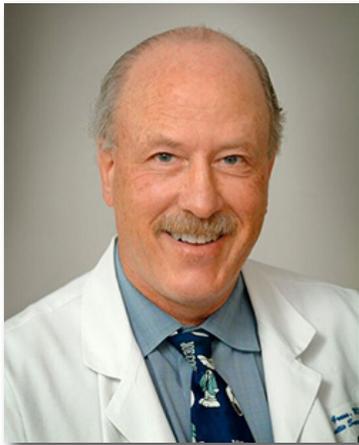


Surgery News

DR. JOSEPH GRUSS REMEMBRANCE

RICHARD HOPPER, MD, MS, PROFESSOR AND MARLYS C. LARSON
ENDOWED CHAIR IN PEDIATRIC CRANIOFACIAL SURGERY, DIVISION OF
PLASTIC SURGERY



The Department of Surgery celebrates
the remarkable life and career
of Dr. Joseph S. Gruss

The Department of Surgery wishes to recognize and celebrate the career of Dr. Joseph S. Gruss, Professor Emeritus of the University of Washington. Dr. Gruss retired from active practice last year after 28 years of service at the University. He died this June after a heroic battle with pancreatic cancer.

Joe Gruss was born in Johannesburg, South Africa on April 5th, 1945. After declining an opportunity to become a professional footballer, he completed his medical training and spent a year as a family doctor and casualty officer before moving to England for surgical training. In 1973, Joe moved to Toronto to train as a plastic surgeon. In his first faculty position at the University of Toronto, Joe displayed his life-long passion and talent for facial reconstruction. Despite fierce early criticism and resistance, he introduced novel and controversial concepts of early bone grafting and fixation that are now the foundation of modern facial trauma surgery. Already an internationally known surgeon, Joe was recruited in 1991 to join the Division of Plastic Surgery

at the University of Washington as a full Professor. He continued his ground-breaking work at the Harborview Medical Center facial trauma program, but he also saw the opportunity to take principles of facial trauma surgery and apply them to help children born with complex craniofacial deformities. He joined the Craniofacial team at Seattle Children's Hospital and Regional Medical Center and fostered its growth into the world-class interdisciplinary Seattle Children's Hospital Craniofacial Center. He published pioneering papers on how to distinguish infant skull deformities that needed surgery from those that did not. His dedication to team care of children born with cleft lip and palate earned him the Marlys C. Larson Endowed Chair. Patients were referred from around the world for his surgical approach to giant neurofibroma tumors of the face and neck. A tireless educator, Joe gave more than 300 invited lectures, and founded the UW Craniofacial Surgery fellowship program 18 years ago that has graduated many of today's leading surgeons. Although he received many prestigious career achievement awards, Joe Gruss always said his true honor was the opportunity to work with and get to know so many inspiring young patients as they faced their severe facial differences with courage and determination.

In January of this year, Joe wanted a celebration of craniofacial surgery in Seattle, and fellows and colleagues from around the world joined him at the first Gruss Lectureship in Facial Reconstruction. Afterwards, he said that event was his true eulogy. Our Department will forever miss and thank our friend, pioneer and thought-leader, not just for his tremendous surgical skill and experience, but for the passion and heart he dedicated to the care of children from around the world.



Joe Gruss at Komfe Anochie Teaching Hospital in Kumasi, Ghana as a member of the Seattle Children's Partners in Africa Cleft Teams (PACT) program. A passionate educator, Gruss loved to travel the world to share his experience and knowledge with young surgeons.

In lieu of a memorial service, Dr. Gruss asked that friends and family continue his work advancing pediatric craniofacial surgery through donations to the Seattle Children's Joseph S. Gruss Lectureship Fund (<https://giveto.seattlechildrens.org/gruss>)