

In memoriam – Andrei Medvedev

It was a sad day when I received news about the sudden passing of Dr. Andrei E. Medvedev in late July, this unexpectedly happened while he was in Russia visiting his mother. Andrei was a great scientist and a friend. He completed his PhD in Moscow and came to Terje Espevik's lab at NTNU in Norway in 1993 as a postdoc. He moved to the US in 1996/97 to join Stefanie Vogel's lab at the Uniformed Services University of Health Sciences in Bethesda. In 2002 Stefanie and Andrei relocated to the University of Maryland, and Andrei moved through the ranks there and became Associate Professor with his own lab. Later, he moved to the UConn Health Center in 2013.

Andrei's big interest was signaling in the innate immune system and finding the basis of host responses during serious infections. At NTNU he started to work with TNF receptors, NF- κ B and later LPS and other ligands interacting with receptors such as CD14 and CR3. At USUHS and U Maryland he increased his attention to endotoxin/LPS, and also got involved in the Toll-like receptor (TLR) "wave" that swept the innate immunity field at that time. One of his finest contributions was a paper in *J Exp Med* (2003) describing mutations in the IRAK-4 signaling molecule in a patient with recurrent serious bacterial infections and hypo-responsiveness to LPS, strongly supporting the view that TLR/IL-1/IL-18 signaling was a key component of human anti-bacterial defenses. Andrei was a well funded and very productive scientist, perhaps especially known for solid investigations, great biochemistry, persistence and particular attention to details. He had many papers investigating mechanisms associated with endotoxin signaling and tolerance, the altered cellular state induced by an initial exposure to LPS before later challenge, also observed in vivo. Many of his papers studied TLRs and downstream signaling components, such as IRAK and Tollip. Lately he was also interested in lncRNA and their regulation of innate immunity.

He was a long-time member of IEIIS, and very interested in society matters. He was often seen at the IEIIS meetings, he received a Young Investigator Award and was a scientific councilor, and helped with the *Innate Immunity* journal. He was a good and caring colleague with many collaborators and was always interested in other people's work.

Everyone who knew him knows he could be very serious about his research, but behind this was a great sense of humor. I especially remember a trip to a research retreat for our Department of Cancer Research at NTNU in the mid/early 90's. We had a chartered train ride that took a few hours, and after Andrei's arrival to Terje's lab the natural topic for the ride was Russia. We were served caviar and vodka shots, Russian music was played and some dressed up for the occasion. Andrei was brimming with joy and grinned for the whole trip. I was lucky enough to stay in regular email contact with Andrei even after our ways parted, and saw him at meetings, in Maryland, at UMass and at UConn, and he always met me with a big smile.

Andrei was a family man and was very proud of his kids Anton and Anastassia. He loved his family and even after he started at UConn he commuted most weekends to his beloved wife Svetlana and their home in Maryland by car – a trip that takes at least 6 hrs one way. Warm wishes go to Svetlana, Anton and Anastassia in this difficult time.

Andrei is sorely missed by his colleagues and friends.

Egil Lien

UConn has established a memorial fund in his name that will support presentations by young investigators. For those interested in contributing, the details are listed below.

UConn Foundation
Attn: Aaron Frankel
10 Talcott Notch Road Suite 100
Farmington CT 06032, USA

Indicate "In Honor of Dr. Medvedev" on your donation.