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2005 ASNR Gold Medal Award Winner

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2005 ASNR Gold Medal Award Winner

Dr. Samuel (Muli) Wolpert was born in Johannesburg, South Africa in 1930, educated in public schools and went to the University of the Witwatersrand Medical School, where he graduated in 1953. In South Africa, after completing his internship, he spent time as a resident in Internal Medicine, Orthopaedic Surgery and finally Radiology. After traveling to London, he trained at Guy's Hospital and St. Mary's Hospital, and received a D.M.R.D. (Diploma in Medical Radiodiagnosis) in 1960. He then returned to radiological hospital practice in South Africa.

In 1963–1964, Dr. Mannie Schechter, Senior Neuroradiologist at the Albert Einstein College of Medicine (AECOM) in New York and a major influence on Dr. Wolpert's career, visited his home country of South Africa. Mannie offered Dr. Wolpert a 2-year NIH fellowship in Neuroradiology. Through this fortunate visit of Dr. Schechter to South Africa, Muli emigrated to the United States in December 1964, and commenced a 2-year fellowship at AECOM in January 1965.

Dr. Wolpert did not initially intend to specialize in neuroradiology, but impressed by the quality of the neurologists, neurosurgeons and neuropathologists at the AECOM, as well as by the charisma and competence of Mannie Schechter, he decided that this was going to be his ultimate career choice. In 1967, Drs. Alice Ettinger and Robert Paul of the New England Medical Center Hospitals (NEMC) in Boston recruited Dr. Wolpert as a neuroradiologist. He stayed at NEMC for the next 30 years.

He climbed the academic ladder at Tufts University School of Medicine, becoming a full professor of Radiology in 1974, and of Neurology in 1979. He initiated a fellowship training program, training 36 fellows between 1971 and 1997, and also started the Boston Neuroradiology Club. With Dr. Bennett Stein's encouragement, Muli commenced embolizing AVMs utilizing silastic emboli, which limited the hemorrhagic complications that could ensue during surgical removal of the AVMs. The 2 physicians were invited to discuss their experience on one of the national television morning shows. The show was advertised as "Sam's balls cure stroke."

In 1976, Dr. Wolpert published "Angiography of Posterior Fossa Tumors." The timing of the publication was unfortunate, since computerized axial tomography had recently been discovered; and at the time, many thought that there would be no future need for posterior fossa angiography. In 1977, he became Treasurer of the ASNR and during his tenure presented the idea of an ASNR journal to the President of the ASNR, Dr. Sadek Hilal, and his Executive Committee. Dr. Wolpert and Dr. Leeds chaired the search committee for an editor-in-chief and, eventually, Dr. Juan Taveras was chosen as Editor of the *AJNR*. He invited Dr. Wolpert to be the first Associate Editor, and the initial issue of the *AJNR* appeared



SAMUEL M. WOLPERT, MD

at the beginning of 1980. The history of neuroradiology has been one of Muli's interests, and recently he edited a series of papers on Neuroradiologic Classics which appeared in the *AJNR*. He became President of the ASNR in 1984.

In 1992, Dr. Wolpert was the lead neuroradiological investigator in one of the first studies on the value of intravenous recombinant tissue plasminogen activator in the treatment of acute stroke. The Boston Floating Hospital, a pediatric hospital, is part of NEMC, and many of Dr. Wolpert's publications were on pediatric neuroradiology. This interest culminated in the publication of "MRI in Pediatric Neuroradiology," by Dr. Wolpert and Dr. Patrick Barnes of Children's Hospital in 1992. Dr. Wolpert is a charter member of the Board of Directors of the American Society of Pediatric Neuroradiology (ASPNR). In June 2004, because of his interest in and publications on pediatric neuroradiology, Dr. Wolpert received a Special Recognition Award from the ASPNR. He has published 3 books, 114 papers and 24 chapters. He has had multiple speaking engagements, in the United States and overseas, and was Vice-President of the New England Roentgen Ray Society, as well as a member of numerous radiological societies. He has been an examiner for the American Board of Radiology and a CAQ examiner in neuroradiology.

Now living in Santa Fe and retired after a part-time neuroradiology stint at the University of New Mexico Health Sciences Center, Dr. Wolpert is devoting his time (unsuccessfully) to reducing his golf handicap, oil painting (also unsuccessfully) and opera. (He has been a backstage docent at the Santa Fe Opera for the last 5 years.) Dr. Wolpert and his wife Cynthia have been married 48 years and have 3 children, David (a physicist at NASA-Ames in California), Michelle (a bank officer in Houston), and Steven (a family practitioner in Phoenix).