

Phillip G. Spiegel, MD, MBA



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Dr. Phillip G. Spiegel passed away on June 26th, 2008, from complications secondary to cancer. He would have been seventy-two the following week. Born in Chicago in 1936, he attended Northwestern University for both his undergraduate and medical school training. His internship year was spent at Jackson Memorial Hospital in Miami, followed by a surgical residency at the Cleveland Clinic. Though interrupted by military service, he decided to follow the subspecialty of orthopaedic surgery and secured a position at L. A. County Hospital under J. Paul Harvey, graduating in 1967. For four years, Phil practiced in Beverly Hills, but became increasingly restless and eventually left his practice to pursue an academic career. This led him to F.W. Rhinelander's laboratory in Cleveland, where he worked for several months, followed by a year in Davos, Switzerland, under the guidance of Stephan Perren, MD, 1971-72. He returned to academics for good, first at USC for a year, then in Chicago for the next five years, before coming to Tampa in 1978. During that time, Phil became increasingly drawn to the art and science of trauma care, the specialty that would help define his career.

Upon his arrival in Tampa, Phil set out to improve his division through recruitment of fellowship trained faculty, a relatively new concept at that time. The level of quality achieved was evident in both the academic production of his division, as well as the caliber of the residents he was able to attract. Unable to maintain the funding needed to attract the best and the brightest, he became tireless in his efforts to form a Department of Orthopaedic Surgery. These efforts were rewarded when the Department became a reality, and he became the first Chairman of Orthopaedic Surgery at the

University of South Florida, School of Medicine in 1981. During the next seven years, he worked to build a powerful faculty, especially in the fields of trauma, pediatrics, spine, arthroplasty and hand surgery.

During these early years in Tampa and as a result of his experiences with the AO in Davos, Dr. Spiegel became interested in the biology of fractures and became an important proponent of the modern treatment of the multiply injured patient. Along with John Border, MD, Sigvard Hansen, MD and others, he became an integral part of both the North American teaching faculty of the AO, as well as a founding member of the Orthopaedic Trauma Association. Many publications, as well as a seminal book on orthopaedic trauma, ultimately led to his selection as the Founding Editor of the *Journal of Orthopaedic Trauma* in 1987, a position he held for ten years.

During his tenure as Professor and Chairman of the Department of Orthopaedic Surgery at USF, Dr. Spiegel nurtured the seeds of academic inquisitiveness in many that he taught. He was a tireless promoter of his faculty, urging them to publish, discover, and develop new ways to improve patient care. He was an excellent administrator, and through his guidance made the Department financially self sufficient. This allowed him to continue to recruit excellent faculty. One of his skills was to sublimate his ego, letting others shine, as he knew this would benefit the Department, which ultimately it did. Over the years, many of his residents, fellows, and faculty have gone on to become ABC and ASG traveling fellows, members of the AOA, Chiefs of Divisions, and even Chairmen of their own Departments. Dr. Spiegel was well on his way to creating a world class Orthopaedic Institute, when the political storm that always seemed to find him erupted in 1988, resulting in his dismissal and ultimately ending the residency and Department that he had worked so hard to build.

Phil Spiegel was a charismatic leader who treated those around him like family. They in turn felt the same about him. He possessed an intelligent mind, a sharp wit, and an excellent sense of humor that he used skillfully. He was a mentor to all who knew him, and was an advocate for all those that asked him for help, trying to open closed doors wherever he could. He felt that if you had talent and were willing to work hard, his role was to assist you in your pursuit. This is the mark of a true leader. In Tampa, there was none better.

Dr. Spiegel is survived by his wife, his daughter and his two sons. All his friends, past residents, partners, and colleagues will remember him for his optimism, intelligence, warmth, and his passion for academic pursuits and improvements in patient care. A healthy, active, and energetic man whose retirement was cut short by a malignant disease, Phil will be sorely missed by all those whose lives he touched.

Roy Sanders, MD
Editor-in-Chief

(This obituary also appears in the J. Bone & Joint Surgery)