

Professor Robert H Jones (1940–2022)

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It is with great regret that we received the news of the death of Professor Robert H Jones, MD (1940–2022).

Professor Robert H Jones was one of the most distinguished figures of cardiac surgery and was renowned as a leader of clinical research in the field of cardiology and cardiac surgery. Professor Jones graduated from the Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine in 1965. He completed his surgical residency at the Duke University Medical Center (DUMC) in 1968–1974. Then he worked at DUMC, obtaining scientific and professional positions, such as Professor of Surgery, DUMC 1982–1987, Mary and Deryl Hart Professor of Surgery 1987–2014, Associate Professor of Radiology 1982–2014, Faculty Duke Clinical Research Institute 1992–2014, Mary and Deryl Hart Professor of Surgery Emeritus 2014–2022.

He was an active member of several scientific societies and has received many awards and honors including the Master of the American College of Cardiology Award in 2011.

He published nearly 300 articles as an author/co-author in leading scientific journals; his papers have been cited 16 429 times and his H-Index is 61.

Professor Jones greatly contributed the development and promotion of Polish cardiology and cardiac surgery on the global forum. He supported our scientific community since his first visit in Poland as a lecturer at the American College of Cardiology Circuit Course in May 1984. He was a great friend of Poland and Polish people, gladly accepting the changes taking place over the years in all areas of life in our country. Inviting Polish cardiology and cardiac surgery centers to participate in the NHLBI non-commercial clinical study Surgical Treatment for Ischemic Heart Failure (STICH) was a privilege and a challenge at the same time. This research program initiated a new treatment strategy for complications of ischemic heart disease and impacted guideline changes. We can proudly say that Polish participation in this study was



Figure 1. A meeting from the early period of the STICH trial at the Institute of Cardiology in Warsaw 2005. From the left: Professor Zbigniew Religa, Director of the Institute, Professor Robert H Jones, Principal Investigator in the STICH trial, Professor Zygmunt Sadowski, a member of the steering committee and a national coordinator of the STICH trial



Figure 2. A meeting of the STICH Family, Tarnowskie Góry, 2011. Our guests from the Duke University responsible for the STICH trial: first row from the left: second — Thomas C Barfield, MBA, project leader; third — Kerry L Lee, MD, PhD, biostatistician; fifth — Professor Robert H Jones; eighth — Professor Eric J Velazquez, MD, the principal investigator in the STICHES trial (continuation of STICH), and a group of Polish cardiac surgeons and cardiologists at the meeting organized on the initiative of Professor Marian Zembala

important due to high numbers of randomized patients, the quality of patient care, as well as high scientific activity during meetings of committees and working groups. Participation in the STICH created an additional important platform for cooperation between cardiac surgeons and cardiologists from various Polish centers. Professor Jones brought us together, participating in this study, into a great international community, called the STICH-Family. We had a great privilege to get to know Professor Jones better (Figures 1 and 2). He was a great leader who made sure that each member of the team genuinely felt a part of it and made a real contribution to the success of the project. He taught us a lot, especially how to work as a team. During the long-lasting cooperation (2003–2018), an original STICH mode of action has been developed under the leadership of Professor Jones. As a result of the STICH/STICHES study, more than 50 original articles in high-impact journals were published, of which 37 were attended and supervised by authors from Polish cardiac centers. Polish authors also had an opportunity to present the STICH trial results during ESC and AHA/ACC meetings. In recognition of his activities for the benefit of Polish cardiology, he was awarded the title of the Honorary Member of the Polish

Cardiac Society in 1990. He was also awarded Doctor Honoris Causa at the Medical University of Lodz, 2008. Many of us owe a lot to Professor Robert H Jones and he will remain our Mentor. We will always remember him with respect and gratitude.

Cardiologists and cardiac surgeons forming
the STICH trial team in Poland

Supplementary material

The list of the STICH trial publications coauthored by Polish authors is available in Supplementary material at https://journals.viamedica.pl/kardiologia_polska.

Article information

Conflict of interest: None declared.

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