



Gary D. Tollefson, M.D., Ph.D

February 1, 1951 - March 31, 2009

Indianapolis resident, medical inventor and executive who helped revolutionize the field of neuropsychiatric medications, died Monday, March 30, 2009, after a battle with Luekemia. He was 58 years old. Dr. Tollefson, who held a medical degree in psychiatry and a Ph.D in psychopharmacology, is perhaps best known for his work at Eli Lilly and Company, where as a past president of the Neuroscience Product Group, he directed programs for schizophrenia, Alzheimer's disease, depression and other related disorders. His leadership led to drugs that revolutionized the field and became household names. These included Prozac, Cymbalta and Zyprexa among others. Dr. Tollefson is also personally credited with co-inventing the drug Strattera for attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD). After 13 years at Lilly, Dr. Tollefson left the large corporate world to become Chief Executive Officer of a San Diego based start-up, Orexigen Therapeutics, Inc., where he applied his background in psychiatry and pharmacology to the field of obesity, targeting the problem of excessive weight gain through neural pathways to the brain. During his tenure, he led Orexigen as it grew from a small, private operation into a publicly traded company with multiple drugs in late stage clinical trials. Dr. Tollefson resigned from Orexigen late last year to focus on his health and other business pursuits. Despite his illness he remained active as a medical innovator, serving as co-founder and board member of a start-up neuroscience company, Euthymics Bioscience, Inc., to develop a novel antidepressant without the typical side effects that can discourage patients

from staying on their medications. A Minnesota native, Dr. Tollefson obtained his Bachelor's Degree in psychology Summa Cum Laude in 1973 and his Doctor of Medicine Degree in 1976 from the University of Minnesota, where he completed a residency in psychiatry and a Ph.D in psychopharmacology (1980). Prior to beginning his career in the pharmaceutical industry in 1991, Dr. Tollefson was the chairperson of the Department of Psychiatry at the St. Paul-Ramsey Medical Center and an associate professor in the Department of Psychiatry at the University of Minnesota Hospitals. He was an active researcher who authored over 200 peer-reviewed publications and a number of book chapters. Dr. Tollefson was married to the former Karin Anna Graffeo. She and her son, Cal Graffeo, Dr. Tollefson's stepson, survive him, as do his daughters, Elizabeth and, Theresa Tollefson both of Indianapolis, and Tina Tollefson of San Diego CA. A Memorial Service will be held Thursday, April 2, 2009 from 6:00 p.m. until 8:00 p.m. with funeral services Friday at 10:00 a.m. at St. Simon the Apostle, 8155 Oaklandon Rd., Indianapolis. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the National Institute of Mental Health to honor Gary's passion, and/or a fund for Leukemia research c/o IU Foundation, IU Simon Cancer Center for Leukemia Research, Attention: Scott Boswell. Arrangements entrusted to Shirley Brothers Fishers-Castleton Chapel.