Oliver H. Dabezies, Jr, MD (1930-2001)

Oliver H. Dabezies, Jr, MD, an internationally known leader in the field of ophthalmology and long-time clinical professor of ophthalmology at Tulane Medical School, died June 23, 2001, in New Orleans, La. He was 71 years old. Dr Dabezies was a New Orleans native and received his medical degree from Tulane. He continued his medical training in New Orleans, completing an internship at Charity Hospital of Louisiana and a residency at the Eye, Ear, Nose and Throat Hospital. From 1958 to 1960, as a captain in the army, Dr Dabezies was director of the residency program of Walter Reed Memorial Hospital in Washington, DC.

Early in his career, he headed the American National Standards Institute Committee, which wrote regulations adopted by the Food and Drug Administration to prevent contamination and resulting blindness from the use of contaminated contact lens care products. Dr Dabezies continued to teach after retiring from private practice in 1999. He received Tulane Medical School’s Distinguished Service Award in 1994 and was named the Tulane Alumni Association’s outstanding alumnus in 1995.

Dr Dabezies served on the board of the Southern Eye Bank in New Orleans for more than 42 years and was its president at the time of his death. He was the first recipient of the Eye Bank’s Distinguished Service Award. He was former president of the New Orleans Academy of Ophthalmology and organized the academy’s quarterly educational meetings. Dr Dabezies treasured ophthalmic heritage and was an avid historian. He authored comprehensive histories of the Southern Eye Bank, the Tulane University Department of Ophthalmology, and the New Orleans Academy of Ophthalmology as well as The History of Ophthalmology in the American Medical Association. He was a founder of the Contact Lens Association of Ophthalmologists, served as its executive vice president for 11 years, and authored its textbook on contact lenses. More recently, he created the International Contact Lens Society of Ophthalmologists.

Dr Dabezies earned both the Honor and Senior Honor Awards from the American Academy of Ophthalmology and served on its board. The academy also named him the guest of honor at its 1995 annual meeting. A former secretary of the American Medical Association’s Ophthalmology Section, Dr Dabezies was to receive the section’s highest award, the Howe Medal in Ophthalmology, at the American Medical Association’s annual meeting this year.

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