

**Indiana University-Purdue University at Indianapolis  
Retiring Faculty Recognition Luncheon—May 3, 2011**

**Richard L. Schreiner, MD  
Edwin L. Gresham Professor and Chairman  
Department of Pediatrics  
Physician-in-Chief, James Whitcomb Riley Hospital for Children**

Richard Schreiner has been a faculty member of the Indiana University School of Medicine for 40 years and served as Chair of the Department of Pediatrics and Physician-in-Chief of the James Whitcomb Riley Hospital for Children for 22 of those years. During his tenure as chair, he guided the Department of Pediatrics to become one of the premier in the nation. With a combination of common sense, humility and risk taking he built the department from 40 faculty to more than 230, from 60<sup>th</sup> in extramural NIH research funding to 17<sup>th</sup>, from 0 endowed chairs to 22, from 30 pediatric residents to 150 - while creating a \$2.5 million endowment for the Physician Scientist Training Program, a \$2.5 million endowment for the Dyson Pediatric Residency Program, a \$9 million endowment for the Pediatric Education Program, a \$12 million Diabetes Research Program, and a \$475 million 300 bed inpatient addition. He did this without a business plan or a mission statement – he did it around his passion for providing the best care possible for all children. Perhaps his greatest contribution, which is less tangible, was developing the Department of Pediatrics with a culture infused with collegiality, respect for one another, excellent care and caring, and simple values of recognizing and valuing everyone - from child to parent to grandparent, to sibling to housekeeper to clerk to nurse. Dr. Schreiner sees everyone as worthy and equal. Unbeknownst to most people, Dr. Schreiner always carries an extra \$100 bill in his pocket. Although known to stretch a dollar to its maximum (he proudly boasts that he still wears his dad's hand-me-down sport coat), he is also known to be extraordinarily generous. One day while walking through the Riley Outpatient Center he passed by the information desk where a woman was standing with her two young children, one in a wheelchair. She was sobbing because she had just discovered her car had been mistakenly towed from the parking garage. Rich immediately handed her the \$100 bill and she was able to retrieve her car immediately and head back to her home.

Dr. Schreiner and his wife Pat, a long time nurse at Riley Hospital, have four wonderful children and now three grandchildren. Their youngest child, Kelley, has Down Syndrome. Dr. Schreiner has been a leading advocate for special needs children throughout his career, and with Kelley often speaks to large and small audiences throughout Indiana and the country. In addition, he visits every family when their child is admitted to Riley Hospital with a diagnosis of Down Syndrome and provides hands on support and a compassionate listening ear during their child's hospitalization.

People often ask how Dr. Schreiner was able to create truly one of the best pediatric departments in the world at Riley Hospital. One key was Dr. Schreiner's unique ability to recruit talented faculty and enable them to follow their passion (it didn't matter what that passion was as long as it added to the richness of the Department – in research, teaching, advocacy, volunteer community programming or clinical care). As long as faculty worked hard and strove for excellence, Dr. Schreiner was there to enable that individual to succeed to the highest level – he genuinely saw that the only reason the chairman's office existed was to enable faculty to be excellent, productive and happy. But perhaps the most important reason that he was so successful is his total lack of ego – he never let himself get in the way of helping other faculty and staff achieve the very best. Dr. Schreiner stepped down as Chair of the

Department and Physician Chief of Hospital in 2009 but, thankfully, continues to work with Riley Hospital and with the Riley Children's Foundation to share its stories and raise funds to support this great legacy.

James Lemons, MD  
Professor Emeritus  
Section of Neonatal-Perinatal Medicine  
IU School of Medicine

Source for above: [https://academicaffairs.iupui.edu/media/7960c4e1-f16d-4edb-bc2d-fb659d985103/TEeF9Q/AAContent/03-Events/Faculty%20Retirement%20Luncheon/2011\\_Tribute\\_Booklet.pdf](https://academicaffairs.iupui.edu/media/7960c4e1-f16d-4edb-bc2d-fb659d985103/TEeF9Q/AAContent/03-Events/Faculty%20Retirement%20Luncheon/2011_Tribute_Booklet.pdf) (see pp. 62-63)