



Tandra R. Chaudhuri, PhD, 1947–2006

Tandra R. Chaudhuri, PhD, professor of radiology and codirector of the Multi-Modality Imaging Laboratory, University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB), died in Hoover, AL, on July 26 after a long battle with breast cancer. She was 59 years old.

Born in Calcutta, India, on July 13, 1947, Tandra received her BA from Calcutta University in 1968. Her parents encouraged her to follow the path of her older brothers, who had emigrated from India to the United States. In the “United States” she received a master’s degree in the history of science from George Washington University in 1970 and a second master’s, in microbiology, from the University of Oklahoma in 1976. She earned her PhD in microbiology from Calcutta University in 1983.

Tandra pursued a long and productive research career at universities in the United States and Canada. She was a research associate at the University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio (1976–1978), a research associate at the University of Oklahoma (1981–1984), a research assistant professor at the University of Missouri (1985–1990), a research associate professor at the University of Missouri (1990–1995), and director of research/consultant at Southeast Texas Medical Oncology (1995–2000).

While working at the University of Missouri at Columbia, Tandra met Kurt R. Zinn, DVM, PhD, who became her husband in 1990. In 1995 the couple moved to UAB, where Tandra served as a faculty associate and then research associate professor (2000–2003), and associate professor (2003–2005). In 2005, she was promoted to a full professorship of radiology at UAB, holding that position until her death. She also served as codirector of the UAB Multi-Modality Imaging Laboratory from 2003 to 2006.

Along with her husband, she published more than 155 articles, abstracts, and book chapters and presented approximately 138 scientific papers at various national and international medical and scientific conferences. Tandra was a member of numerous scientific organizations, in-

cluding the American Society of Microbiology, Academy of Molecular Imaging, American Society of Gene Therapy, American Association of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene, American Association for the Advancement of Science, and Sigma XI: The Scientific Research Society.

Tandra’s research interest focused on advancing novel imaging methods for early diagnosis of cancer. Her pioneering work included “Imaging gene transfer using ^{99m}Tc -peptide with high affinity for reporter receptor.” Other contributions in nuclear medicine research included ^{99m}Tc -labeled E-selectin binding peptide in specific targeting of activated endothelium in arthritis model; imaging ^{99m}Tc -FGF-1 targeting; ^{99m}Tc -P2045, a new peptide for imaging somatostatin receptor gene transfer; and detection of ovarian cancer by radiolabeled human monoclonal antibody. Tandra also demonstrated the anticancer effect of curcumin, an active ingredient of turmeric, a common culinary spice.

She held patent and invention disclosure statements on various original research methodologies, including fluorescent stereomicroscopic imaging for early detection and precise localization of cancer, a method for in vivo inflammation monitoring, a method for production of luciferase-positive cancer cell lines for imaging, and an in vivo reporter system for imaging gene transfer.

Tandra received numerous research grants from the National Cancer Institute and the Department of Defense and received funds from the UAB Comprehensive Cancer Center Supporters Board, a cancer funding-raising group in Birmingham. She directed the research work of 4 undergraduate students, 1 master’s-level student, and 4 PhD candidates.

Dr. Chaudhuri was a loving wife and extremely talented in cooking, sewing, dancing, singing, and photography. Her research work, love, laughter, friendship, and musical and photographic talents will be sorely missed.

Eva V. Dubovsky, MD, PhD

Professor Emeritus

University of Alabama School of Medicine