

EDITORIAL

Nunc Dimittis: Fred M. McCorkle, Jr.

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Fred M. McCorkle, Jr., died January 21, 2022. He was born in Shelby, a Mississippi delta town, in 1945. His family moved to Drew, MS, where he completed public schooling. He earned a Bachelor of Science in biology from Delta State University in 1966. Fred worked as a physiology laboratory assistant and graduate student at Mississippi State University (MSU), conducting pesticide and crude oil toxicity studies on channel catfish, mosquitofish, oysters, and brown shrimp. After completing his M. S. degree, he joined the MSU immunology laboratory of Bruce Glick, earning his Ph. D. in 1978. His dissertation investigated aging effects on immune competence in chickens.

He served as a postdoctoral fellow in microbiology and immunology at the Oregon Health and Science University. He moved to N. C. State University as research associate and visiting instructor of physiology in the Poultry Science Department after which he was appointed as an avian immunology research associate at the School of Veterinary Medicine. Finally, he was a senior research associate in rheumatology at the University of Mississippi and the Jackson Veteran's Administration Medical Centers. In 1984, he joined the Central Michigan University (CMU) Biology Department. He achieved professor rank in 1992.

Fred's teaching was respected by faculty colleagues and appreciated by students. He taught a range of biology courses including immunology, cell biology, hematology, endocrinology, and mammalian physiology. He innovated instruction by starting a cell culture course that benefitted many students who continued graduate studies. The course enabled students to learn laboratory skills with broad applications as well as personal discipline.

He advised all CMU pre-health students aiding students in their pursuit of medical, dental and veterinary

school admission. He also served more than 20 yr as the Pre-Medical and Osteopathic Society faculty advisor. These two overlapping student populations held his special interest. He counseled students to retain options for possible alternate career paths. He presented students honest but sometimes difficult information rather than what they wanted to hear. Fred was the Biology Department Graduate Coordinator for 10 yr.

His research focus was comparative immunology and neuroendocrine regulation of immunity. These studies placed emphasis of the impacts of serotonin, dopamine and norepinephrine on chicken immune responses. His investigations were aided by a CMU research fellowship followed by a research professorship. He directed numerous M. S. students' research projects related to this topic from his start at CMU until retirement in 2011. He relished assisting graduate students who needed higher grades, more advanced classes, or research experience to enhance their competitive standing for professional school admission. Early in his career, Fred recognized that collaboration engaged scientists with varied expertise to answer research questions. In addition, he appreciated the value of research experience for undergraduate students. Several of the undergraduate research students he mentored progressed to graduate study and academic careers. He also contributed expert knowledge to Ph. D. student committees as an adjunct faculty member at several institutions.

Fred was a great storyteller with affinity for tales from fellow MSU alumnus, Jerry Clower. Outdoor activities occupied his free time. He was an avid duck hunter and member of Ducks Unlimited. Fred also enjoyed fishing and photography. Later, he became fascinated with raising colorful killifish. He met new friends through his activities at conferences for enthusiasts.