

Fred F. Kadlubar: In Memoriam (1946–2010)

Christine B. Ambrosone



With the recent death of Dr. Fred Kadlubar, the cancer research community lost a dedicated leader, and many scientists around the world lost a valued friend and colleague. Fred's intense scientific curiosity propelled him in his research, and his contagious excitement about science was an inspiration for those who had the good fortune to work with him. His work laid much of the foundation for molecular epidemiology in cancer, and his contributions to our understanding of drug and carcinogen metabolism pathways contributed much to toxicology and carcinogenesis.

Dr. Kadlubar received his doctorate in chemistry/biochemistry at the University of Texas at Austin. He went on from there to the McArdle Laboratory for Cancer Research at the University of Wisconsin in Madison, where he received postdoctoral training in the laboratory of James and Elizabeth Miller, known for their extensive work and expertise in carcinogenesis. This tenure in the Miller laboratory, and his subsequent research, provided Fred with a unique perspective on the historical development of the field of carcinogenesis.

From 1976 to 2006, Dr. Kadlubar conducted research at the National Center for Toxicological Research (NCTR) in Jefferson, Arkansas. He served as Director of the Division of Biochemical Toxicology (1979–1989), Director of the NCTR Office of Research (1987–1995) and Director of the Division of Pharmacogenomics and Molecular Epidemiology (1995–2006). After retiring from NCTR, Kadlubar served as Professor and Chairman of the Department of Epidemiology in the Fay W. Boozman College of Public Health and Director of Research in the Winthrop P. Rockefeller Cancer Institute. During his early career, Kadlubar greatly elucidated the metabolic pathways for aromatic

and heterocyclic amines, and was a leader in determining the effects of variability in key metabolic enzymes, particularly N-acetyltransferases and CYP1A2, on function and ultimately on cancer risk. He conducted focused work on the detection of carcinogen-DNA adducts in tissue and made important contributions to standardization of work in adducts in cancer research. Kadlubar was one of the early investigators in the development of the field of molecular epidemiology, and the role of gene-environment interactions in cancer etiology. As noted by Curtis C. Harris, Chief of the Laboratory of Human Carcinogenesis at the National Cancer Institute "Fred's expertise in metabolism of xenobiotics and genetic polymorphisms helped to lay the foundation of molecular epidemiology." To enhance cross-disciplinary communication and collaboration in this growing field, Kadlubar was co-founder and first Chair of the Molecular Epidemiology Group of the AACR, founded in 1998, and an early editor for the journal *Cancer Epidemiology, Biomarkers & Prevention*.

Kadlubar was broadly recognized across disciplines for his scientific contributions to toxicology, biochemistry, carcinogenesis and molecular epidemiology. His success as a scientist was likely fueled by his insatiable curiosity and thirst for knowledge. He was unparalleled as a mentor, inspiring not only with his enthusiasm for research, but also offering numerous opportunities for career advancement for junior investigators. He loved the outdoors and it likely influenced his career advice to me as I was first starting out with him: "Kid, you've got to think of your research like a farmer – with fields that you are harvesting now, others you are fertilizing, and others where you are just preparing the soil." These words still reverberate as the wisest mentoring advice ever received. Fred will be remembered by so many for his numerous scientific contributions, his enthusiasm and generosity, and for his guidance and mentoring of the next generation of leaders in cancer research.

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BLOOD CANCER DISCOVERY

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