

In Memorium: Dr. Gauri Rajani Varadhachary

HOUSTON: Dr. Gauri Rajani Varadhachary passed away peacefully at home on June 5th due to complications from lung cancer. Her husband, Atul, and her daughters, Tanvi and Riya, were by her side. Varadhachary is also survived by her parents, Drs. Prem & Rekha Rajani, her mother-in-law, Ms. Jamma Varadhachary, her brother Rajeev Rajani and his family Sonia, Yash, and Niki, her in-laws Ajay and Anju Varadhachary, Anju's family, Pratish and Maya Kanani, and a constellation of friends and relatives.

Gauri was born August 25, 1968 in Mumbai, India where she also attended medical school. She moved to Baltimore in 1991 for her Residency in Internal Medicine and to the Baylor College of Medicine in Houston in 1994 for her Fellowship in Hematology and Oncology. Gauri joined Baylor College of Medicine in 2000 as an Assistant Professor in Hematology-Oncology. She moved in 2003 to the Department of GI Medical Oncology at the University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center where she served for almost twenty years, becoming an associate professor in 2006 and full professor in 2012. Throughout her career, she was known for her dedication to quality patient care and for her generosity with her time, energy and empathy.

Gauri was a leading expert in the diagnosis and treatment of unknown (occult) primary tumors,

and she served as the Vice Chair of the National Comprehensive Cancer Network's Guidelines Subcommittee for Occult Primary tumors. Her active research portfolio in pancreatic cancer helped define borderline resectable pancreatic cancer and a multidisciplinary management strategy involving collaborators across the institution and nationally.

She played many different roles at MD Anderson and her influence on the institution will be felt for a long time. As center medical director of the GI Cancer Center, Gauri embraced the Goals of Care initiatives and served on the ICU Utilization Review Committee. In her role as special advisor to the Chief Medical Officer and then the Chief Medical Executive, she provided strategic guidance on building the physician leadership structure across the ambulatory and inpatient spheres, and collaborative leadership on several major initiatives that greatly and positively impacted both patients and the institution. In the months before her passing, she gave of her time to organizing MD Anderson's COVID-19 vaccination efforts for patients, which have helped set the national standard for COVID vaccination among immunocompromised cancer patients. Gauri



has won numerous awards for her work and is an author on over two hundred academic publications. Her colleagues remember her as dedicated to her patients, a selfless mentor, and a compassionate leader.

Gauri's many professional achievements and attributes, though inspiring, were only a part of who she was and her broader impact.

An empathetic and caring woman, Gauri was passionate about social issues, giving generously of her time and money. An orga-

nization that was close to her heart was Pratham, India's largest educational non-profit. She and Atul worked for a year with Pratham in India starting in 1998, helping create Pratham health, a program that reached 65,000 pre-school children in Mumbai, providing them with iron and micronutrients. Gauri continued her involvement with and contributions to Pratham, serving on the Pratham Houston Board for many years. She also generously supported many other organizations in Houston that are doing great work to support vulnerable populations including Daya and other organizations supporting food security, refugees and elder care.

Gauri always prioritized her family and friends along with her professional and philanthropic passions. After her eldest daughter was born, coincident with the completion of her fellowship, Varadhachary took a two-year break to spend time with her daughter, which included the year she spent working with Pratham in India. Over the years, she enjoyed spending time with her daughters, helping them with their homework, teaching them a multitude of skills and having dinner together as a family almost every night. Both her daughters are incredibly thankful to have such

an amazing role model as a mother - they grew up seeing that it is possible to balance an impactful career, a loving family, and fun.

Gauri loved traveling and the outdoors. She organized vacations with family and friends in exotic locations and loved hiking, exploring new cities, and immersing herself in different cultures. Some of her fondest memories included visiting amazing places around the world including, Central and South America, Europe, the Middle East, and India. She also loved the mountains and felt very connected to them (sharing a birthday with the National Parks Service!) and took her family hiking whether they wanted to go or not. When she wasn't traveling, she fulfilled her avid love of the outdoors by tending to her verdant garden. Despite her petite frame, she could lift gigantic bags of mulch and drag heavy trash bags of plants all over the yard. You could find her most Sunday evenings knee-deep in soil, planting new flowers in her garden or enthusiastically planning for the next season. Her daughters loved the dichotomy of the professional, well-dressed, successful career woman and the laughing gardener in an old t-shirt covered in dirt from head to toe.

Gauri was an amazing role model for many and will be remembered by her family, friends, and colleagues as a fountain of laughter, a nurturing friend/mother, and an empathic doctor.

A+ Affordable Insurance
 Excellent Prices for Auto & Homeowners
 Auto Liability from \$39 SR-22
 Immediate Coverage **No Credit Check**
 One Stop Shop for all your insurance needs
713-266-1700
Rajesh Malik (Raj)
 "With you, for you, always"
 Auto • Home • Commercial • Renters • Flood
 7111 Harwin Dr., Suite 274, Houston TX 77036
 aplusaffordableinsurance@hotmail.com
FREE Gift

SONY KOHLI
YOUR REAL ESTATE AGENT
Residential & Commercial
 Call Now **832-766-6662**
 Your Realtor for Home Buying & Quick Sell
 We Have a Team to Assist with Credit Issues
REALM
 Real Estate Professionals

SRI BALAJI BHAVAN
 ... Home of the real "Dosas" ...
Over 200,000 Dosas Served!
 Have you had your "Dosa" yet?
 Also Serving: Excellent Madras Thali (Complete Meal), Paav Bhaji & Delicious Chaat Items. Our timings: Wednesday thru Monday 11AM - 9:30PM
 5655 Hillcroft, (Next to Sari Sapne) Tel: 713-783-1126 • Closed Tuesdays
 The Only Authetic South Indian Vegeterian Restaurant In Town
 "Where Dosa Really Tastes Like Dosa"