

In Memoriam

Anthony Norman
Professor of Biochemistry, Emeritus
UC Riverside
1938 – 2019



Born in Ames, Iowa in 1938, Tony earned his BS from Oberlin College in 1959, and his MS (1961), and PhD (1963) from the University of Wisconsin, Madison.

A member of the UCR faculty since 1963, Tony's research area was cellular and molecular endocrinology, where he was internationally known for his breakthroughs in the study of vitamin D. In 1967, his laboratory group discovered that vitamin D is converted into a steroid hormone by the body. Two years later, his lab group discovered the vitamin D receptor (or VDR), an essential receptor in more than 36 target organs of the body that respond biologically to the vitamin. In 1971, his lab group reported the chemical structure of the steroid hormone to be $1\alpha,25(\text{OH})_2\text{Vitamin D}_3$. In 1972, Tony in collaboration with Dr. Jack Coburn at the UCLA medical school treated the first uremic patients with the steroid hormone, produced in the Norman laboratory. In 2008, he joined Dr. Cedric Garland of UC San Diego in making the recommendation that the daily intake of vitamin D for adults be revised to 2000 international units. He also organized 14 triennial international Vitamin D Workshops.

Tony's many profound contributions to UCR included his extensive leadership and exceptional mentorship of students. Among his roles, he served as Chair of the Department of Biochemistry (1976-81), Divisional Dean/Program Director for the UCR/UCLA Biomedical Sciences Program (1986-91), and Program Director for the Cell, Molecular & Developmental Biology Interdepartmental Graduate Program (2005-08). Tony was also a dedicated supporter of UCR Highlander Athletics, serving as Faculty Athletic Representative through 2010.

Tony also made tremendous contributions to the UCR and UC Systemwide Academic Senate, serving as Chair of the System-wide Committee on Academic Personnel (UCAP) and as a member and Chair of the UCR Planning and Budget Committee. During his term as Chair of the UCR Academic Senate (2005-08), he was the campus Representative to the Systemwide Senate Academic Council, Chair of the Executive Committee of the UCR Senate, Chair of the Systemwide Senate's ad hoc Compendium Committee, Senate Representative to the UCR Chancellor's Cabinet and the UCR Accreditation Steering Committee, and Vice-Chair of the UCR Long Range Planning Steering Committee. Tony also held the position of President of the UCR Emeriti Association between 2010-2012. After his chairmanship of the UCR Academic Senate, Tony gifted the body with its conference room.

Tony's formal teaching included team-taught graduate and undergraduate courses as well as an upper division course entitled "Topics in Human Biochemistry." Tony mentored 23 students who received PhD's during his career at UCR. In 2005, he received the UCR Dissertation Advisor/Mentor Award from the Academic Senate and Graduate Division, an award recognizing faculty who have made outstanding contributions to the training of advanced graduate students. In recommending him for the award, Tony's students noted how he cared about their education and well-being, provided a stable, well-organized laboratory for their research work, offered guidance while fostering independence, and maintained an ongoing interest in their careers. His students further respected his abilities and accomplishments as a scientist, calling him "...one of the preeminent researchers in the vitamin and hormone field."

Tony was credited with over 800 scientific publications. He also served on the editorial boards for a large number of academic journals, including the Journal of Biological Chemistry (1982-87), Endocrinology (1978-83,1989-94), Nutrition Reviews (1984-97), Journal of Molecular & Cellular Endocrinology (1987-91), and many others.

Additional service to science and his profession included being an active member and leader in a number of professional societies, serving on sabbatical in universities all over the world, and participating in a number of NIH study sections.

His honors include garnering the Mead Johnson Award from the American Institute of Nutrition (1977), William F. Neuman Award from the American Society for Bone and Mineral Research, (1995), named a most cited scientist by the Institute for Scientific Information (1965-85), a Fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science (1995), serving as the Presidential Chair in the UCR Biochemistry Department (1999-2009), and receiving the MERIT award from the National Institutes of Health (1986-93).

Tony served his community on the Riverside Community Hospital Board of Directors.

Tony was predeceased by his wife Dr. Helen Henry, in 2018. Helen was also a Professor of Biochemistry at UC Riverside, and a key collaborator in his research on vitamin D. They are survived by daughters Thea Norman and Jacqueline Norman, son Derek

Norman, and nine grandchildren. Jacqueline Norman currently serves as UCR Campus Architect.

Tony Norman's next of kin for notification is Jacqueline Norman who resides at 6969 Randwick Rd., Riverside, CA 92506.

This memorial was prepared by Darleen DeMason, Professor of Botany & Plant Sciences, with additional information from Dean of the College of Natural & Agricultural Sciences.