



## Marc Heft

June 10, 1948 - February 8, 2020

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Marc William Heft died Saturday, February 8 at his longtime home in Gainesville, Florida. Born in 1948 to Jayne and Harold Heft, Marc grew up in Lynbrook, New York, the younger brother of Samuel and older brother of Philip. He received his B.S. in electrical engineering (1970) and D.M.D. (1974) from the University of Pennsylvania, and his M.A. (1981) and Ph.D. (1982) in psychology from the American University. After completing a general practice residency at the Baltimore City Hospitals, he was appointed to the Neurobiology & Anesthesiology Branch, National Institute of Dental & Craniofacial Research, National Institutes of Health, and later to the Laboratory of Behavioral Sciences, Gerontology Research Center, National Institute on Aging, prior to his appointment to the faculty of the University of Florida in 1984.

His 35 years at the UF College of Dentistry saw a shift early on from the Department of Community Dentistry & Behavioral Science to the Department of Oral & Maxillofacial Surgery (1987). Director since 1989 of the Claude D. Pepper Center for Oral Health in Aging, the focus of Marc's research and scholarship was aging, including sensory aging and health services research; and pain, including measurement, impact and disparities in care. A member of the McKnight Brain Institute, he also held appointments as Professor in the Department of Neuroscience, UF College of Medicine, and in the Department of Clinical & Health Psychology, UF College of Public Health and Health Professions. He was awarded a University Term Professorship in 2017.

An active member of professional and research bodies of national and international scope, Marc tirelessly advocated for oral health and oral health research, particularly through leadership positions in recent years: he served as President of the International Association for Dental Research (2015–2016), for which he was also Chair and Member of the Board of Directors; and President of the American Association for Dental Research (2007–2008). He was a Fellow at the American Association for the Advancement of Science, and at the Gerontological Society of America, in recognition of his record of

research and scholarship. The list of his publications and achievements is long, and it gave him joy to attend professional and scientific meetings on five continents, delivering research presentations and lectures, and avidly participating in discussions with his peers. Marc placed great importance on mentoring students and younger colleagues in his field, and made this a consistent priority over the years. He also served the broader University of Florida community through involvement in governance activities, serving as Faculty Senate Chair and Member of the UF Board of Trustees in 2013–2014.

Marc loved his family immensely: his wife of 45 years, Ann Gary Heft; his children, Adrienne Heft, Sara Heft and Jordan Heft, and daughter-in-law Jessica Heft; and his young grandchildren, Caleb and Malia Heft, are grieving his loss, as are other family members and cherished friends. His kindness, his thoughtful, inquisitive mind, his boundless energy on the tennis court, and the twinkle in his eye will be dearly missed.

Funeral services will be held Tuesday, February 11, 2020 at 11:00 a.m. at Congregation B'nai Israel, 3830 NW 16th Blvd, Gainesville with Rabbi David Kaiman officiating. Burial will follow in B'nai Israel Cemetery, at the corner of East University Avenue and Waldo Road.

Marc would have liked for condolences to be expressed in the form of donations to the American Cancer Society.

# Events

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**FEB**   **Funeral Service**                      11:00AM

**11**

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Congregation B'nai Israel  
3830 NW 16th Blvd., Gainesville, FL, US

**FEB**   **Burial**

**11**

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B'nai Israel Cemetery  
corner of E. University and Waldo Road, Gainesville, FL, US

# Comments

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“ Dr. M Heft was a wonderful person, professional, scientist and a clinical researcher. I had the opportunity to be work with him as a post doctoral fellow 1989-1993 in one of his NIH program grants for which he was the director and the principal investigator at the University of Florida School of Dentistry. Dr. Heft was very kind and effective in his professional and scientific approaches.

He was very kind to me personally and took personal interest in me to ensure my continued employment at the University of Florida after the end of the tenure of NIH grant. I owe a deep debt of gratitude to him for his timely intervention and help when I needed most to continue at the University of Florida, Gainesville, FL. He showed interest in my personal well being and in my family welfare.

The loss of some one so close is difficult to bear. We share the grief with his family. May his soul rest in peace. May the Almighty give his family strength and peace to bear the loss in his passing.

Gopal Rajakumar and Family  
Miami Florida

**Gopal Rajakumar** - February 18 at 09:13 AM

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“ He was a towering academic and also a wonderful listener who loved people including the friends of his children. A gentle, beautiful soul we were lucky to have with us for so long.

**Mohana Rajakumar** - February 12 at 10:34 PM

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“ The Kosher Sympathy Gourmet was purchased for the family of Marc Heft.



February 12 at 04:32 PM

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“ It is really sad to say goodbye to a smart, funny, generous, and sensitive man like Marc. He will truly be missed. My heart is broken but his memory will live forever.



**Andrea Kaplan** - February 12 at 12:10 PM

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“ Sending my deepest condolences to Marc's family; I was so saddened to hear about his passing. Marc's obituary made note of his dedication to mentoring younger colleagues, and I was so fortunate to have received this mentoring from him many times over the years. It's rare to meet such an outstanding scientific mind with a truly generous and kind spirit. I can't imagine attending an IADR or AADR meeting without seeing Marc's smiling face, and the meetings will be much emptier without him. I know I speak for so many colleagues when I say we are all much better for having known Marc. May his memory be a blessing.

**Lisa Heaton, Seattle, WA** - February 11 at 03:56 PM

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“ It is with great sadness that we learn of Marc's passing. Marc was my faculty senate chair mentor and advisor. His leadership and thoughtful judgement were valued by all his friends and colleagues. Our thoughts are with Ann and his entire family.  
Paul and Cherith Davenport

**Paul Davenport** - February 11 at 03:02 PM

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“ Emerald Garden Basket was purchased for the family of Marc Heft.



February 11 at 11:42 AM

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“ Margaret Namusisi lit a candle in memory of Marc Heft



Margaret Namusisi - February 11 at 04:49 AM

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“ Arrive in Style was purchased for the family of Marc Heft.



February 10 at 08:45 PM

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“ My heart was pained greatly to receive the news of Marc's passing. We spent a couple of delightful years together as young scientists at the National Institute on Aging in Baltimore, MD in the early 1980's. I was so impressed with Marc's broad education ranging from engineering to dentistry to psychology. His interdisciplinary interests and skills were unique for the time and certainly led to the huge success he enjoyed in his career. Beyond his science, I always appreciated his great humor and warm personality. It was a genuine pleasure to reunite at various meetings around the world and catch up on science and family. I know he loved his position at UF where he made so many contributions to science, clinical care, and administration. And I know how much he loved his family. I send my condolences to Ann, the children and grandchildren as well as to his UF family.

Donald Ingram, PhD - February 10 at 06:57 PM