



Sara Szuchet

December 22, 1932 - July 31, 2024

Sara Szuchet, aged 91, passed away peacefully in her sleep on July 31, 2024, in Moorestown, N.J. Born on December 22, 1932, in Berezne, Poland, Sara moved to Argentina during her early childhood, where she embarked on a lifelong journey of scientific inquiry and discovery fueled both by innate curiosity and a strong desire to serve humankind.

A graduate of the University of Buenos Aires, where she earned a degree in Chemistry, Sara was awarded a scholarship to pursue a PhD in physical biochemistry at Cambridge University in the UK. Her academic journey continued with a postdoctoral fellowship at Princeton University. Sara began her career in academia at SUNY Buffalo where her lab used technology to characterize proteins that she had developed while at Princeton. Her research took a personal turn after her sister and niece were diagnosed with multiple sclerosis (MS), leading her to dedicate her efforts to understanding the etiology and pathogenesis of MS, despite having no background in neuroscience or cell biology. She joined the nascent Department of Neurology at the University of Chicago in 1976 under the leadership of Barry Arnason, initially as a research fellow supported by the National Multiple Sclerosis Society, and then soon after as an Assistant Professor and rising over the years to the rank of Professor of Neurology. Sara's groundbreaking work challenged existing models of oligodendrocyte biology and myelin membrane assembly, significantly advancing the field. Read about her research here: <http://voices.uchicago.edu/szuchet/>. She continued her research at full throttle

until it was cut short by the effects of the pandemic and subsequent health problems. She retired from the University of Chicago at the age of 90! Sara's passion for science was matched by her commitment to her family. She is survived by her daughter, Vivianna Van Deerlin, son-in-law, Peter Van Deerlin, and grandchildren, Barry and Daniel Van Deerlin. She was preceded in death by her parents, Jontel Szuchet and Ita-Lea Hendler, and her older siblings, Efrain and Clara Szuchet. Sara's life was a testament to her strong principles and her desire to serve humanity through science.

A memorial to honor Sara's life and legacy will be announced at a future date. In lieu of flowers, contributions can be made to the Sara Szuchet Neuroimmunology Research Fund at the University of Chicago Medicine, an endowed fund supporting research and other initiatives related to multiple sclerosis and neuroimmunology.

Contributions can be sent to the University of Chicago Gift Administration and Business Data, Dr. Sara Szuchet Memorial, 5235 S. Harper Court, 4th Floor, Chicago, IL 60615, or online at <https://giving.uchicago.edu/drsara-szuchet>.

Cemetery Details

PRIVATE INTERMENT

Tribute Wall

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“ My greatest memory of Sara was experiencing her kindness, patience and compassion as she was one of my very first clients as a newly hired caregiver and current nursing student. Sara taught me so much about what it takes to be an amazing provider and future nurse and I am beyond honored and grateful to have known and served her before her passing. I enjoyed our many wheelchair walks outside, spending time with her and her favorite teddy bears, watching all her favorite movies and shows, and learning how to crochet for her which became one of my favorite downtime hobbies now. She always seemed to light up my day and had very cool stories to tell me about her life like how she taught neuroscience back in Chicago as a professor or her adventures as a kid in Argentina. Although we only had about a month to spend together, I feel very fulfilled that I had the opportunity to serve her as an angel on the gateway to heaven. I will never forget how much she has taught me and the new experiences and perspectives I've gained throughout my time with her. Sara will have a special place in my heart.



Sincerely,

Alysha Khem (on behalf of Unity Love Home Healthcare)

Alysha - August 07, 2024 at 05:50 PM

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“ My greatest memory of Sara is her desire and thirst for knowledge and community. Her quest in her profession as well as her personal life exemplified this tremendously. Sara exuded commitment to task and passion to purpose. It was a HONOR & PRIVILEGE to know her and her family which she so gratuitously shared throughout the course of our relationship. My family and I extend our gratitude, appreciation and thanks to Peter and Viviana for sharing their most prized familial treasure.

Sincerely
Mr. & Mrs. McQuarter
Semper Fi



Mr. & Mrs. McQuartrt - August 02, 2024 at 01:51 PM