Professor Georgi D. Efremov (1932–2011)

After a long battle with cancer Professor Georgi D. Efremov died on May 6, 2011. Professor Efremov, the founder and head of the Research Center for Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology (RCGEB) at the Macedonian Academy of Sciences and Arts, was a world-renowned expert in the field of hemoglobin research and a very prominent scientist in the field of biomedicine and biomolecular sciences in Macedonia and throughout the region. He was instrumental in the characterization of polymorphic protein variants in domestic animals and published hundreds of papers on the detection and characterization of different hemoglobin variants and thalassemia alleles. Professor Efremov was the founder of molecular genetic research and diagnostics in the Republic of Macedonia and made a major contribution to the molecular detection and characterization of many monogenic diseases, such as hemoglobinopathies, cystic fibrosis, muscular dystrophy, hemophilias, and other infectious and inherited malignant diseases.

Professor Georgi D. Efremov was born in Kratovo, Republic of Macedonia in 1932 and graduated from the

Faculty of Veterinary Medicine at the University of Zagreb, Croatia in 1956. In 1968 he was invited by Professor Titus H.J. Huisman from the Department of Cell and Molecular Biology at the Medical College of Georgia in Augusta, Ga., USA to join his group that was studying the structure, function, synthesis and expression of normal and abnormal human hemoglobins. This productive relationship lasted for 30 years and resulted in numerous publications about new hemoglobin variants and thalassemias. In the last 25 years he expanded his research interest to include the molecular basis of human monogenic diseases and the establishment of a basis for the detection and characterization, including prenatal diagnosis, of the most common monogenic diseases in Macedonia. His rich scientific career included the publication of over 500 peer-reviewed reports in national and international journals as well as several chapters in books and monographs. As a professor, mentor, valued supporter and advisor he will be greatly missed, but we are convinced that the values that inspire a life devoted to science are his true legacy and these will always be cherished and will endure in and through the work of his many students.

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