

## Obituary



**Prof. Dr. Khalil Al-Shabender 1925–2008**

Though it is vital to write about the pioneers in medical practice in order to keep everybody alert about their outstanding achievements, it is a sad feeling when hearing about their departure. They are dead by body but they are alive in the hearts and the brains of their students.

Professor Khalil Al-Shabender was born in 1925 in the heart of our lovely capital Baghdad, a place called Hyderkhana. Grown up in a distinguished wealthy family, his father was a pioneer solicitor, occupied so many official positions.

He had all his education in Baghdad schools and was very eminent student. After graduation from secondary school with high grade, he had the chance of admission to Baghdad Medical College in 1942 from which he was graduated in 1948. During this period he showed interest in so many social activities, including writing poems or performing theater activities. Moreover, loving and performing many artistic activities. All these activities did not affect his performance as an outstanding medical student with special inclination to the surgical specialty.

After finishing the military service, he was appointed as a resident doctor in the surgical department in Baghdad General Hospital in 1950 to 1952.

After that, he traveled to the United States of America to work in George Town Hospital in Washington D.C. from 1952 to 1957. During this period he proved himself superior to the Americans.

Got so many American degrees in medical practice like MD, Diploma in head and neck surgery then the American Board in general surgery in 1962. After that he start working as a specialist in many American cities like Baltimore, and then chairman of the emergency department in Washington D.C.

He came back home to be a member of the Department of Surgery in Mosul Medical College in 1965, then chairman of the Department of Surgery for fourteen years. During this period he proved himself as tidy, meticulous, very enthusiastic, hard working, scientific, outstanding teacher, devoted totally for his career and his students and away from private practice.

We can never forget his personality and his lectures depending on chalk and blackboard but it was superior to the data-show which is probably the best way to deliver lectures.

He was the founder of modern surgical department, more or less equal to European standards. His teaching interest was unique, and he was a man with justice. He was behind the surgical museum and writing the surgical syllabus.

He encourages all scientific activities which were performed weekly. Published more than twenty distinguished articles and actively participated in several medical conferences.

Also, he achieved several international scientific awards because of his distinguished experimental works on the liver, kidney and pancreas.

He was a member of several international surgical societies. His name was mentioned on so many activities and in so many books. He was not only a distinguished surgeon but immanent figure in educational and social activities.

Sadly, he disappeared after heart attack in 2008 in Mosul. But he is still alive and will remain alive by his generations of students and by his lovely wife Baeda Tohala.

We ask Allah to have him in the Heaven, simply because he served humanity directly and indirectly for several years.

**T.A. Hamdan**