

SAHC's Pathologists Set to Retire

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(Alton, IL) – Three pathologists on the medical staff of Saint Anthony's Health Center -- Dr. Paul Stromsdorfer, Dr. Isidro Tolod and Dr. Vidya Deshpande -- are set to retire on Friday, May 30.



In recognition for their decades of service, a retirement reception will be held on Thursday, May 29, from 3 to 6 p.m. in the Perpetual Help Center on the campus of Saint Anthony's Health Center. The reception is open to the public.

Two of the doctors, Dr. Stromsdorfer and Dr. Tolod, have been working together for the last 34 years. Dr. Stromsdorfer started as the director of pathology at Saint Joseph's Hospital in 1966, and was joined by Dr. Tolod in 1980. Dr. Deshpande joined the team in May 2004.

"I was offered the position at Saint Joseph's laboratory in the mid-60s, straight out of a pathology residency," Dr. Stromsdorfer says. "I came on staff there simultaneously as a consultant at Saint Anthony's. At that time, Saint Anthony's was an infirmary, a chronic care institution."

"Back then, Saint Anthony's did not do surgery. It was mostly clinical," Dr. Tolod says. "We would cover for Dr. Halley -- Saint Anthony's pathologist at the time."

The duo's commitment to their craft paid off. After Saint Joseph's Hospital filed for bankruptcy in 1989, Saint Anthony's acquired the hospital and renamed the facility Saint Clare's Hospital, the doctors were invited to take over the Saint Anthony's pathology lab.

"I owe a great deal to Saint Anthony's previous Pathology Director, Dr. Henry Halley and CEO William Kessler," says Dr. Stromsdorfer.

The doctors said they have been amazed by the vast improvements in the quality of microscopes and techniques over the length of their career.

"Pathology has moved so fast. In the past it was difficult to identify a tumor, but now it can be done faster. We can even determine how certain tumors will respond to different treatments," says Dr. Tolod.

"Pathology involves a great deal of continuous learning. All medicine progresses, but pathology seems to progress in a very rapid fashion," adds Dr. Stromsdorfer. "For every new book that is written in pediatrics and surgery, there are 10 textbooks written in the various fields of anatomic and surgical pathology, hematology and oncology."

Dr. Tolod plans on spending his retirement making up for lost time by traveling and seeing his family.

“I really enjoyed working but I wasn’t there all the time for my family’s events. I was busy with work,” he says.

While Dr. Stromsdorfer is ready to take a step back, he still has a desire to remain on a part time or consultant level with Saint Anthony’s.

“I still want to learn, and an important aspect of pathology is that you want to learn something new every day.”

Vance Hatcher, Director of Saint Anthony’s Laboratory, adds, “I’ve had the pleasure to work with Paul and Sid for the past 15 years. In addition to being close colleagues, they are even closer friends. They have made my work here so much more enjoyable. They’re well respected and are going to be missed around here. I pray that the next phase of their lives is as successful as this one has been.”

“I made the right decision about a career path. I have continued to be stimulated by the new development in my field,” says Dr. Stromsdorfer. “One of the nicest experiences I have had is the continuous relationship with the Sisters and working with all of the religious orders whether it was with the Daughters of Charity or the Sisters of Saint Francis of the Martyr Saint George.”

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