



Honoring the Life of a Visionary

Robert “Bob” Dailey, MD

Bob Dailey, one of the giants and true pioneers of Emergency Medicine, passed away recently. Dr. Dailey was part of the small circle of visionaries who helped bring Emergency Medicine into being as a specialty. After assisting in its development at USC, he came to Fresno in 1974 to establish one of the earliest Emergency Medicine residency programs in the country at Valley Medical Center. His first graduating class in 1976—Ted Shigyo, Eric Platz, Bill Webster, and Robert Knopp—set the stage for a program that would shape generations of physicians and serve as a model for training nationwide. Following the successful launch of the Fresno program, Dr. Dailey went on to found the Emergency Medicine residency program at Highland Hospital in Oakland, further extending his impact on the specialty in California and beyond.

On the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the UCSF Fresno residency he founded, Dr. Dailey reflected with characteristic wit and humility on his role in building the program. He recalled with pride the video commentary he had recorded about the early days, joking that it was “terrific” and probably better than anything he could do now. He also relayed two favorite stories: that his greatest talent was selecting staff and residents who were “more gifted than I,” and that he once sketched out the national guidelines for Emergency Medicine residencies in about 20 minutes—on the back of a napkin, while sitting in the sun outside his Fresno apartment. These anecdotes capture both his humor and the bold, improvisational spirit that defined the early years of the specialty.

Dr. Dailey’s vision created some of the first ER programs in the nation at a time when the future of the field was far from certain. His courage and imagination established a foundation at UCSF Fresno that has grown into one of the most respected residency programs in the country, training physicians who serve communities across the nation.

Thank you, Bob, for becoming enchanted with Emergency Medicine, for daring to imagine what it could become, and for leaving behind a legacy that endures in every physician trained, every patient cared for, and every innovation born of the programs you started. We are proud to carry your vision forward.