

John D. Brunzell, MD (1937–2015)

John D. Brunzell, MD, was an internationally renowned lipidologist and endocrinologist who made significant contributions over four decades at the University of Washington.

A 1963 graduate of the University of Washington (UW) School of Medicine, Dr. Brunzell spent most of his career at the UW. He was appointed professor emeritus in 2007 and continued to be very active clinically and in research in his emeritus role.

He held many leadership positions over the years, including program director of the UW General Clinical Research Center (1996 to 2004), acting head of the Division of Metabolism, Endocrinology and Nutrition (1994-1996), head of the Division Fellowship Training Programs (1997 to 2007), chair of the Medical Student Endocrine Course (1986 to 1996), and head of the Lipid Clinics at UWMC and HMC.

He studied genetic and acquired disorders of triglyceride and cholesterol metabolism; diabetes, obesity, and cardiovascular disease; and rare genetic disorders of lipoprotein metabolism. His research resulted in more than 300 papers. In 2005 he received the Lifetime Achievement Award from the UW General Clinical Research Center, which he directed for eight years. In 2008 he received the Mayo Soley Award from the Western Society for Clinical Investigation. This award honors lifetime achievement in scientific endeavor and training of junior investigators. He helped co-found the North American Association for the Study of Obesity (NAASO), the forerunner of today's Obesity Society.

Dr. Brunzell took great pride in the training of academic physicians, having trained more than 25 metabolism fellows, many of whom now play leadership roles in academic medicine in the U.S. and throughout the world.

Dr. Brunzell was born in Lewiston, Idaho and graduated from Whitman College in Walla Walla, Wash., where he was honored in 2006 as an Alumnus of Merit. He completed his medical school training at the University of Washington, Residency at Los Angeles General Hospital, and Fellowship at the University of Washington. John served as a U.S. Army Captain in Vietnam — Helicopter Squadron Flight Surgeon from 1965 to 1966.

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