



Tierry F. Garcia, MD (1919-2016) “The Most Good for the Most People”

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Dr. Tierry Garcia was born December 20, 1919 as one of nine children of Dr. Silverio F. Garcia from Bocaue, Bulacan (UPCM 1912) and Elisea Trijo Ballesteros (UP Pharmacy) from Sorsogon. He was married to Amanda, wife of 63 years, and the couple was blessed with three children: Tierry, Jr., Sofia Garcia – Buder, M.D. (a third generation UPCM graduate) and Angela.

According to Sofia he *“led a life of service to God and to his fellowmen, both professionally and personally. His greatest professional legacies for posterity include being among the founding fathers and past Chairman of the Department of Ear, Nose and Throat at the UP-PGH; the Philippine Society of Otorhinolaryngology; and the Manila Doctors Hospital. He was the last of the small group of pioneers over six decades ago who helped pave the way for the delivery of modern day ENT care to the Filipino people whom he loved.”*

She continues: *“like his father before him, a former surgeon and governor of Sorsogon,”* he *“strived towards doing **‘the most good for the most people’**.”*

On a personal note, his father used to play tennis with my grandfather Col. Antonio Martinez, a Bicolano who was Philippine Constabulary Officer in Sorsogon at that time. Because of this, a special bond was formed between Dr. Tierry and my father. Here are the thoughts and recollections of my father Dr. Armando T. Chiong on this great man:

“I first met Dr. Tierry Garcia in 1960. I was 30 years old and he was 40. My first impression of Dr. Garcia was that he was a visionary leader with strong intellect. When he talked in meetings and conferences everybody listened. He was well-respected such that he was able to establish the first separate Department of Otolaryngology from Ophthalmology at Manila Doctors Hospital in 1956 in spite of much objections. He established his clinic beside famous physicians with the likes of Dr. Ambrocio Tangco, founder of Department of Orthopedics at the Philippine General Hospital; Benjamin Barrera, then Dean of UP College of Medicine; Dr. Gonzalo Austria, former Dean of UE College of Medicine; Dr. Constantino Manahan, world renowned OB-Gynecologist; and Dr. Carlos Sevilla, famous EENT specialist who was among the 14 of his co-founders of Manila Doctors



Hospital. Most importantly, he also founded the Philippine Society of Otolaryngology and Bronchoesophagology in 1956.”

“When he left for the United States in 1972, I took over his clinic and practice. All his medical instruments that he left with me are still intact and I have them in our hospital in Malolos, Bulacan. As for my last impression of Dr. Garcia, he was a generous and kind person. He helped in my first appointment to the Department of Otolaryngology at UP College of Medicine in 1964 apart from giving me his clinic at the Manila Doctors Hospital.”

He graduated from UPCM at the top 10 of his class in 1942 and ranked in the top 10 of the Physician’s Licensure Board Exams followed by a three-year residency training in surgery at PGH then another residency in the U.S. finishing as chief resident in Otolaryngology at Columbia Presbyterian. This prepared him well for the trail blazing and pioneering work. His bold, and inspiring spirit proved a great influence to succeeding generations of what he had ascribed as the “best and the brightest” otolaryngologist Fellows of PSOHNS now numbering 694 from the original heroic nine that rallied to establish a separate society 60 years ago in the midst of great opposition.

He firmly believed that serving others was the “true path to happiness” as gleaned from one of my own conversations with him after a PGH grand rounds he attended. As proof, he established a PGH Patient Endowment Fund in ORL to help indigent patients undergo much needed surgeries with meager financial resources.

We have been most fortunate indeed that he was able to join us in the 2015 Annual Congress last December and on the 60th Anniversary of the Philippine Society of Otolaryngology-Head and Neck Surgery last February. Proof perhaps that not all “the good die young.” He has bequeathed to us a most precious legacy, a specialty we have chosen as careers and where we have all found some of life’s most important rewards. In his own words, a meaningful life that can only be measured by what he thought constitutes “true happiness” – a life lived in the service of our God and country, while enjoying a journey filled to the brim by love of family, friends and fellowmen.