Remembering Sanjiv Sam Gambhir, MD, PhD

By Mitchell D. Schnall, MD, PhD

On July 18, the field of radiology lost one of its most influential leaders, Dr. Sam Gambhir (pictured right), the Chairman of Radiology at Stanford. To some of you, Sam is a household name in radiology, while for others, this is the first time you are hearing about him. Sam was one of the most prolific and creative molecular imaging researchers in the world. In addition, he was a charismatic advocate for the use of novel diagnostic technology to detect the earliest signs of disease as a means to reduce disease burden, and mitigate the cost of treatment. We were fortunate to have Sam serve on our ECOG-ACRIN board for a brief period.

Despite his remarkable success, what really distinguished Sam was how he cared for people, and his unique way of making everyone he spoke with feel special. The last time I saw him was at the Radiological Society of North America (RSNA) 2019 Meeting in Chicago. Typical of Sam, he took the effort to stand up and walk across a wide corridor, clearly challenged by his illness, just to ask me how I was doing. Radiology lost one its greatest leaders this week, and I lost one of my personal heroes. Sam will be missed by many.

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