

Testimony of a fitting tribute for Dr. Arcio Peñaloza Rosas

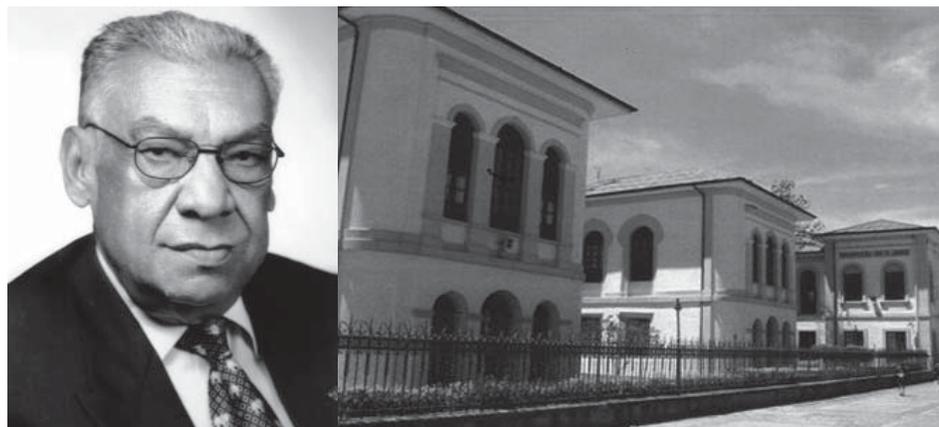
Luciano Aponte, MD¹

¹ Former President. Asociación Colombiana de Gastroenterología

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Brief oration presented by former president of the Colombian Association of Gastroenterology Dr. Luciano Aponte Lopez to commemorate the distinguished career of service of Dr. Arcio Penaloza Rosas who was Honorary Professor of Medicine at Universidad del Rosario and the la Fundacion Ciencias de la Salud, Hospital de San José. Presented on behalf of the Colombian Association of Gastroenterology in a special ceremony during the National Convention of Gastroenterology held in Cartagena de Indias on September 18, 2009.



Mr. President Dr. Marcelo Hurtado and honorable members of the Board of Directors, Honorable Presidents and Boards of Directors of the Associations of Digestive Endoscopy, Colorectal Surgery and Hepatology, Honorable former presidents, invited foreign professors, members present, ladies and gentlemen.

Honorary Professor Alvaro Caro Mendoza, who is also being honored tonight by our Association.

Very Distinguished Professor Arcio Peñaloza, Peñaloza Ramirez family:

With personal emotion and respect, I perform the mission from our medical community of awarding this parchment as an expression the sincere acknowledgement by the Association and by Colombian Gastroenterology of the commendable and unique work for the nation, developed by you, Professor Arcio Peñaloza. I say this with emotion and

respect, because the student's encounter with his mentor in enduring moments, like this moment, one, may be the ultimate expression of gratitude.

Arecio Peñaloza's educational work is unique, and I would say unusual in our environment. It is not easy to find cases similar to his, when he has dedicated more than 60 years to a single hospital institution, Hospital San José, in Bogota. In our environment discipline, perseverance and tenacity to work against the odds are not abundant. We are inclined to follow the easy path and let ourselves be overcome by the first obstacle.

Our Liberator, Simon Bolivar, said "Glory and greatness consist in being useful." And you Professor Arecio Peñaloza have exceeded. Your life journey has been marked by difficulties, all overcome. The rooms and corridors of the centenary Hospital San José are very loyal and silent witnesses of your struggle. Let the heart be sincere and pay attention because as the poet and surgeon Alfonso Bonilla Naar said on a similar occasion: "This is a night for fishing memories."

You saw how the initial bronchoesophagology service was divided to give birth to two disciplines, from which the endoscopy service was born. The beautiful watercolor paintings by Manuel Venegas Gallo must now be going through your mind. In the absence of photographs Gallo painted those pictures to embody the findings made with some Ruddock peritoneoscopy equipment. Remember that, according to the Argentinian Marcelo Roger, cholangiography was performed with a transhepatic puncture of the gallbladder. You lived in the hazardous and complicated days of rigid endoscopy. Dilatations using Hurst bougies, retrograde gastrostomy with Tucker bougies, or those string guided ones used before the invention of the metallic Eder Puestow stringless dilator. What bravery, what daring, but also what skill! To use, Browne-McHardy esophageal pneumatic balloon dilation for the first time in Colombia! All of your experiences with biliopancreatic catheterization were presented at the convention in Monteria and then published. Your gastroenterology and endoscopy service, beginning in 1961, the year of its establishment, has, under your talented and successful leadership, linked Colombia with global gastroenterology.

Under the aegis and direction of founder Dr. Carlos Camacho, the country enjoyed the visit of University of Illinois Professor Paul Hollinger, who taught about esopha-

geal endoscopy during the first course on Gastroenterology, lectures on esophageal surgery by John H Garlock, and by Seymour J. Gray on gastric cancer, stress, hormones and peptic ulcers, by Franz J Infelfinger on biliary dyskinesia and other topics, bad absorption, and by Hans Popper on hepatic cirrhosis.

We all know the dominance the service acquired in the practice of laparoscopy and in the management of liver biopsies with the celebrated Menghini and Vin Silverman needles, when the advent of ultrasound had not yet been envisioned.

Pioneers from France like Debray, Housset, Hivet, Leger, Laurent, Vicari, and Jean Pierre, others from Japan including Sugura, Shinya, Fujita, Nakajima and Oguro, Germans like Harold Henning, Italians such as Dagnini, Spanish pioneers such as Armengol-Miro and Pou Fernandez, and many more from Argentina, Chile, Mexico and Bolivia have all given science and light to teaching.

Forty-four students have been trained and now relieve the pain of many Colombians across the width and length of the national geography. All actions and experiences were shared with the national medical community united through our association through each and every one of its conventions.

The gastroenterology service under your wise leadership has grown as soul mate of our Association. And if all this were not enough, on the golden fiftieth anniversary of his service, he introduced us to Nib Soehendra. How can we not but admire him? Why shouldn't we worship his magnificent work? By his side, we have learned lessons of integrity, character and devotion to the creative effort. His honesty has met every test. We have never known him to tire or slow down.

But all this would not have been possible without the company and support of his noble and dignified wife, Doña Blanca. Always aware of the sleepless struggle, the successes, the momentary failures, and so much more to her as well, many thanks. We are sure that their son, Arecio Peñaloza Ramirez will only enlarge upon his father's work.

Looking at this loyal homage, I seem to feel together with all of you that "there is a light at the gate and a guardian in the estate." If in any case we could present, on our part, some raving, you can still light the way with the intimate conviction that you will have company.

Thank you very much.