



**Dr. Robert M. Filler MD, FACS, FRCS, O. Ont**

It is with great sadness that we announce that Dr. Robert. M. Filler passed away on July 2, 2020.

Dr. Filler, a native of Brooklyn, N.Y., graduated cum laude in 1956 from Washington University School of Medicine in St. Louis, Mo. He had since distinguished himself by his reputation as an outstanding pediatric surgeon, first at Harvard Medical School, Children's Hospital in Boston and subsequently at The Hospital for Sick Children, Toronto. Here, he served an unprecedented 18 year term as the Surgeon-in-Chief and Professor of Surgery and Pediatrics at the University of Toronto.

Dr. Filler was an active member in more than a dozen prestigious Canadian and International medical societies. He has published more than 290 original papers and book chapters on a variety of pediatric surgical subjects. He held a six-year governorship in the American College of Surgeons and was elected President of the American Pediatric Surgical Association in 1991.

He is known for his many contributions to the surgical treatment of infants and children. He was recognized as an expert in airway reconstruction and separation of conjoined twins. In 1979 he performed an innovative operation at The Hospital for Sick Children on Herbie, a child from New York. The publicity from this operation helped establish Herbie Fund at the Hospital for Sick Children to help children with serious health problems from around the world.

Dr. Filler was responsible for the training of many pediatric surgeons, medical and post-graduate students. He developed and directed a renowned training program in pediatric general surgery, and attracted outstanding trainees from around the world many of whom now serve in leadership positions worldwide.

In 1995 he initiated a Telemedicine program at Sick Kids, the first in Ontario. He was a founding member of the Canadian Society of Telehealth in 1998 and served as its President from 2000 to 2002. In 2006, the Ministry of Health started the Ontario Telemedicine Network, a province wide telemedicine network which encompasses more than 600 sites. Dr. Filler served as the first Chairman of the Board until 2009. His community activities have included long term memberships on the Clinical Research Advisory Committee for the March of Dimes Birth Defects Foundation, Director of the Ronald McDonald Children's Charities, and Governor of Variety Village.

Dr. Filler was a visiting Professor and invited lecturer nationally and internationally, at numerous universities and conferences around the world. He served as Editor or Associate Editor of many professional publications, including Pediatric Alert, Journal of Pediatric Surgery, Canadian Journal of Surgery, Pediatric Surgery International, and Child Health Alert.

He was awarded the Bronze Star Medal by the U.S. Army for his treatment of Vietnamese children during his one year tour of duty as a military surgeon during the Vietnam War. In his career he received many awards including the Sovereign Order of St. John of Jerusalem, Variety Club's Sir James Carreras' Award, and the Alumni Achievement Award, Washington University School of Medicine. The Hospital for Sick Children has established an endowed Chair in Pediatric Surgery in his name. In 1995 he was awarded the Order of Ontario.

The legacy of Dr. Filler to SickKids to the children he operated upon and saved, to their families, to our society as a whole, to the community of pediatric surgery and in particular to the numerous surgeons he trained and mentored, is immense and will live forever.

**Agostino Pierro**