



Donald P. Swartz, MD
September 2, 2008

Donald P. Swartz, MD, professor and past chairman of the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology at Albany Medical College (NY) died on Tuesday, September 2, 2008 at the Albany Medical Center Hospital at the age of 86. Dr. Swartz was born in Kitchener, Ontario, on September 12, 1921. After high school he attended the Euler business school in Kitchener and then worked as a hardware salesman and payroll and cost accountant until 1942. After serving in the Canadian armed forces during World War II, he enrolled at the University of Western Ontario in London, Ontario receiving a B.A. in 1947. In 1951, he graduated cum laude from that same institution with an M.D. and was elected to the local Alpha Omega Alpha chapter. He served a junior rotating internship at Victoria Hospital, London, Ontario, from 1951-1952 and then obtained a MSc. in endocrinology from the University of Western Ontario, again graduating cum laude in 1953. Dr. Swartz then completed a senior rotating internship at Westminster Hospital in London, Ontario and a residency in obstetrics and gynecology at The Johns Hopkins Hospital in Baltimore, MD from 1954 until 1957, where he also served as Chief Resident (1957-1958).

In 1958 Dr. Swartz returned to the University of Western Ontario on the faculty of both the Departments of Obstetrics/Gynecology and Medical Research. From 1962 until 1971 he served as Director of the Department of Obstetrics/Gynecology at Harlem Hospital (NY) and on the clinical faculty of Columbia University in New York, becoming a Professor in 1972. In that year he assumed the post of Professor and Chair of the Department of Obstetrics/Gynecology of the Albany Medical College, a position he held until 1979. Over his career he proved an extraordinary institutional "citizen" serving on over 50 committees of the Albany Medical College and Albany Medical Center. He remained on their faculty after 1997.

Dr. Swartz's major clinical research focused on oral and injectable hormonal contraception, intrauterine devices, abortion and postmenopausal hormone therapy. He contributed 57 peer reviewed publications, and six textbook chapters. He also authored four monographs and authored and/or edited four textbooks. He received nine awards from various societies for his research during his career, and frequently served as a lecturer and course director at postgraduate courses.

Dr. Swartz directed the training of nearly 100 obstetrical/gynecology residents, garnered multiple teaching awards and was an examiner of the American Board of Obstetrics and Gynecology. Beside this society, he was a fellow of the Royal Colleges of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists, and Surgeons, of Canada. He was elected treasurer of the New York Obstetrical Society, and was awarded a John and Mary Markle Scholarship in Medical Science for five years (1958-1963). He served as President of the American Association of Planned Parenthood Physicians and contributed to seven American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists' committees, chairing the Committee for Continuing Education. He also served on the Medical Committee and Board of Upper Hudson Planned Parenthood Association.

Dr. Swartz had three professional passions: Teaching Gynecological Surgery to residents, learning and sharing his knowledge of the specialty with students and residents, and "The Hopkins". It was a rare conference or teaching session that went by without him teaching something from the lore of "The Hopkins." He combined these with his love for golf, downhill skiing and organizing and running a very successful regional, annual conference at Stratton Mountain for many years.

Dr. Swartz was a consummate Faculty member -- loyal, academically productive, a great teacher, and a superior physician who contributed to the department, the medical college, the professional organizations, and the community. He wore his academic credentials and honors with pride and respect, and repaid in full the honor and respect he was given by all who worked with him.

His first wife, Norma Mae Wollner, died in 1980. He married Isabelle (Liz) Dales in 1984, and she died in 2010. He is survived by a son, Ian D. Swartz, a daughter, Rhonda L. Peterson, MD, and a stepdaughter, Bonnie-Jo Hall. He also had three grandchildren and one great-grandchild.

Submitted by Drs. Myron Gordon and Charles J. Lockwood