Walter Wolf, PhD

Walter Wolf, PhD, an AACR member since 1990, died Dec. 25, 2014, at the age of 83. Wolf was the distinguished professor of pharmaceutical sciences at the University of Southern California (USC) School of Pharmacy in Los Angeles.

Wolf, who had been a member of the AACR’s Chemistry in Cancer Research and Tumor Microenvironment Working Groups, was known for his research in radiopharmacy and noninvasive biomedical imaging. He continued his work on nuclear pharmaceuticals until his death.

Wolf was born May 5, 1931, in Frankfurt, Germany, and spent his childhood in Uruguay. He and his family were able to quickly leave Germany following Kristallnacht in 1938, during which his father was among the many Jews arrested that night by the Nazis. Wolf’s mother was able to secure his father’s release and obtain Uruguayan visas soon after that.

Wolf received his bachelor’s and master’s degrees from the University of the Republic in Montevideo, Uruguay, and his doctorate from the Sorbonne in Paris. Wolf joined USC in 1959 and was the longest-serving member of their current faculty. He had served on the Faculty Senate throughout his career, including as president from 1990 to 1991. In 1968, Wolf established the university’s radiopharmacy program, which prepared pharmacists to work with radioactive drugs for diagnostic and therapeutic purposes.

Wolf’s work has been recognized with numerous honors, including the Georg Charles de Hevesy Nuclear Medicine Pioneer Award and the Pioneer Award in Nuclear Pharmacy of the American Pharmaceutical Association. Additionally, the Correlative Imaging Council of the Society of Nuclear Medicine and Molecular Imaging established the Walter Wolf Young Investigator Award to recognize original research in the field of molecular imaging and therapy.