

GERALDINE SOWINSKI PINKUS



GERALDINE SOWINSKI PINKUS received her B. S. in Chemistry (summa cum laude) in 1961 from the University of Pittsburgh. The Chemistry Department recognized Dr. Pinkus' talent early on as she received the Freshman Chemistry Award, Silverman Award, Merck Award, and the University Hamilton Award for the best record in the graduating class. She continued her education at Pitt completing a medical degree and an internship in internal medicine (Montefiore Hospital). She began her residency in pathology at the University of Pittsburgh and completed this training at Peter Bent Brigham Hospital (now the Brigham & Women's Hospital) in Boston where she became chief resident. She subsequently accepted a staff position at that hospital and eventually became the Director of the Hematopathology Division and Director of the Hematopathology Service at the Dana Farber Cancer Institute. She is also Professor of Pathology at the Harvard Medical School.

She has had an exemplary career as a scientist and educator. Her laboratory became one of the pioneers of immunohistochemistry which made it possible to detect a wide variety of tissue markers such as tumor antigens, a spectrum of markers for lymphocyte phenotyping, hormones, enzymes, intermediate filaments and others, even those present in extremely small quantities. This methodology literally revolutionized the field of diagnostic surgical pathology and hematopathology and even today, its application continues to expand. Her laboratory was the first in this country to demonstrate the clonal nature of plasma cells in tissue sections based on detection of intracytoplasmic immunoglobulin, providing a basis for distinguishing neoplastic (monoclonal) plasmacytic disorders from reactive (polyclonal) plasmacytic proliferations. Their studies were also among the first to demonstrate the presence of keratin proteins in epithelial cells and neoplasms of epithelial derivation in sections of paraffin embedded tissues. Dr. Pinkus remarked that "These achievements would not have been possible without the excellent didactic training I received in the Chemistry Department and the additional experience I acquired working in the research laboratory of Dr. Ted Cohen."

