

## Umberto Saffiotti (1928-2020)



Umberto Saffiotti of Bethesda, MD, died peacefully at home with his family. Umberto was born January 22, 1928, in Milan, Italy, into a family of educators, health professionals, and public servants. After classical lyceum and medical studies, he specialized in occupational medicine at the Clinica del Lavoro Luigi Devoto. Umberto left Milan in 1960

to join the Division of Oncology at the Chicago Medical School. In 1968, he moved to the National Cancer Institute, in Bethesda, where he spent the rest of his professional life. His work on cancer causation included interdisciplinary efforts to regulate environmental carcinogens and contributed to the establishment of OSHA and EPA. As the “politics of cancer” during the Nixon administration increasingly undermined the scientific quality of research and contributions to regulatory and public health policies, Umberto resigned from the leadership of NCI’s Carcinogenesis program in 1976. He continued to head the Laboratory of Experimental Pathology at NCI until his retirement. Umberto’s work focused on respiratory carcinogenesis, especially risks from silica and asbestos. He cherished collaboration and friendships with colleagues in the lab and around the world and was a dedicated mentor to several generations of young researchers. We still remember his lecture “Silicosis and lung cancer: A fifty-year perspective” given at the 68th National Congress of the Italian Society of Occupational Medicine (Parma, 2005) where, as a keynote speaker, Umberto had the opportunity to summarize his scientific legacy.