Introduction

On January 24, 2014, Nancy McCartney-Francis died before completing revisions for her manuscript, which is published in this edition of the *Journal of Leukocyte Biology* [1]. Because this manuscript was very important to Nancy, I have finalized her revisions to ensure its publication on her behalf as a testament to her efforts in this study and her life-long career in the field. In addition, this memorial section for Nancy highlights her many accomplishments and contributions in the field of leukocyte biology.

**IN MEMORIAM: NANCY MCCARTNEY-FRANCIS 1950–2014**

Nancy McCartney-Francis, Ph.D., a NIH immunologist, died January 24, 2014, at the age of 63 in North Potomac, MD, USA, from complications of systemic lupus erythematosus. Dr. Francis joined the NIH in 1981, and at the time of her death, she was a member of the NIDCR, NIH, in Bethesda, MD, USA. She leaves behind a legacy of scientific and personal accomplishments and also a multitude of colleagues, friends, and family who celebrate her life and mourn her loss. She was predeceased by her husband and parents.

Nancy was born June 5, 1950, in Bridgeport, NE, USA. She received her undergraduate education at the University of Kansas, where she graduated Phi Beta Kappa; her master’s in microbiology at The University of Texas at Austin, where she also obtained her Ph.D. in microbiology in 1980. Her doctoral dissertation, which focused on Ig genetics: regulation in the expression of polymorphic structural genes, under the mentorship of Dr. W. J. Mandy, primed her for her subsequent sojourn to the laboratory of another expert in this field—particularly in rabbit immunochrometry, immunogenetics, and molecular immunology—Dr. Rose G. Mage at the NIAID, NIH, who trained with Elvin Kabat, the founder of modern immunochrometry. In 1985, she joined my Laboratory of Immunology at the NIDCR, where she remained for nearly 30 years in what became the Oral Infection and Immunity Branch until I retired, at which time (2012), she joined the Craniofacial and Skeletal Diseases Branch.

Much of her research focused on TGF-β and immune function, inflammation, and mechanisms of host defense, with special relevance to autoimmune diseases. Among her earliest contributions to this then new field of the role of TGF-β in immunity was our collaborative demonstration with the Drs. Anita Roberts and Michael Sporn laboratory (National Cancer Institute) that TGF-β is an extremely potent chemoattractant, a *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* USA study cited >1000 times. Her pioneering observations also advanced our knowledge of the NO pathway that is now appreciated to be instrumental in innate and adaptive immunity with implications for targeted therapeutic approaches. Her research interests evolved to encompass host-pathogen interactions, most recently, exploring the involvement of TGF-β and secretory leukocyte protease inhibitor in protection against *Leishmania major*. Nancy made noteworthy contributions to the biomedical literature on innate immunity, autoimmunity, and confounding roles of TGF-β in immune function as the author of numerous research publications, review articles, and book chapters, as well as an invited speaker at national and international scientific meetings.

Her spirit of dedication and cooperativity framed her involvement in and leadership of multiple committees; orchestration of institute core facilities; and training, supporting, and assisting other investigators and students. Nancy was a superb and inspiring mentor, being patient and kind while instilling students and fellows under her watchful eye with her passion for scientific inquiry, technical expertise, excellence, honesty, and importantly, excitement for good data. She enthusiastically promoted their successful career development, taught them that preparation is key, and opened doors of opportunity, influencing the lives of many. Students she trained went on to graduate schools, medical schools, and one even joined the ranks of professional baseball, all armed with an arsenal of scientific and personal survival skills. As Dr. Jose Vargas, a Rhodes Scholar and now a cardiologist at MedStar George-

**Abbreviations:** NIAID=National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, NIDCR=National Institute of Dental and Craniofacial Research

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1. Correspondence: NIDCR/NIH, 30 Convent Dr., Bldg. 30, Room 106, Bethesda, MD 20892-4352, USA. E-mail: umwahl@mail.nih.gov
town University Hospital aptly stated, “She was my very first research mentor and a truly phenomenal person”.

Nancy received other deserved recognition, honors, and awards for her work and selfless support of others, including those from the American Cancer Society, a National Research Service Award, a NIAID Special Achievement Award, the National Institute of Dental Research Scientific Director’s Award, and multiple performance awards. She received special commendation from Georgetown University Medical Center for her continued participation in their MS in Biochemistry and Molecular Biology intern program. She was a member of the Society for Leukocyte Biology and American Association of Immunologists, as well as other professional societies.

Her genuine concern for others, graciousness, warmth, insightfulness, and fun-loving spirit emerged whether in or out of the lab and was appreciated by all who knew her. She was a true team player and galvanized those around her. Beyond her life in science, Nancy had a passion for service and community and was actively involved in her church, where she was a remarkably talented musician—the organist—and a source of vision and action. She also loved art, craft fairs, and all forms of music. She never gave up in life despite her declining health and will be remembered for her stoic resilience in facing a severe disease that gave her continued suffering.

For those of us who had the privilege of knowing Nancy as a remarkable colleague, mentor, and friend, she will be profoundly missed. In addition to her scientific achievements, Nancy will be remembered for her beautiful smile, her musical gifts, her quiet tenacity, and her friendship. It is especially disheartening to lose someone who has so much to give.

REFERENCES


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Memorial: Nancy McCartney-Francis, 1950–2014

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