



Dedication to Ernest J. Gentchos, MD

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It is our great honor and privilege to dedicate the 24th edition of the *University of Pennsylvania Orthopaedic Journal* to Ernest J. Gentchos, MD, a man whose commitment to education and service to the University of Pennsylvania and beyond are unparalleled.

Dr. Gentchos was born in Greece in 1937. The Greece of his early childhood knew only war and occupation by the armies of Mussolini and Hitler. Many Greeks perished during this occupation, including some of Dr. Gentchos's closest childhood friends. The end of WWII brought no respite, as Greece soon became engulfed in a devastating civil war which lasted until 1953. Due to the conflict and political instability, Dr. Gentchos did not see his father until the age of 11. His father traveled back and forth between the US and Greece and was not allowed back into Greece during the occupation and subsequent civil war. Dr. Gentchos remained in Greece where he lived with his mother and large extended family. In 1948, Dr. Gentchos and his mother escaped Greece and emigrated to the US where they could be reunited with his father.

Dr. Gentchos's first exposure to medicine was as an orderly at his community hospital. He gained an exceptional foundation in human anatomy and pathology by participating in every autopsy he could. He did his undergraduate studies at Benedictine University in Illinois, where he first developed his interest in physics. He then attended medical school at St. Louis University School of Medicine. Again, war dominated his early adulthood. After completing his internship at Albert Einstein Medical Center in Philadelphia, Dr. Gentchos joined the Army and was eventually deployed to Vietnam, where he spent 13 months.

Upon returning from Vietnam, Dr. Gentchos completed a surgical residency at the University of Pennsylvania under the guidance of Dr. William Blakemore and furthered his interests by completing an orthopaedic residency with Dr. Edgar Ralston. Giants walked the earth in those days. Upon completing residency, Dr. Gentchos went into private practice for eight years. He then did a fellowship in spine surgery at Beth Israel Hospital in Boston, MA. After fellowship, Dr. Gentchos returned to private practice in New Jersey but remained active in Penn Orthopaedics through teaching medical students. In 1997, Dr. Gentchos returned home and joined Penn Orthopaedics as a full-time faculty member. For a



Dr. Gentchos at age 10.

decade, he staffed the nonoperative clinic in the Shoulder and Elbow Service, working side-by-side with Drs. Gerald Williams, Joseph Iannotti, and Matthew Ramsey. He then staffed the general nonoperative clinic at HUP.

Dr. Gentchos's commitment to education and lifelong learning is matched only by his generosity. Fifteen years ago, he began endowing scholarships to medical students, undergraduates, and high school students. Currently, he funds scholarships for four medical students at two medical schools, two undergraduates, and one high school student. Over the years, Dr. Gentchos has enabled dozens of students to pursue their dreams. Scholarship recipients have gone into numerous fields, and they have given back as well. And many of them continue to keep in touch with the man whose generosity knows no bounds.

Dr. Gentchos retired from HUP last year, but he can still be found regularly at Friday clinic at the VA. It is only fitting that after a life dominated by war, Dr. Gentchos still dedicates his time to the care of our veterans. Dr. Gentchos remains a vibrant participant in the Penn Orthopaedic community. He is the first person present at HUP Trauma Conference on Mondays and Tuesdays, and he is a regular presence at Orthopaedic Grand Rounds. Whenever we discuss patients who have failed primary and revision surgical intervention, you can always find Dr. Gentchos shaking his head wistfully and reminiscing about the era in which he trained and practiced, one in which physicians had to rely more on their resourcefulness and skill in nonoperative management to overcome limitations in their implants. In a time when we have the latest and greatest implants and technology at our disposal, Dr. Gentchos serves as an invaluable reminder that the simplest solutions still often work the best. Thus, we are proud to honor and dedicate the 24th edition of the *UPOJ* to Ernest J. Gentchos, MD, a fitting tribute to a man who has impacted generations of physicians at Penn Orthopaedics and throughout the medical community.



In 1948, Dr. Gentchos was the 61st American citizen evacuated from his region of Greece since the start of WWII.