

## **Robert B. Forney, Jr. (1945 – 2022)**

*Tribute by Dr. Barry K. Logan at the ADID Division Meeting of February 12, 2023*

Our Friend and Colleague, Dr. Robert B. “Bob” Forney, Jr., Chief Toxicologist with the Lucas County Coroner's Office in Toledo OH, died Sunday December 4<sup>th</sup>, 2022 in his Springfield Township OH home. He was 77.

Bob was a dedicated husband and father to his wife Debbie, and their children Robert, Scott, Jonathan, and Daniel, and is missed by them and his many former students, colleagues and friends.

Bob had been diagnosed with aggressive cancer about a year prior to his passing, and despite intensive medical intervention, eventually succumbed to his illness.

Dr. Robert Forney Jr. was described by Dr. Kurt Dubowski in his 2008 nomination speech for Bob for the IACT Dubowski Award as “The Complete American Toxicologist, as well as a Complete Person”.

He entered the profession of forensic toxicology in the steps of his father, the late Dr. Robert. B. Forney, Sr., to whom he referred to often as a “stout-hearted man who gave him a love of life, science, public service and him.”

Bob completed his undergraduate education in chemistry at Indiana University at Bloomington, followed by three years in the Peace Corps working largely in Thailand during the Vietnam War. On returning to the United States, he completed his PhD at Indiana University School of Medicine in Indianapolis and then a Postdoctoral Fellowship in Forensic Toxicology under Dr. Irving Sunshine at Case Western Reserve University.

In 1976 he moved on to the position of Chief Toxicologist of the Lucas County, OH Coroner's Office and Assistant Professor of Pathology at the Medical College of Ohio, both in Toledo, OH, where he spent the remainder of his career. His later appointments include Associate Professor positions at the Medical College of Ohio, School of Medicine, Department of Pathology; and School of Allied Health. He also served as Adjunct Associate Professor at the University of Toledo's College of Pharmacy, Director of the Poison Control Center, and Director of Toxicology at the Medical College Hospital.

By virtue of his education, expertise, experience and interests, Bob was one of a handful of board-certified forensic toxicologists who were recognized experts in the areas of both clinical and forensic toxicology, and both postmortem and human performance toxicology, as well as on issues of alcohol and drug abuse in the workplace.

Bob was a member of many professional organizations, including AAFS, SOFT, TIAFT and IACT. He served as a longtime member of the Executive Committee of the Committee on Alcohol and Other Drugs (CAOD) (now the Alcohol, Drugs and Impairment Division (ADID)) of the National Safety Council, and Chair of its Social and Behavioral Factors Subcommittee/Section.

He served as Chair of the Committee and its Executive Board and was especially effective in expanding its scope of activities and improving interaction with the NSC leadership. I remember in particular Bob's efforts to bring the Committee together as a team, and several of us remember him taking all the attendees at the annual meeting out for drinks after and which he paid for all.

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Bob was also a long-term (28 years) member of the faculty of the Robert F. Borkestein Course on Alcohol, and had an encyclopedic knowledge of the pharmacology and physiology of alcohol. He was also a member of many other professional organizations, an author of over 30 papers, and several book chapters in forensic toxicology, especially with respect to alcohol.

Bob was a man of strong faith and was an evangelist with the Christian and missionary alliance. Like his father, he did not hesitate to speak out strongly on topics he felt passionate about. We are fortunate to have had him as a colleague, friend, and leader in our field.