

General Prof. Dr. Khalaf Al-Moutaery (July 1948- January 2018)

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In January 29th 2018 the Saudi neuroscience community received, with great sadness, devastating news that General Professor Dr. Khalaf Al-Moutaery passed away after a life full of achievements. Born in July 1948 in Taif, the western region of Saudi Arabia, Dr. Al-Moutaery graduated with honors from Taif high school in 1966. He went to Germany to study medicine in 1974 and successfully obtained the medical degree. He had a great passion for neurosurgery, so he joined the training program of the department of neurosurgery at the University of Hanover and obtained FACHARZT certificate in neurosurgery in 1983. He returned home to be the first neurosurgeon in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and joined Al-Shumaisy Riyadh Central Hospital, and few months later, he moved to the Military Hospital to establish the Department of Neurosciences and the first Neurosurgical Unit in Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

In 1987, he was instrumental in the establishment, with King Faisal University and King Faisal Specialist Hospital, of the Saudi Training Program in neurosurgery. He was the leading power behind expanding the program nationally to become the Saudi board program in neurosurgery in 1994, which he served as the board president for several years. Dr. Al-Moutaery was an international figure; he joined the world federation of Neurosurgical Societies (WFNS) and progressed between different committees of WFNS till he was elected as the 1st Vice President of the World Federation for Neurosurgical Societies. He invited the top leading neurosurgeons from 14 different Arab Countries in his office at the Military Hospital to establish Pan Arab Neurosurgical Society in February 1994 and served as a president for 2 years. In 1997, he successfully founded and published the bi-annual neurosurgical journal “Pan Arab Neurosurgical Journal” and served as an Editor-in-Chief.

Honors and awards. During this prosperous career, Dr. Al-Moutaery received several honors and awards for his dedicated national and international achievements. The most prestigious was King Abdulaziz Award (First Degree) in 2005, WFNS Medal of Honor in 2009, and Saudi Association of Neurological Surgeon (SANS) Gold medal award for lifelong achievement in Neurosurgery in 2016.

Research and journals advisory board. Dr. Al-Moutaery was actively involved in many research projects and served in many national and international journals’ advisory boards like Saudi Medical Journal, Neurosciences Journal, Pan Arab Journal of Neurosurgery, Acta Neurochirurgica, and World Neurosurgery.

Dr. Al-Moutaery will have a lifelong legacy as the first qualified Saudi neurosurgeon that established the first neurosurgical Unit in Saudi Arabia in 1983. Many will remember his energy and wise counsel, especially the many of younger academics and trainees in Saudi Arabia and the Arab world he supported throughout his career. He was and will continue to be a symbol of leadership of Saudi Neurosurgery and a role model for many Arab Neurosurgeons. The Saudi association of neurological surgeons, on behalf of all neurosurgeons in the country, present the profound condolences to the family of Dr. Al-Moutaery, his students, colleagues, and his friends.

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