Brown Honors Dr. Aronson, Founding Medical School Dean, with $3M Endowed Fund

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PROVIDENCE – In formal regalia, Brown Chancellor Thomas J. Tisch formally announced the Dean Stanley M. Aronson Fund for Research and Innovation on Saturday, May 24, during a reception and ceremony at the Warren Alpert Medical School to honor the school’s founding dean.

“Dr. Aronson is an adored giant in the worlds of medicine and medical education – and also in the life of Brown and Rhode Island,” Tisch, a Brown alumnus, said. “To have this important fund named in his honor is a wonderful and fitting tribute.”

The fund is endowed with $3 million. Proceeds will allow the medical dean to make strategic investments in faculty, educational programs, and research facilities that would not otherwise be possible.

“Every dean builds on the work of previous deans,” said Dr. Jack A. Elias, dean of medicine and biological sciences at Brown, “but Stanley Aronson was asked to build a medical school from the ground up. Nothing compares to that.”

The event was attended by Dr. Aronson’s family, friends, supporters, colleagues and former students during his tenure; many of whom reminisced about visiting Dr. Aronson’s farm in Rehoboth where he nurtured a seedling from the Tree of Hippocrates in Greece, and which now stands tall in front of the Arnold Laboratory. They recalled the gift of his mentorship, his boundless love of learning, and his work ethic which inspired them. Others recalled the resonance of his deep, eloquent voice and his tall presence, matched with great warmth, empathy, and admonishment to call him anytime if they were struggling or had a particular problem. To many, he was a father-figure.

Dr. Aronson beamed as he greeted guests, among whom were several of his successors to the deanship. During his brief remarks, he paid homage to them and noted that there were several deans in medical schools nationwide who graduated from Brown’s medical school.

He said he was pleased that Dr. Elias and future deans will have a significant additional resource to meet the needs of students and those who will benefit from their training.

“This is a wonderful thing that will give him a wider range of creativity in research, teaching, and certainly in the care of the sick in Rhode Island,” Dr. Aronson said.

The endowed fund certainly was a timely gift. The event was capped with a chorus of Happy Birthday, as the ever-humble nonagenarian prepared to reach another milestone several days after the ceremony. ✯