise Fay Bergman; his sons, Dr. Andrew Fay and Nicholas Fay, resident physicians at UMMC; his daughter, Isabel Fay; and his grandchildren, Sarah, David, and Julia.