

## EDITOR'S PAGE



# Goodbye Mihai

## We Will Miss You

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A short time ago, we lost one of our close colleagues in the heart failure community, Mihai Gheorghiade. The loss of Mihai has allowed us to reflect on our community of heart failure clinicians and investigators, our purpose, our culture, and our mission and vision. I had the distinct privilege of working with Mihai more than 30 years ago as a fellow on the FIRST trial when Mihai was a junior investigator. I quickly learned one of Mihai's many admirable characteristics: passion. Mihai was passionate about asking questions, clinical investigation, clinical trials, team-oriented research, mentoring, and digoxin. We built a team of colleagues who became lifelong friends and investigators. Despite a trial that was negative, we were able to reconstruct the database and answer many questions together through secondary analysis.

As I look back over Mihai's career, I view his many great attributes. First is his passion for answering questions, furthering knowledge, and investigation. Second is participating as a team-oriented researcher; perhaps one of the best examples is the OPTIME trial, where Mihai created the hypothesis, obtained funding, bridged the relationship with the Duke Clinical Research Institute, and allowed a fellow on the project to take the lead as the first author of one of the very first trials of acute heart failure. In fact, it was this trial and the FIRST trial in which Mihai began to understand and observe that hospitalization for heart failure was truly an event that was characterized by a change in the clinical course and a dramatic change in the short-term outcomes over the next 30 to 60 days. This increase in morbidity and mortality in the short term became a major focus in Mihai Gheorghiade's research. He interrogated many databases by asking and answering questions to sort out the importance of congestion and edema, and he then promoted, through his relationship with the private sector, the

targeting and development of therapeutics toward this condition.

At the time, many people felt that a heart failure hospitalization was just a short transient decompensation in the clinical course of chronic heart failure. Mihai felt otherwise: he believed that this was an acute event much like an acute coronary syndrome in patients with stable ischemic heart disease. The question was the pathophysiology; as it was multifactorial, it required intense investigation through registries, trials, database analysis, sub-analysis, and continued translational investigation. It was this passion for knowledge and promotion of information to better the care of patients with heart failure that was the focus of Mihai Gheorghiade. However, Mihai's contributions did not stop there. He supported fellows, junior faculty, and senior faculty and collaboration with the industry, government, and FDA lenders in tackling these problems. It was Mihai who promoted the think tanks, workshops, and intellectual dialogue to solve these important problems in a team-oriented fashion. More so than many, Mihai was able to bridge the gap between the enormous deficiencies in knowledge that existed in the world of improvement in human health. Finally, perhaps Mihai's greatest legacy was his passion for mentorship. He loved to be with young people to critique, improve, endorse, and accelerate their passion for research, innovative care, and teaching. Mihai leaves with us a legacy of those he mentored, me included, but many, many others across institutions, states, the country, and the globe in which he was a mentor's mentor. In these regards, we will miss Mihai. I am saddened that I did not have a chance to say goodbye. He was a complex individual with a colorful personality; we will miss him in our tight-knit, close, heart failure community.

*"Mihai Gheorghiadu embodied integrity, energy and passion in all that he endeavored, never ceasing to inquire. His enduring legacy will be the countless young investigators whose careers were inspired and fostered by his tireless mentorship."*

—Robert O. Bonow

*"Mike was a passionate man who always had a point of view that was well informed and worth arguing about."*

—Robert M. Califf

*"Thought leader with deep passion for the pursuit of new and effective therapy for CHF. Open forward thinking not swayed by controversy. Admired mentor to many...challenging to colleagues...friend to all...and a gentleman."*

—Hani (Tony) N. Sabbah

*"Mihai Gheorghiadu: passionate advocate for heart failure; tireless innovator; gifted scholar; dedicated mentor; delightful eccentric. Anyone who treats heart failure relies on the substance of his work. A legacy not soon to be forgotten."*

—Clyde Yancy

*"Mike leaves us the lasting example of a critical and innovative thinker who focused on the problems of patients with heart failure and challenged us, in the truest sense of clinical science, to keep reaching for novel solutions through drug therapy."*

—Kirkwood F. Adams

*"Scientific research was vital for Mihai. He told me this, many times. He introduced new concepts, worked incessantly and, one of his nicest aspects was an incredible mentor, able to make young doctors grow and express themselves. He also had a warm personality, able to consider any subjective aspect. His legacy will last. It is difficult for me to realize what happened."*

—Marco Metra

*"Mihai was a physician-scientist with incredible passion, unparalleled dedication, and steadfast commitment."*

—Gregg C. Fonarow

*"Friend Passion Mission Mentor Uncompromising Thinker Love Logic Rational Intelligent Independent Bold Tireless Teacher Advisor Confident- will miss him forever."*

—Javed Butler

*"Mihai will be remembered as the first to tie Europe to America and emergency room to cardiology to heart failure research."*

—Alexandre Mebazaa

*"The first time I ever met Dr. Gheorghiadu he handed me a half-finished manuscript and challenged me to finish writing it. As I walked out of the room he said, 'I hope to see you again this lifetime.' He used to exclaim that 'research is a drug and I am going to make you an addict!'"*

—Drew Ambrosy

*"Mihai was an inspirational mentor always knowing how to push his mentees to achieve their full potential. He instilled in us the need for clarity: 'What's the most important thing?' will forever guide us."*

—Liviu Klein

*"Greatest mentor I've ever had. Will miss him greatly! World won't be the same if I can't hear him calling 'Peter! What is...?'"*

—Peter S. Pang

*"As legendary as Mihai's contribution to the field of heart failure was a passion for mentoring young people. Mihai's impact on cardiology will live on through the dozens of mentees whose lives he has touched and impacted."*

—Stephen J. Greene

*"I loved that man. He was quirky but brilliant and full of exuberance and passion; and on a very personal note, while lunching in a restaurant in Lugano with our wives, he laboriously but eruditely taught me the difference between good pizza and bad. I'll never forget him."*

—Marvin Konstam

*"Mihai taught me about bespoke suits, Italian leather and high quality handbags. All the important things in our field! He was very kind to me."*

—Mona Fiuzat

*"We will all miss that call from Mihai—slightly unexpected, but always welcome and filled with energy. We will miss his passion for digoxin and fine Italian coffees. Most of all, we will miss him as a visionary leader, giving mentor, brilliant colleague, and trusted friend."*

—Muthu Vaduganathan

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