Randall Cohrs

In memorium

1952-2021

Randy Cohrs was a major contributor to the field of alphaherpesvirus latency, especially of varicella zoster virus. His work extended from his deep compassion for afflicted patients and their families and took him to the cutting edge of the molecular mechanisms of virus transcription control.

He helped to introduce practicable therapies and vaccines to the clinic. He coupled his work with patient samples to in vitro systems and advanced next-generation sequencing techniques to bring clarity to the control of alphaherpesvirus gene expression in disease.

Randy also worked outside the herpesvirus field, both to share information and to learn from the work of others on various virus models. He wanted to know what others thought and he went to extraordinary measures to make it possible for them to share their work.

While particularly focused on students (of all ages and disciplines), he trained everyone he met in the art of communication. He practiced that and forced others to practice it as well. To that end, Randy's contributions to science extend well beyond his chosen field.

Whether it was the International Herpes Workshop, the Rocky Mountain Branch of the American Society for Microbiology, the Rocky Mountain Virology Meeting, or, his favorite, the Colorado Alphaherpesvirus Latency Society, he dedicated himself fully to scientific communication.

The results have come to play in many fields because of his introduction of diverse persons and personalities in convivial and, for him, joyous interactions. He was a magnanimous, kind and charitable man who broke down all the barriers to scientific communication as often as he possibly could.