

Farewell, Sam Delgado

Brian J. Rebolledo, MD · Thomas P. Sculco, MD

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Despite changes in healthcare, developing technology, and the exponential growth of clinical care at Hospital for Special Surgery, the one constant for the last 48 years has been Sam Delgado (Fig. 1). From a journey that started nearly a half century ago, Sam propelled his way to being this institution's most influential scrub technician. Sam came to Hospital for Special Surgery (HSS) after spending time in the US Navy as a corpsman. After arriving, he quickly moved his way up by first working in the hospital wards and eventually being reassigned to the operating room. Present for the first hip arthroplasty performed at HSS by Dr. Phillip Wilson, Jr., in 1967 [1], his cumulative experience has truly been unmatched. It is estimated that Sam assisted in over 40,000 joint replacement cases during his career. He has been an educator for generations of HSS residents and fellows, and his innovations have impacted the way joint replacement surgery has been performed throughout the world. Undoubtedly, his title underestimates the magnitude of his contributions to the HSS community.

Like many of the great educators at HSS, Sam represented what makes this an extraordinary institution. Sam was well known for making the morning coffee, spending all day in the operating room, and putting the lights out at night. The tireless work ethic and an attitude of positivity impacted everyone he encountered.

This past December, in the setting of applause, Sam hung up his helmet outside operating room 5 for the last time. Wearing the characteristic headband fashioned from a roll of gauze and the black waistpack in tow, he quietly thanked

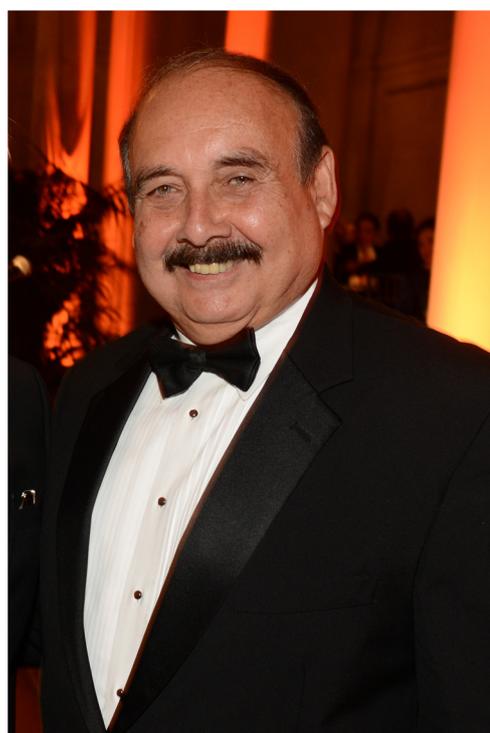


Fig. 1. This photograph shares Sam in his finest after having received a Distinguished Service Award from the Hospital during the tribute celebrating the 150th anniversary of the hospital's founding.

everyone and softly waved his last good-bye. While most readers of the Journal have passed at one time through these halls, most have also come across the great Sam Delgado. We wish Sam a very happy retirement and thank him for the service and inspiration that he provided to us all.

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B. J. Rebolledo, MD (✉) · T. P. Sculco, MD
Department of Orthopaedic Surgery, Hospital for Special Surgery,
535 East 70th Street,
New York, NY 10021, USA
e-mail: rebolledob@hss.edu

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