

Memorial Resolution

Mark David Pescovitz, M.D.

Mark David Pescovitz died tragically in a motor vehicle accident on December 12, 2010. Dr. Pescovitz was a Professor of Surgery and Microbiology/Immunology at the Indiana University School of Medicine and the Vice-Chair of Research for the Department of Surgery. He was returning home to Indianapolis after visiting his wife at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor, Michigan. His wife, Ora, serves as the CEO of the University of Michigan Health System and Executive Vice President for Medical Affairs of the University of Michigan. An upper Midwest blizzard and poor road conditions contributed to the accident.

Dr. Pescovitz was born on May 19, 1955, in Cincinnati, Ohio. His father was a surgeon and his mother a talented artist. He drew his talents from both. He was the oldest of seven children, six boys and an older sister. During his childhood and early teens, Dr. Pescovitz began to demonstrate his interest in the world of science with extraordinary projects which he entered in science fairs. Dr. Pescovitz was accepted into the honors six-year program at the Northwestern University where he received his undergraduate degree in 1977 and his medical degree in 1979. After graduation from medical school he entered the University of Minnesota Surgical Residency program where he completed both general surgery training and a transplant fellowship. During that training period he was engaged in transplantation immunology research for four years at the National Institutes of Health (NIH) in Bethesda, Maryland.

After completion of his transplant fellowship, Mark and Ora both joined the faculty at the Indiana University School of Medicine. Mark was appointed as an Assistant Professor of Surgery in 1988, but quickly rose through the ranks to his eventual promotion to Professor of Surgery and Microbiology and Immunology in 1998. At the time of his death, he served as the Director of the Transplant Immunology Laboratory at Indiana University School of Medicine and the Vice-Chair for Research of the Department of Surgery.

Dr. Pescovitz was an excellent transplant surgeon. He was considered a premier kidney, liver, and pancreatic transplanter and was responsible for introducing pancreas transplantation to Indiana University. He was loved by his patients, respected by his colleagues, and admired by all who worked closely with him. Mark Pescovitz served both the local and regional United Network of Organ Sharing Organizations as a committee member and as a member of the Board of Directors with the regional organization

Beyond his clinical and technical skills as a transplant surgeon, Dr. Pescovitz's passion was basic science and clinical research. Throughout his career he participated in over seventy-five industry-sponsored clinical trials in transplantation and dialysis access. In many of these trials he not only contributed to their design and organization but served as the principle investigator and assumed responsibility for their successful completion. At the time of his death Dr. Pescovitz was the principle investigator on three NIH grants and one Juvenile Diabetes Foundation grant, as well as numerous ongoing clinical trials. His recent primary focus was the role of immunologic processes in diabetes mellitus and its associated renal manifestations.

Dr. Pescovitz published over 265 peer reviewed papers, monographs, and book chapters throughout his career. There were over a dozen more in preparation. He was particularly proud of a 2009 publication in the *New England Journal of Medicine* from the Type I Diabetes Trialnet study group which he led.

Dr. Pescovitz was a sought after speaker at both national and international meetings. He served as a valued member of NIH study sections and on multiple Data Safety Boards for both the NIH and industry. He was an Associate Editor of the American Journal of Transplantation, on multiple other editorial boards, and served as an Ad Hoc reviewer for dozens more. He was a member of all the major surgical organizations including the Society of University Surgeons, the Central Surgical Association, the American College of Surgeons, and the American Surgical Association.

Dr. Pescovitz was loved and respected by his medical students, residents, and transplant fellows. In addition, he was a research mentor for dozens of highly successful individuals at all levels of their training.

Dr. Pescovitz developed a passion for helping the underserved populations both in his home community and abroad. He joined many of his Indiana University colleagues in projects at the Moi University in Eldoret, Kenya. It was through his efforts that a team of IU surgeons were able to perform a series of renal transplants for patients in Eldoret. His work there led to his recognition by the Kenyan community as an honorary “village elder.”

But Dr. Pescovitz’s contributions reached far beyond medicine. He had a passion for documentary photography and he took advantage of his opportunity for international travel to perfect these skills to an extraordinarily high level. Exhibits of his photographs, including the highly acclaimed “Unconventional Tourist” have been displayed locally at the Indiana University Herron School of Art and the Gallery Artist Studio Project in Boston.

Dr. Pescovitz was a true friend of the arts and loved all genres of music, art, and literature. He was an active supporter of the Indianapolis Opera and the International Violin Competition of Indianapolis, serving on the Board of Trustees for both groups as well the Board of Directors for the Indiana State Museum.

Finally, the positive impact of Dr. Pescovitz on the Jewish Community of Indianapolis is impressive. He served on numerous organization boards including the Board of the Jewish Federation of Greater Indianapolis, Jewish Community Relations Council, Friends of Born’s Jewish Studies Program, and Hasten Hebrew Academy. His impact for all of these organizations will be greatly missed.

Despite the incredible loss of talent to the medical, artistic, and communal families of Indiana and Indianapolis, the death of Mark Pescovitz to his family will be deeply palable. However, he does leave behind three highly educated, successful and talented children, Aliza, Ari, and Naomi. His wife, Ora Pescovitz, a landmark name at the Indiana University School of Medicine, will miss him greatly. He was undoubtedly her biggest supporter and she was certainly his.

Dr. Mark David Pescovitz was a true renaissance man – an outstanding transplant surgeon, a highly productive and innovative clinical and basic science investigator, a fine artist and a true community leader. Privately he was a devoted father, and a supportive, loving husband. He will be greatly missed by Indiana University, the Indianapolis community, and of course his family.

Be it resolved that this memorial resolution be presented to the Faculty Council of Indiana University – Purdue University at Indianapolis and that copies be sent to his wife, Dr. Ora Pescovitz, and his children Aliza, Ari and Naomi.

Keith D. Lillemoe, M.D.

Jay L. Grosfeld, M.D.

Stephen B. Leapman, M.D.

Passed by the IUPUI Faculty Council at their meeting on March 1, 2011.