



## **Uniformed Services University**

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## **News Release**

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### **Obituary: Cinda Jane Pieres Helke**

**BETHESDA, Md.** – Cinda Jane Pieres Helke, 53, a biomedical research scientist, medical educator, and academic administrator died on June 13, 2004. She had cancer.

Dr. Helke made significant research contributions to understanding how the nervous system influences cardiovascular function in health and in diseases such as diabetes. She published over 120 research papers and book chapters, presented her research work in numerous seminars nationally and internationally, and her research was continuously supported by grants from the National Institutes of Health for more than 22 years. Her skill as a lecturer and teacher of pharmacology to medical students at the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences (USU) was recognized by many teaching awards from the students. She directed the Neuroscience Program at the same institution, developing that graduate program into a model interdisciplinary doctoral program. In her most recent position as Associate Dean of Graduate Education in the School of Medicine at USU, she was a constant champion for the needs of graduate students, a driving force for providing excellence in their training, and promoted the growth, diversity, and modernization of the graduate programs.

Dr. Helke, a resident of Montgomery County, was a native of Iowa. She graduated from Creighton University School of Pharmacy and received her Ph.D. in pharmacology from Georgetown University. After a postdoctoral fellowship at the National Institutes of Health, she joined the faculty at the newly established Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences in Bethesda where she attained the rank of Professor in 1988.

Dr. Helke's professional memberships included the American Society of Pharmacology and Experimental Therapeutics, where she served as Secretary-Treasurer, the Society for Neuroscience, the International Society of Autonomic Neuroscience, the American Diabetes Association, and the American Association of Medical Colleges Graduate Research and Education Group (GREAT).

She was a member of Cedar Lane Unitarian Universalist church, where she was a member of the adult choir and served as chair of the Music Committee. Her love of music and the performing arts also lead her to sing with the Treble Tones (Montgomery County womens group under direction of Rosemary Wasser), and to sing and tour with the VA-National Medical Musical Group (under direction of Victor Wahby). She was a member of the Kennedy Center Circles, the National Symphony Orchestra Association, and Strathmore Hall Arts Center.

Survivors include her husband of nearly 30 years, Joel E. Helke of Rockville; her mother, Lorna R. Pieres of Sun City, AZ; a sister, Mariann Peterson of Des Moines, IA., and two brothers, Gerald. M. Pieres of Phoenix, AZ, and Patrick Pieres of Simi Valley, CA.

A memorial service will be held on Thursday, June 17<sup>th</sup> at 11:00am at Cedar Lane Unitarian Universalist Church, 9601 Cedar Lane in Bethesda, MD. Memorial contributions may be made to the Graduate Education Fund (HJF) at the Uniformed Services University, the Cedar Lane Unitarian Universalist Church music program, or the House of Ruth (Washington, D.C.).