

čestné uznání

FREDERICK S. KELLER, MD

“If a job is worth doing, then it is worth doing right.”



Frederick S. Keller, MD, Cook Professor is the Director of the Dotter Interventional Institute and Chair of Diagnostic Radiology at Oregon Health & Sciences University in Portland, Oregon. At the 2008 meeting of the Czech Society for Interventional Radiology, Dr. Keller will receive the Society's Honorary Membership and deliver the “Josef Rösch Lecture” entitled “Hereditary Hemorrhagic Telangiectasia: From Symptoms to Solutions, a Multi-disciplinary Approach to a Complex Disease.”

“This honor follows shortly another distinctive award “Honorary Membership of the European Radiologic Society” that Dr. Keller received in March in Vienna.

When I was invited to write an article about Dr. Keller, I accepted with pleasure. Fred has been my colleague, coworker and close friend for more than 34 years.

Dr. Keller was born in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania to Allen and Mimi Keller in 1942. His father was a lawyer. Fred and his older brother Frank had happy childhoods in Ellwood City, a small town in Pennsylvania. That shaped a lot of their character. Both parents had an important influence on Fred's personality introducing him to a strong work ethic and discipline at a young age. Fred's father's philosophy was, “If a job is worth doing, then it is worth doing right.” It influenced Fred throughout his career. While growing up, Fred loved horses and attended summer camps where he was able to ride daily. He thought about a career as a jockey and spent the last two years of high school at Culver Military Academy, a school with 130 horses. He excelled there in both academics and equestrian events and was a member of the famous Black Horse Troop.

Fortunately for interventional radiology, Fred changed his mind after entering Swarthmore College where he majored in zoology. He loved college and his competitive nature found satisfaction in inter-collegiate wrestling. He was a highly successful member of the college wrestling team and the co-captain in his senior year. In his years at the University of Pennsylvania Medical School in Philadelphia, Fred concentrated on studying and found relaxation in occasional trip overseas. During his senior trip, he was fortunate to meet a Belgian girl named Annette. They married soon afterwards and Annette has been his soul mate for more than 40 years. She became

a lawyer and has been extremely helpful to Fred in his professional life. They have two wonderful children, Mimi and Andrew, both lawyers, who are a source of tremendous pride and joy to Fred and Annette.

After graduation, Dr. Keller spent a year at the University of Wisconsin Hospital in Madison, Wisconsin as an intern. His military service was in the United States Public Health Service in the US Coast Guard in Northern California from 1969 to 1971. He was stationed on an icebreaker in the Arctic as both the ship's doctor and dentist. After he left the Coast Guard, Dr. Keller worked as an emergency department physician at several hospitals in the San Francisco Bay area. He studied emergency medicine books and read a lot of journals. In 1973, he read some articles in the New England Journal of Medicine describing angiographic techniques to stop gastrointestinal bleeding and obtain liver biopsies. The idea of becoming an angiographer appealed to Dr. Keller and he applied to OHSU for a residency program in radiology starting in 1974.

Fred was the best resident I had ever had. He worked with high intensity, commitment and determination to deliver the best results. Therefore, after his residency, Charles Dotter and I selected Fred for a faculty position in cardiovascular and interventional radiology. It was an exciting time to work with Fred. We were busy in clinical practice developing new diagnostic and interventional procedures and writing papers. Fred published 52 papers and book chapters in 6 years. He became one of the early pioneers of embolotherapy in treatment of vascular malformations, benign and malignant tumors in various locations and gastroesophageal varices. He was a pioneer with the use of glue, alcohol and new occlusive devices. His publications on visceral angiography in diagnosis and treatment of GI bleeding are still basic resources for present interventionalists. Despite a very busy clinical service and work in research, we also found free time for running in the hills and parks around the university. Given our natures, every run was a hidden competition.

In 1983, Fred left Oregon to go to the University of Alabama, Birmingham, where he took up the position of the University's first Chief of Angiography and Interventional Radiology. At UAB, Fred established a premiere interventional program with fellowships. Even though we were separated by many miles, we stayed in close contact, visiting each other and continued writing papers together.

After establishment of the Dotter Interventional Institute at Oregon Health & Science University as an independent, free-standing division of the Medical School, I started looking for new faculty members. Fred was my first choice to follow me as the Institute's Director. He listened to my persuasive calls from

Oregon and returned back to Portland. The independence of the Institute attracted him. Also an endowed chair, funded by Mr. Bill Cook, waiting for Fred helped in making his decision. Immediately after his arrival in 1991, Fred started working hard on the Institute's goals and in 1993 became the Institute Director. He has done an excellent job. He brought new highly qualified people for clinical and research work and worked closely with other departments. His close cooperation with the hospital and the university helped in the expansion of the Institute and continued acquisition of new equipment.

