

## Faculty News

### In Memorium: Teri Liegler, PhD

*October 10, 2018*

As those in our HIV community mourn the passing of our dear colleague, Teri Liegler, PhD, professor in the Division of HIV, ID and Global Medicine, we wanted to share information about services being offered and the memories that many have of Dr. Liegler.

*A memorial will be held at Beach Elementary School, 100 Lake Ave, Piedmont, CA 94611, on Sunday, October 28, from 12 - 2pm. Dr. Liegler and her family requested that any donations made are in support of emerging investigators, both faculty and staff, as they develop their careers. Please note -in memory of Teri Liegler,- when making any donations [1].*

Dr. Liegler battled glioblastoma for the last year and a half in a way that was uniquely Teri - with insight, forthrightness, and an unwavering dedication to her work, family, colleagues, and the field of HIV. The Director of the Laboratory of Clinical Virology based at Zuckerberg San Francisco General Hospital for many years, researchers and their work flourished under her guidance. A member of the AIDS Research Institute Executive Committee, she helped shape the trajectory of HIV priority areas at the University, and guided considerations that would most positively impact the HIV community of UCSF. Universally, the professional memories of Teri's colleagues are intimately woven with warm personal reflections.

A compassionate clinician educator, Teri was motivated to fight the HIV epidemic in San Francisco in the late 1980s. She signed on as a post-doctoral fellow at the Gladstone Institute under Warner Greene, studying the pathogenesis of the virus.

-Teri was truly committed to helping to end the AIDS pandemic. She never lost sight of that goal, always bringing great commitment and energy to her work,- remembers Dr. Greene.

Teri emerged as a national leader in virology and laboratory science, and worked closely with investigators at partner facilities like the Blood Systems Research Institute, ushering in generations of investigators. -When I arrived at UCSF in 2004, Teri was friendly and welcoming, standing out even among the congenial UCSF crowd [with her] dedication to making UCSF and the world a better place,- said Dr. Philip Norris.

The breadth of her research and her appreciation for the interdisciplinary nature of HIV made her notorious among clinicians as well.

?I worked with Teri for many years, starting in the Women?s Interagency HIV Study. She was gracious, kind, wicked-smart, hard-working, and a total inspiration. I am going to miss her so, so much,? says Ward 86 Medical Director, Dr. Monica Gandhi.

Her impressive portfolio prompted her appointment as Director of the UCSF-Gladstone Center for AIDS Research Core Virology Core, where she pioneered methods for detection of HIV and drug resistance. She was a lead investigator on iPrEx [2], the groundbreaking study that revealed treating HIV-negative persons prophylactically (PrEP) was effective and safe in humans, leading to dramatic reductions in HIV incidence. This deepened her friendship with iPrEx study lead Dr. Robert Grant, who worked with her closely from the labs of San Francisco to the field in sub-Saharan Africa.

?Over our 20 years of work together, my favorite day with Teri was playing golf in Nigeria ? against all odds, she was up for an adventure and hopeful for a hole in one,? remembers Grant. ?She had singular integrity, passion, and devotion to science that could end HIV transmission and disease. She lit up ways forward for me and so many others. I will miss her for the rest of my life. If ever I face a hard choice at the intersection of heart and mind, I'll ask myself, ?what would Teri do???

Teri played a critical role in UCSF-led studies of HIV cure, test and treat initiatives, and surveillance projects. She was also the virologist for the SEARCH [3] study in Uganda and Kenya, studying antiretroviral therapy for HIV elimination delivered through a community health approach.

?Teri was a shining star in our division,? says Dr. Diane Havlir, Chief of the Division of HIV, ID, and Global Medicine. ?Her passion for science and her dedication to helping the careers of young scientists was unsurpassed. She was a beloved member of our international team and our colleagues there sent many loving messages during her final days.?

Invested in gender equity and advancing the careers of women in science since her arrival at UCSF, Teri was a powerful advocate, as Dr. Steve Deeks recalls.

?My earliest memory of Teri was a discussion we had about women in academia. This was in the mid-1990s, long before it became a popular issue. She was passionate about this and many other issues, and very effective working behind the scenes to help numerous women ? both faculty and staff ? thrive at UCSF. She did all of this quietly and with amazing grace. She will be very much missed,? he said.



Dr. Liegler with former lab members Randy Damron, Jennifer Bare, and Travis Trono.

A common thread amongst those who worked with Teri was the admiration for how she mentored and molded emerging investigators and physicians. She trained hundreds of laboratory investigators from around the world in virologic methods, leaving a global influence that cannot be understated. Her mentoring was not limited to junior scientists.

"I [knew] Teri for 20 years, and frequently reached out to her for information, guidance and collaborations. She was always forthcoming with knowledge, insights, advice and data. Her integrity and work ethic were an example to me and the many others, particularly the many young scientists she mentored," said Dr. Mike Busch.

Teri connected meaningfully with trainees and colleagues outside of the lab as well, even in the midst of her cancer treatment, showcasing her selfless and generous spirit.

"There are so many ways in which Teri impacted my career at UCSF and my life," says Dr. Mohamed Abdel-Mohsen, who worked with her as a pre-doctoral lab specialist, then a trainee, mentee, and finally colleague; though he most fondly remembers a recent event. "In March of 2017, I left UCSF. Not very long after, Teri was diagnosed with her tumor and I came back to see her in January 2018. I was amazed by how she was courageously fighting cancer and remaining [fully engaged in her work]. We managed to have dinner together, and she asked me if my young daughter had ever read Charlotte's Web. I replied no, and a few weeks later, I received a box full of books for my daughter - including Charlotte's Web. Despite all she was going through, that I can only imagine, she was caring enough to send me these. [That was] just Teri."

Her warmth was indeed unforgettable. "Teri Liegler was an accomplished scientist, a treasured colleague, and a close personal friend. I knew Teri through our daughters - best friends since pre-school - long before I worked with her at UCSF. She was a second mother to my youngest daughter and a second daughter to my mother-in-law, who adored her. We all will miss her spark, her love of her family, and her wonderful friendship," says Dr. George Rutherford.

We mourn Teri's passing, but celebrate and honor her remarkable life. Her inspiring legacy, impressive scholarship, and selfless nature will be forever remembered.

We encourage you to read the Department of Medicine announcement <sup>[4]</sup> regarding Teri's passing.

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**Links**

[1] <http://makeagift.ucsf.edu/HIVIDGM>

[2] <http://www.aidsmap.com/The-iPrEx-study/page/1746640/>

[3] <http://www.searchendaids.com/>

[4] <https://medicine.ucsf.edu/chairs-corner/memorial-death-teri-liegler-professor-division-hiv-id-and-global-medicine>