
Obituary

Harold Rifkin

1916–1997

Dr. Harold Rifkin, President of American Diabetes Association (ADA) from 1985 to 1986, died on May 19 in New York City after a long illness. He is survived by his wife Bibi, his daughters Janet and Phyllis, and his son Matthew. Dr. Rifkin earned worldwide recognition and respect for his contributions to the understanding and treatment of diabetes, and his books, monographs, and numerous clinical and scientific papers had a major impact on the care of people with diabetes. He was the co-editor of *Diabetes Mellitus: Theory and Practice*, and he was the first editor-in-chief of ADA's *Physician's Guide to Non-Insulin-Dependent Diabetes Mellitus*. He also was the chair of the first continuing education program (CEP) conducted by the Association, which occurred in 1984. The program was delivered to about 17,000 physicians in 22 cities in a one-day satellite video conference. It remains the largest CEP ever conducted by the Association, and probably the largest professional education program to be held on any topic in medicine.

Dr. Rifkin graduated from Dalhousie University and received his postgraduate training at the Montefiore Medical Center in New York City and Yale University School of Medicine. He was on the faculties of the Albert Einstein College of Medicine and New York University School of Medicine, and was awarded the honorary Doctor of Science degree by Yeshiva University and the Albert Einstein College of Medicine in 1991, and received a Doctor of Law degree from Dalhousie University.

Dr. Rifkin always worked toward a world without diabetes and for a better life for people affected by diabetes. In addition to his innumerable volunteer activities for the American Diabetes Association, he also established the Rifkin Fund for Diabetes Research, for which he raised nearly one million dollars. Among the many honors he received was the ADA Outstanding Clinician in Diabetes Award in 1980, and the Harold Rifkin Award for Distinguished International Service in the Cause of Diabetes, which the ADA established in his



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honor in 1991. He won the Canadian Diabetes Association's Lilly Award in 1987, and the International Diabetes Federation (IDF) recognized his service and contributions to the international diabetes community by appointing him IDF Honorary President for life.