



## Matthew Franklin Mescher

March 22, 1948 - December 21, 2021

Matthew F. Mescher, Ph.D.

Matthew F. Mescher, an icon of Immunology at the University of Minnesota, died on December 21, 2021, of cancer.

Matt was born on March 22, 1948, in South Haven, MI to George and Dixie Mescher. He earned a B.A. in chemistry from Hope College in Holland, MI and a Ph.D. in biochemistry and molecular biology from Harvard University. He then joined the faculty at Harvard before moving to the Molecular Biology Institute in La Jolla, CA. In 1993, he moved to the University of Minnesota (UMN) where he held an endowed professorship in the Department of Laboratory Medicine and Pathology for twenty-two years. His research achievements were recognized by his election to the UMN Academy of Excellence in Health Research and in the American Association of Immunologists President's Symposium.

Matt was a transformational leader in Immunology at UMN. He was charged with revitalizing the community which lacked a national identity and was geographically dispersed across a large campus. He helped form a small group of faculty members, from several UMN departments, who succeeded in forming a new graduate program and a Center for Immunology, with Matt as Director. Under Matt's leadership, the Center for Immunology acquired contiguous laboratory space for a multi-departmental group of faculty members. In his calm and confident way, Matt led the Center to become one of the strongest academic units at UMN and one of the leading Immunology Programs in the country. His contribution to science will remain vital through the Center for Immunology and the on-going research of his many trainees.

Matt was very well read, thoughtful and intrigued by all manner of people and ideas. He had a terrific sense of humor and enjoyed life – he graphed his golf games and his runs, raced his Corvette, played the violin, quoted poetry. He loved the natural world, especially bugs and snakes, much to the delight of his grandchildren. As the oldest of four siblings,

Matt learned leadership skills early on, loved his family and is cherished by his siblings.

Matt adored his wife and his girls, and they adore him.

Matt's legacy will live on through his remarkable, unassuming influence on his family, friends, colleagues and the many people he met over the course of a well-lived life. He was a kind and gentle soul who will be dearly missed.

Matt is preceded in death by his parents Dixie and George and his brother Phil. He is survived by Karen, his high school sweetheart and wife of fifty-two years who resides in Chester, MD- two daughters, Molly Kathryn Mescher of Baltimore MD and Cassandra Lynn McKay (Ryan) of Severna Park, MD; two grandchildren, Evelyn and Tate McKay; a nephew Mike Mescher of New York, NY; a niece Alexandra Jolly of Blowing Rock, NC and his siblings Mary Mescher and Ben Mescher (Cindy) both residing in Chester, MD.

Memorial contributions may be made to the University of Minnesota's Center for Immunology: Mescher Trainee Enhancement Fund, either online at [www.give.umn.edu/giveto/mescher](http://www.give.umn.edu/giveto/mescher) or by check written to UMF with Dr. Mescher/Mescher Fund in memo line and sent to: UMF, PO Box 860233, Minneapolis, MN 55486-0266.

There will be no services at this time.

# Tribute Wall

ZX

“ Matt was a great mentor, no doubt about that. However, somehow my most memorable time was a Christmas Party of CFI, Matt sat with us on a poker table under influence of a cold beer. Zhengguo

---

**Zhengguo Xiao** - January 27 at 02:12 PM

DA

“ For a very memorable time in my life, Matt was my best friend, and I was honored. I will remember him as a kind soul.  
Dave T

---

**davetruax** - December 27, 2021 at 09:13 PM