



# Grover Cleveland High School

## Small Learning Communities

December 2012

Denise Vittor, Principal

# Recent News

## Dr. George Eisenbarth a GCHS Graduate Remembered

### World renowned diabetes researcher at CU Denver dies; colleagues mourn

By Michael Booth  
*The Denver Post* Posted 11/18/12

World-renowned diabetes pioneer Dr. George Eisenbarth, a researcher and director of the Barbara Davis Center for Childhood Diabetes at the University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus, died Tuesday after a struggle with pancreatic cancer. He was 65.

Eisenbarth led research teams that first nailed down Type 1, or juvenile, diabetes as an immune-system disorder. His discoveries altered the ongoing search for a vaccine or cure for the life-threatening disorder, helping to focus attention on genetic causes and methods of stopping the disease before it gets a chance to start in children.

"His devotion to the study of diabetes and his impact on the field was as impactful as the discovery of insulin, in many ways," said Jeffrey Bluestone, a professor of immunology and provost at the University of California, San Francisco.

Colleagues and friends, though, gave equal weight to Eisenbarth's personality. They described him as a warm and welcome presence on the Anschutz campus.

"He could be the strongest advocate for what was needed to support clinical work but also a great campuswide citizen," said Dr. Stephen Daniels, chair of the CU medical school's pediatrics department. "He knew there were a lot of competing needs."

Eisenbarth cemented a friendship on Daniels' first day six years ago, when he found himself stranded after a job interview on an Anschutz campus that felt then like an island. Eisenbarth immediately offered Daniels a ride to his hotel.

"That was a first impression of how he went out of his way to help people," Daniels said.

Eisenbarth combined clinical work with children at the Barbara Davis Center with intensive research, driven by worries about the rapid growth of Type 1 diabetes. (Type 2 diabetes is caused by a combination of genetics and lifestyle factors, including obesity.)

"Every 20 years in the Western world, the rate of Type 1 diabetes doubles," he told a CU campus publication. While some research had focused on diet or other factors, he was interested in a genetic trigger and whether relatively sterile Western life had kept humans away from helpful forms of bacteria that strengthen immune systems.

Work by Eisenbarth and co-researchers helped create tests identifying those most vulnerable to diabetes, and treatments preventing such complications as blindness.

Eisenbarth, a Brooklynite from two parents who never finished high school, won the prestigious Pasteur-Weizmann/Servier International Prize in Biomedical Research, and the Banting Award, the top honor from the American Diabetes Association.

The French prize came with the commendation that "Professor Eisenbarth is one of the greats of diabetes research," and with a more tangible trip to Paris and a \$192,000 award.

Eisenbarth is survived by his wife, Frieda, and son Stephan, both of Denver, and daughter Stephanie, of New Haven, Conn.



Dr. George Eisenbarth was executive director of the Barbara Davis Center



GEORGE EISENBARTH  
Cleveland Circle, Student  
Judge, Herald, Sing, Arista,  
Biology Project Group, Rifle  
Team, Math Team  
Medical Research  
Scholarship Columbia

1965 GCHS  
Yearbook Picture

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