



In Memoriam to
Herman Friedman, Ph.D.
Sept. 22, 1931 - Aug. 25, 2007

Our valued colleague and friend, Herman Friedman, passed away on August 25, 2007 after a two decade long struggle with multiple sclerosis. To honor him, the Council of the Society has decided to rename the SNIP Founder's Award as the **Herman Friedman Founder's Award**.

Herman was Professor and Chair of the Department of Medical Microbiology and Immunology from 1978 to 2003, and then became Emeritus Professor and Distinguished University Professor at USF. He was an effective leader for 25 years, building a successful, well-funded, and widely recognized faculty, whose work on the effects of cannabinoids and other abused substances on immune function and infection established his department as one of the major groups in our field.

Herman had a long and distinguished career as a research scientist. He published more than 800 original scientific papers, reviews, book chapters and abstracts. Between 1963 and 1970 he had 9 papers in *Nature* and 3 in *Science*, catapulting him to the position of one of the best known immunologists in the world. In the 1960's his research focused on immunodeficiency induced by bacteria and murine retroviruses and this early work was part of the foundation of knowledge that was so important to the study of AIDS when it was first recognized to be a retrovirus induced immunodeficiency. He had diverse research interests and contributed strongly to bacterial immunology, viral immunology and, as we know him best, the study of neuroimmunopharmacology. Beginning in 1981 he began to investigate the newly discovered bacterial species, *Legionella pneumophila*. His laboratory developed the mouse model that has proven invaluable for study of this organism. A major thrust of his research since 1985 was the effect of drugs of abuse, particularly cannabinoids, on immune function and *Legionella* infection. His laboratory showed that tetrahydrocannabinol (THC), the major active ingredient in marijuana, enhances susceptibility to this infection. Other studies examined the effects of THC and cocaine on immune responses, showing that both substances are immunosuppressive, and exploring the mechanisms by which this immune depression occurs. These mechanisms include suppression of Th1 and enhancement of Th2 immunity through the polarization of both the dendritic cell response and modulation of the cytokine network. Dr. Friedman's group also showed that cannabinoid receptors, especially CB2, mediated these immune responses and that expression of these receptors is a part of the activation program for immune cells.

He became a major force in making the area of neuroimmunopharmacology a legitimate, exciting, area to study. Herman organized the first meeting in the area.

of drugs of abuse and immunity at USF, and published the proceedings. This initial event was followed by other conferences and publications, helping to establish the field, and to bring together and to stimulate the investigators in what was a somewhat ill defined research area, eventually leading to the founding of SNIP. Herman had a phenomenal memory and an intensely inquiring mind. He always had a new scientific idea with which to challenge you in conversation. He encouraged colleagues to pursue additional studies in the area of abused drugs and infection and immunity. He organized his colleagues to write chapters leading to books in the area, of which he edited volumes over a 15 year period including titles such as “Drugs of Abuse, Immunity, and Infection”. He was an active force in moving our science forward through his discussions with staff at NIDA, the books he edited, and the conferences he organized.

Herman was active in SNIP and attended almost every meeting, organized symposia, and encouraged his laboratory and faculty to fully participate. He was a recipient of the Joseph A. Wybran Award in 1997 for dedication to study of the role of drugs of abuse in modulating the neuroimmune axis and served on many society committees such as Awards and Public Relations.

Herman was a warm and generous person, who nurtured anyone interested in science, including graduate students, post-doctoral fellows (of which he mentored 59), medical students, technicians, faculty, and scores of scientists who spent time in his laboratories. He was an unfailingly positive person, who always saw the best in everyone. He encouraged all who came within his sphere of influence to rise to his or her potential, and many people are grateful to him for the help he gave them in advancing their careers.

We have lost a dear colleague and friend who was a major influence in many of our lives. His legacy of scientific inquiry in the field of neuroimmunopharmacology will live on as the work of SNIP continues. This year at the meeting in Charleston, the Society will honor his memory at the banquet on Saturday night. We encourage you to attend and pay tribute to a great scientist and exemplary human being.

Contributed by:

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