



Annamari Ranki

* 3.1.1955 † 14.1.2024

Professor Annamari Ranki passed away on 14 January 2024 at the age of 69 years.

Professor Ranki's academic journey was marked by excellence from its very beginning. She started her research career already during her medical studies at the University of Helsinki. She earned her medical degree in 1977 and defended her doctoral thesis on T and B lymphocyte markers the following year when she was only 23 years old, one of the youngest doctoral graduates in Finland at that time.

After her PhD, she specialized in dermatology and venereology in Helsinki and oriented her research to immune responses in autoimmune diseases. Before taking up her position as Professor and Chairman at the University of Helsinki in 1997, Professor Ranki had already made significant contributions as Professor and Chief Physician at the University of Oulu and the University of Tampere, both in Finland.

Professor Ranki's career was not confined within the borders of Finland. In 1983, she started studying an entirely new disease of unknown origin: AIDS. This research resulted in collaboration with Dr. Robert Gallo. She joined Gallo's lab for two years at the National Cancer Institute, NIH, in Bethesda, and she also

worked at the Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center in New York from 1985 to 1987. After returning to Finland, she continued her research on HIV immunology. In the past three decades, her group studied the molecular pathogenesis of cutaneous T-cell lymphomas and genetic autoimmune inflammatory and autoimmune diseases such as the tumour necrosis factor receptor-associated periodic syndrome (TRAPS) and the autoimmune polyendocrinopathy syndrome APS1. She thus pursued translational science long before this term was invented.

Her scholarly output was as prolific as it was profound. She authored almost 300 scientific articles, numerous reviews, and textbook chapters, with more publications still to come.

Annamari Ranki was also active in research politics and scientific societies both at the national and international levels. She was one of the best-known Finnish dermatologists in Europe. She was awarded ILDS Certificate of Appreciation and became a member of the Finnish Academy of Science and Letters in 2010, underscoring her status as a respected and influential figure in her field. She was a board member of the ESDR, EADV, EDF, the Nordic Der-

matology Association and International Society for Cutaneous Lymphomas, and Chairman of the Finnish Dermatological Society. She was Secretary General of EDF from 2007 to 2008, and President from 2009 to 2010.

But beyond her impressive professional and academic achievements, what truly set Professor Ranki apart was her unwavering commitment to her discipline, her stu-

dents, and her colleagues. In addition to being a scientist, she was a mother of three and a devoted grandmother, who served as a role model for female scientists. Her guidance and mentorship have shaped the careers of numerous medical professionals and researchers.

We extend our deepest gratitude to Professor Ranki for her extraordinary life and contributions.

*Obituary by Sirkku Peltonen, Eija Hiltunen-
Back and Katariina Hannula-Jouppi*

Image: Helena Karlsberg