To improve relations with diagnostic radiology that were in considerable turmoil after the Institute's separation, Fred accepted the position of Chair of Diagnostic Radiology in 1992. Inheriting a small, dysfunctional department that was on probation and had only a few faculty members, Fred with his stewardship rebuilt it into a nationally recognized and fully accredited department of diagnostic imaging with a large faculty that closely cooperates with the independent Dotter Institute. The Institute itself under Fred's leadership has become a premiere, worldwide known institution combining excellence in patient care, teaching and research, and demonstrating the pathway for interventional radiology's future. Fred's main objective has been to have interventional radiologists working independently, but closely cooperating with imaging radiologists and other specialists. All faculty members of the Institute, thus, have joint appointments in Diagnostic Radiology and Surgery Departments.

Fred's busy schedule at the Institute and my aching knees prevented us from reviving our running after he came back to Portland. Occasionally, however, we found time on weekends for hiking the Oregon hills and mountains. In 1994 and 1995, we participated in a grueling 67 kilometers long one-day hike around Mt. Hood, involving 3,400 meters elevation changes. Some called it the "death march." But with friendly cooperation, both of us completed it in about 16 hours. Fred's jokes helped us forget our aches and pains during the hike. That was the final hike for me. Fred then turned his interest to downhill skiing and became a very proficient skier practicing on the Olympic slopes of Park City in Utah.

Fred has been an essential organizing member of the International Symposia on Interventional Radiology in Prague from 1994 to 2002. He was a co-chairman of the meetings and also its important cosponsor. Since 2004, Fred organizes annual meetings, Vascular and Interventional Education Days for Technologists and Nurses in Portland and the Interventional/Neurointerventional Conference in Park City. Both meetings became very popular and are well attended by medical professionals and device company representatives.

Fred's impact on interventional radiology goes far beyond the Dotter Institute. Fred has been one of the most active teachers disseminating the use of interventional techniques

throughout the world. Since his first major lecture at the International Congress of Radiology in 1978 in Brussels, Fred presented more than 1100 lectures in 22 countries on 6 continents. The combination of great expertise and eloquence with humor in his lectures makes Fred a much sought after speaker on many interventional meetings. His stirring Dotter Lecture at the 2000 annual SCVIR meeting and his lecture on "Public Perception of Interventional Radiology" at the annual SIR meeting in 2002 helped the Society of Interventional Radiology to embark on new pathways for establishing interventional radiology as an independent specialty under the American College of Radiology and led to a national public awareness campaign. Presently, Fred prefers lectures on the use of interventions in specific diseases, particularly on hereditary hemorrhagic telangiectasia. Fred established an HHT Center of Excellence at OHSU and many patients are referred to him for embolization of their pulmonary arteriovenous fistulas. Fred also continues to be active in writing of interventional papers and his list of contributions grew to 234 publications of peer review papers and book chapters.

An extremely important part of Fred's work has also been shaping the evolving interventional field through his dedication and service to the Society of Interventional Radiology. He has been its Fellow for more than 25 years, served on multiple committees both as a member and as chair; and ultimately, in 1998, became president of SIR. In this position, Fred brought a firm conviction about the importance of clinical interventional radiology that continues to influence the Society leadership and its most fundamental policies. In 2001, Fred redirected his focus as the SIR Foundation Chair and successfully achieved the campaign goal of five million dollars in donations to the Foundation to be used for support of basic and clinical research in interventional radiology. Because of this success, he was selected in 2007 to chair a new capital campaign for the SIR Foundation.

Fred is a widely recognized and honored worldwide. His honors include the Gold Medal of SIR, Cook Chair, Endowed Frederick S. Keller Chair at the Dotter Institute, Distinguished CIRSE Fellowship, Honorary Memberships of JRS, ERS, BSIR, and SCIR, honorary professorships in Chinese and Brazilian Universities, lectureship of several eponymous lectures in the USA and Europe, and membership in editorial boards of interventional journals in the US, Europe and China.

Presently, Fred is very active directing the Dotter Institute and Diagnostic Radiology, doing clinical cases, particularly embolization of pulmonary fistulas, traveling and lecturing at national and international meetings and, when time allows, skiing in Park City. He has had an excellent and highly successful career and I, as his mentor, am very proud of all his accomplishments. I am sure that his parents would also be extremely proud that he always did his job right.

Josef Rösch, MD, DrSc.