



Sariel G.G. Ablaza M.D. died after a long illness at home in Moorestown, New Jersey on January 14, 2019. He was born in Hagonoy, Bulacan, Philippines to Paciencia Gutierrez and Cipriano Ablaza. Sariel graduated from the University of the Philippines, College of Medicine in 1951, and completed his Thoracic Surgery residency at Hahnemann Medical College and Hospital in Philadelphia, and The Maryland General Hospital. He specialized in Cardiac and Thoracic Surgery and had a long and distinguished career practicing in Philadelphia and New Jersey.

Dr. Ablaza was Chairman of Cardiopulmonary Surgery at Albert Einstein Medical Center, Northern Division from 1972-1987 and Clinical Professor at Medical College of Pennsylvania, where he also served as Chief of Thoracic and Cardiovascular Surgery. He wrote and published over 40 scientific articles on surgery and held a patent for the surgical device for treatment of dissecting aneurysms. He retired from private practice in 1996.

Dr. Ablaza was a stalwart among Filipino surgeons in America, having served as president of the Philippine Society of Filipino Surgeons of America, and the founder and first chairman of the Board of the Philippine Surgeons' Charities, Inc. Beyond the confines of the operating table, he served as the President of the Philippine Economic and Cultural Endowment (PEACE), a U.S. based charitable organization from 1994-1996. It was during his term as its Artesian Wells Committee Chairman that he linked PEACE with the Commission on Filipinos Overseas to construct potable water sources for underprivileged communities in the Philippines.

Forever grateful to his alma mater, Dr. Ablaza had time and again supported the advancement of the faculty and students of the University of the Philippines' College of Medicine. Upon being nominated as its first "Balik-Professor" in 1981, he regularly visited the college and had been involved in the training of its students and residents. As a testament to his dedication in improving the quality of medical instruction, [Dr. Ablaza established the Sariel Ablaza and Andie Ablaza professorial Chair 1983 and 2000, respectively. The Sariel Ablaza professorial chair was noted for being the first funded by an individual in the college, and ushered in a movement from other alumni to support more than 100 professorial chairs in the College of Medicine.](#)

Dr. Ablaza's devotion to the UP College of Medicine did not end there. He currently has scholarships to help both needy and academically deserving students with tuition, fees, books and living expenses for the four years of medical school. Among the many awards he received, the Lingkod sa Kapwa Pilipino Award, bestowed in 2004 at Malacanan Palace, by President Arroyo was the ultimate recognition of a life dedicated to the service of the professional advancement of Filipino surgeons and the UP College of Medicine.

Sariel touched many lives as a teacher, leader, physician and friend. His hobbies and interests included gardening, poetry, raising orchids, and cooking Filipino food for his family and friends.

Sariel is survived by his wife, Andie (Braunstein) and their daughter, Alixandra. He is also survived by his children from a prior marriage, David (Alyssa), Brian, Sheri Locarno (Mario) and Valerie and grandchildren Caitlin Ablaza, Brendan Locarno,

Marco Locarno and Luke, Thomas, Mary, DJ and Nicky Ablaza. He was preceded in death by his sisters Elsie Ablaza, Leiwayway Garcia and brother Ismael Ablaza. His surviving siblings Nora DeLeon, Lulu Samin and Lydia Lu share in our loss. A special thanks to his loving caregiver and friend, Maria LaTouche-Davis. Sariel leaves behind a large and loving extended family here and in The Philippines. His family and friends will miss his generosity, sensitivity, and intelligence. Ashes will be distributed to his family. In lieu of flowers, contributions can be made to: UPMASA (Sariel Ablaza Scholarship), C/O Dr. Rolando Perez, 717 Sherbrook Drive, Silver Spring, MD 20904.