Dr. John Hansbrough

Dr. John Hansbrough was born in Virginia, graduated from the University of Wisconsin with Honors in Chemistry and attended Harvard Medical School where he graduated Magna Cum Laude in 1972. During this time, he began his career in basic science and his M.D. thesis involved the isolation and purification of RNA from lymphoid tissue.

He subsequently completed his internship and general surgery residency at the University of Colorado and then joined its faculty at University of Colorado where he quickly rose to Associate Professor of Surgery while directing the Surgical Intensive Care Unit, the Emergency Department, and the Burn Unit. During this time, he continued his fundamental interest in basic research and was recruited to UCSD in 1984 as Director of the UCSD Burn Center.

For 17 years, he single-handedly developed the UCSD Burn Unit into an internationally recognized center that not only emphasized excellence in care but opened the frontier for describing the immunosuppressive effects of injury, and the challenge of developing wound coverage using artificial skin.

Dr. Hansbrough was instrumental in developing alternative skin substitutes and, after years of collaboration with both NIH, basic scientists, and industry, he was singularly responsible for the development of Dermograft-TC which has become a standard tissue coverage.

During his career, he had continuous extramural funding, served on the editorial board of every major journal related to injury care and participated in visiting professorships throughout the world.

Dr. Hansbrough’s commitment to research was classical. He took clinical problems for which he was directly responsible and aggressively pursued solutions which led to real changes in care. He was truly a renaissance surgeon.

His interests were not limited to clinical care and biology. He was deeply interested in ongoing education and the rehabilitation of the injured patient. During the course of his career, he developed resources including a burn camp for injured children and was awarded the Chancellor’s Associate Award for Community Service at UCSD. In addition, he was visionary in developing a video-based learning center which focused on teaching patients the difficulties of dealing with burn injury and was intimately involved in training residents and peers in the fundamentals of burn care.

As a tribute to his efforts, a CD demonstrating the fundamentals of burn care was distributed to all physicians caring for soldiers placed in harm’s way during the Iraq Gulf War conflict of the 1990s.

John was quiet, but an internally passionate physician. His commitment to his family was the focus of his life. His dedication to the care of the injured patient was amplified because of this.

Dr. Hansbrough’s untimely death left a huge void in the Department of Surgery, throughout UCSD, and in the San Diego community. His loss extended internationally and was recognized by a special award from the American Burn Association. He was in line to become president. John gave of himself much more than he received. He saw this as his responsibility to medicine and to the injured patient. Perhaps this alone is his legacy. Dr. Hansbrough was one of the truly great surgeons of his time.
Nicole S. Gibran, MD, FACS

Director, UW Medicine Regional Burn Center
Harborview Medical Center
Professor, Department of Surgery
University of Washington

Nicole S. Gibran, M.D., F.A.C.S. received her bachelor’s degree at Brown University, and her medical degree at Boston University. After a residency in the Boston University Department of Surgery, she completed a clinical fellowship in the UW Burn Center with Drs. David Heimbach and Loren Engrav and an NIH Trauma Research Fellowship in the Skin Biology Laboratory of Dr. Karen Holbrook. She joined the UW Department of Surgery as an Assistant Professor in 1994. Now a Professor in the UW Department of Surgery, Dr. Gibran is an attending surgeon at Harborview Medical Center where she has been the Director of the UW Burn Center and the UW Burn Fellowship since 2002. In this role she has emphasized team building and mentoring residents and junior faculty with interest in burns. Her most recent interest has been in promoting national standards of quality metrics and establishing a Burn Quality Improvement Program (BQIP) to follow NSQIP and TQIP.

In addition to fulfilling duties in patient care and teaching, Dr. Gibran has developed the UW Burn Center Research Laboratory with emphasis on aberrant healing processes including hypertrophic scar formation and chronic non-healing wounds seen with diabetes mellitus. She has over 100 publications in the area of wound repair, response to injury, and burns. Her primary research focus on the role of nerve-derived mediators in responses to cutaneous injury has been funded by NIH since 1997. She has served on the Surgery Anesthesia and Trauma IRB study section in the NIH Center for Scientific Review since 2001 and was Chair from 2005 - 2007. Dr. Gibran has been a member of the American Burn Association since 1991 serving on the Research, Program and Ethics committees and the Committee on the Organization and Delivery of Burn Care. While Chair of the CODBC, her committee guided the ABA organizational policy on disaster planning for burn mass casualties. Currently she is Past President of the ABA and continues on the ABA Board of Trustees and is Chair of the ABA Verification Committee. She also served on the Board of Directors for the Wound Healing Society 2009-12 and is current Chair of the Research Committee for them International Society of Burn Injuries.

She is on the editorial boards of the Journal of Burn Care and Research, Surgery and Shock. In her free time Dr. Gibran enjoys cooking and digging in her garden. She gains most of her creativity and energy from keeping up with her husband Dr. Frank Isik and her two sons, Alexander and Oliver; from these individuals she has learned her most valuable life lessons.