

TOP DOCTORS 2012



Leaving a Legacy

Thanks to a long and successful career, Karl Rudat left his profession better than when he entered it

For nearly thirty-five years, **Karl Rudat** was an accomplished and influential presence in the Dean Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology. Some of his earliest patients have welcomed great-grandchildren under his care. Colleagues describe his work style simply: Make decisions based on the best interest of patients, not what would be easiest for him.

On December 6, 2011, Rudat unexpectedly passed away but his legacy remains. Colleagues say the Service to Profession recognition is a result of his high level of care, his passion and dedication to the field and his willingness to impart knowledge to others.

"He was kind and he was ahead of his time in terms of letting patients do what they wanted to do," says **Jean Demopoulos**, who worked with Rudat for thirty-two years and whose own children he delivered. "Karl was always pretty laid-back. He never interfered if

"He treated everybody the same. Whatever. It doesn't matter who you are. He was always very genuine in terms of giving people good care."

there was no reason to interfere. If people wanted to reach over and grab their own baby, he'd let them do it. He was pretty non-judgmental."

"He was caring as well as funny sometimes. People probably don't realize that he was funny," laughs **Valerie Morey**, his nurse for twenty years.

Numerous stories on his online memorial reflect the care and attention he gave to his patients.

"He treated everybody the same. Whatever. It doesn't matter who you are. He was always very genuine in terms of giving people good care," says **Joseph Fok**, Rudat's colleague of thirty years.

"Even though something may have not gone well in the hospital, he could return to the clinic and still be pleasant with patients," adds Morey.

"He treated each one separately as an individual case. In one room you could go in and it could be he's discussing cancer outcome. In another room he goes in and he's talking to somebody about 'How's your kids?' because she's there for a yearly exam. That can be a challenge."

In addition to his professionalism and warm bedside manner, Rudat was an excellent teacher. As a friend and peer, Fok says he consulted with Rudat on a daily basis.

"He's one of the few people, if you have some difficulty, you would say, 'Let's talk to Karl,'" says Fok.

For Rudat, work was not a nine-to-five job, but rather his life. On call or not, he was always willing to take phone calls or come into the clinic or hospital if needed.

"When you do it for thirty-some years and still have the enthusiasm ... and to love what you do, it's not always easy," says Fok.

Rudat's legacy lives on through the indelible mark he left on his patients, his colleagues and his family.

"We miss him every day," says Demopoulos.

As part of Madison Magazine's Top Doctors survey, we ask physicians to recommend a peer for his or her extraordinary work in advancing the practice of medicine. This year's Service to Profession Award honors ob-gyn Karl Rudat posthumously.