

THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN
Regents Communication

ACTION REQUEST

Subject: Report of Faculty Retirement

Action Requested: Adoption of Retirement Memoir

Thomas G. Robins, M.D., M.P.H., professor of occupational medicine in the Department of Environmental Health Sciences, School of Public Health, retired from active faculty status on May 31, 2023.

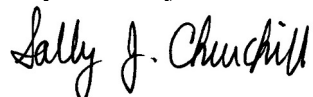
Professor Robins received his A.B. degree in philosophy from Harvard University in 1972, his medical degree (M.D.) from Tufts University in 1979, and his Master of Public Health (M.P.H.) degree from the University of Michigan in 1983. He completed a family practice residency in 1982, and completed a residency in occupational medicine at the U-M School of Public Health in 1984. He joined the University of Michigan faculty as an assistant professor in 1985, and was promoted to associate professor in 1992, and professor of occupational and environmental medicine in 2001. His primary appointment since joining the faculty has been in the School of Public Health's (SPH) Department of Environmental Health Sciences (EHS).

His professional activities while at the University of Michigan have included research, didactic and clinical teaching, the practice of clinical occupational medicine, and service activities within SPH, the university, nationally, and internationally. He served for 10 years as director, University of Michigan National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health Education and Research Center, which directly supports funding and training of master's and doctoral students across multiple disciplines in occupational and environment health (2001-2011). He served as director of global public health for the U-M School of Public Health (2011-2013). He served as director of the U-M WHO Collaborating Center in Occupational Health (1995-2003). He served as the U-M director of the Fogarty International Center Southern African Program in Environmental and Occupational Health (1996-2007). He served as director of the Ghana-Michigan Collaborative Health Alliance for Reshaping Training, Education & Research (2008-2015). He has served as a peer reviewer for numerous scientific journals, and a scientific reviewer or advisor to several U.S. federal agencies (NIH, NIOSH, ATSDR). He led the original development and delivery of presentations to workers receiving the Right to Know training and information for the Ford Motor Company and the United Automobile Workers (UAW) union in the mid-1980s. Since the COVID-19 pandemic, he has served as the physician representing the UAW in negotiations with Ford, GM, and Stellantis (Chrysler) companies to prevent the spread of disease inside of company facilities.

In addition to automobile workers, Professor Robins' clinical and research activities have focused on several domains of occupational and environmental health, including: 1) assessment of health threats in inner-city low-income residents in Detroit using community-based-participatory-methodologies for studies and interventions to decrease high levels of childhood asthma; 2) emphasis on close working ties with university-based investigators in sub-Saharan Africa, to identify key risks and to participate deeply in the research training of African students and young investigators. Areas of focus in southern and west Africa include: impacts of climate change; adverse exposures to informal sector workers, and to nearby low-income communities, e.g., contamination with mercury used to extract gold from ores; recovery of copper from electronic waste where the setting of e-waste on fire is a preferred method. Professor Robins has chaired the committee of 12 Ph.D. dissertations, and more than 75 master's theses, and has led career inputs with six African postdoctoral trainees. He is an author of 150 peer-reviewed publications. He has served as the principal investigator (PI) on 24 research grants.

The Regents now salute this distinguished faculty member by naming **Thomas G. Robins, professor emeritus of occupational medicine**.

Requested by:



Sally J. Churchill, J.D.
Vice President and Secretary of the University

June 2023