

"Citation on Emeritus Professor K Shanmugaratnam, SMA Honorary Member"

Professor K Shanmugaratnam was born in Singapore, received his early education at the Methodist Boys' School in Kuala Lumpur and graduated from the King Edward VII College of Medicine in Singapore in 1947 as a Licentiate in Medicine and Surgery. He had a brilliant scholastic record as an undergraduate: he was awarded distinctions in Pathology, Materia Medica & Pharmacy, Medical Jurisprudence and Medicine and he was also awarded the Lim Boon Keng Medal in the Final Professional Examination. His extracurricular record was equally impressive: he captained the College Cricket XI and was President of the Medical College Union in 1946 when he played an important role in representing the views of undergraduates to the Carr-Saunders Commission on Higher Education.

After graduation he participated actively in the affairs of the Alumni Association of the King Edward VII College of Medicine: he organised the Association's weekly Clinico-Pathological Conferences and served as Editor of the Proceedings of the Alumni Association. He was Chairman of the Southern Branch of the Alumni Association in 1961.

He was a Founder Member of the Singapore Medical Association and a member of the 1st SMA Council. He served for several years as Chairman of the SMA Committee responsible for organising an educational programme comprising clinico-pathological conferences, lectures and symposia. He was a member of the Editorial Board of the Singapore Medical Journal from 1962 to 1971.

He was Master of the Academy of Medicine from 1966 to 1968 in which capacity he played an important role in shaping the organisational structure of postgraduate medical education in Singapore.

Professor Shanmugaratnam's most important contributions and achievements have been in the field of Pathology. He obtained the Degree of MD (Malaya) in 1954 and, on being awarded a Queen's Fellowship, proceeded to the University of London where he obtained the Degree of PhD in Pathology. He is a Fellow of the Royal College of Pathologists of the United Kingdom, a Fellow of the Royal College of Pathologists of Australasia and an Emeritus Fellow of the College of American Pathologists.

His professional career as a Pathologist spans a period of more than 50 years: in the Singapore Government Medical Service from 1948 to 1960 where he rose to the position of Head of the Department of Pathology, as Professor and Head of the University Department of Pathology from 1960 to 1985 and as a Senior Professorial Fellow and Senior Consultant in Pathology from 1986 to this day.

Professor Shanmugaratnam is a histopathologist of international repute. He has been invited to lecture and conduct histopathology seminars in many countries and is frequently consulted by pathologists in Singapore and overseas.

His research has focussed mainly on the epidemiological and histopathological aspects of cancer with particular reference to nasopharyngeal carcinoma and other tumors of the upper respiratory tract: he has edited several monographs and has authored two books and more than a hundred publications in this field.

One of Professor Shanmugaratnam's major contributions has been the development of the Singapore Cancer Registry. He began a modest pathology-based register in 1950 and in 1968 inaugurated the Singapore Cancer Registry as a population-based registry covering all cancer cases diagnosed in Singapore. The Singapore Cancer Registry, of which he is Director, continues to provide data and analyses on the nature and patterns of cancer occurrence in Singapore; it is a valuable resource for cancer researchers and physicians engaged in various aspects of cancer control.

Professor Shanmugaratnam has fulfilled several administrative functions in the Ministry of Health and the University of Singapore with distinction. He was a member of the Singapore Medical Council and the Medical Advisory Council of Singapore from 1962 to 1968, the Committee on Medical Specialisation in 1970 and the Medical Clinical Research Committee from 1978 to 1989. He was Dean of the Faculty of Medicine from 1962 to 1965, Senate Representative on the University Council from 1965 to 1970 and a member of the Board of Postgraduate Medical Studies from 1969 to 1974. He served on the Panel for Committees of Inquiry of the Public Service Commission from 1968 to 1991.

He has also served with distinction in several international organisations. He has served in various committees and commissions of the International Union Against Cancer from 1958 to 1978 including periods as Secretary of Committee on Geographic Pathology and Programme Chairman for Epidemiology. In the World Health Organisation he has served as Head of the International Reference Centre for the Histological Classification of Tumours of the Upper Respiratory Tract (1972 – 1995) and as a member of the Expert Advisory Panel on Cancer (1973 - 1989). He was President of the International Council of Societies of Pathology (1974 - 1978) and President of the International Association of Cancer Registries (1984 - 1988). He is a member of the editorial boards of several journals in the fields of cancer and pathology.

For his achievements and contributions in the field of Pathology, Professor K Shanmugaratnam was awarded the Public Administration Gold Medal by the President of Singapore in 1976 and conferred the title of Emeritus Professor by the University of Singapore in 1986. He is now elected to Honorary Membership of the Singapore Medical Association in recognition of his meritorious service to Medicine and the community.

Mr President, Ladies and Gentlemen, I present Professor Kanagaratnam Shanmugaratnam for the conferment of the Singapore Medical Association's Honorary Membership.

PROF EDWARD P C TOCK