KYNER RETIRES AFTER 43 YEARS AT KUMC

In June 2013, Joseph Kyner, MD, retired from 43 years of service at the University of Kansas Medical Center (KUMC). For much of his tenure, he wore two hats: professor of medicine in the Division of Metabolism and Endocrinology and associate dean of Continuing Medical Education.

In the latter role, he impressed others with his wit and aplomb in the face of myriad regulatory changes.

The son of a grain elevator operator from Wilson, Kansas, Kyner applied to the University of Kansas School of Medicine in 1955, writing on his application, "I can't help but believe a great deal of satisfaction and happiness can come from a study of medicine if one is concerned with human welfare."

He received his medical degree in 1960 and began his residency in internal medicine under Mahlon Delp. However, in 1962, his training was interrupted by the military draft, and he served as a medical officer with the U.S. Army in Germany for two years.

After his return to KUMC, he completed his residency training as well as a fellowship in endocrinology. He also completed a research fellowship in diabetes at the Joslin Research Labs and Harvard Medical School. He returned to KUMC in 1970 to join the faculty.

He went on sabbatical to Great Britain in 1988 and researched islet antibodies to further the study of diabetes.

In 2008, he was named a KU Distinguished Medical Alumnus.

Graves, who considered Kyner an important mentor in shaping his own career, said that Kyner inspired generations of students, residents and fellow staff members.

"Dr. Kyner taught so many of us how to manage diabetes, how to approach such a complicated set of problems and address the many issues," he said. "One of the many lessons he taught me and I heard him bring home to so many students and residents, you don't treat diabetes, you treat a patient who happens to have diabetes. He made sure you knew the patient, understood who they were and what mattered most to them. He made sure you focused on the whole patient, not the disease."

Joseph Kyner, MD