



In memoriam Prof. Gaetano Lombardi

A. Colao^{1,2}

Received: 12 March 2023 / Accepted: 16 March 2023 / Published online: 10 May 2023
© The Author(s), under exclusive licence to Italian Society of Endocrinology (SIE) 2023



Professor Gaetano Lombardi left us last August 25, and with him went one of the most important founders and pioneers of Italian Endocrinology. To remember a person like the Professor in a few lines is a very difficult task because of what he was and what his great teachings continue to represent for his students of the Neapolitan school of the University Federico II and for the great community of Italian endocrinologists.

Born in 1941, he linked his entire academic career to the Federico University, and with his beloved and never forgotten mentor, Professor Marco Minozzi, he literally founded the Neapolitan School, laying the foundations for the construction of a national and international network of scientific collaboration that enabled the entire community of Italian endocrinologists to become a major European point of reference.

A point of reference for everyone, he always had an advice, an interesting and stimulating question, a word of comfort and incitement for anyone who knocked on his door or met along his many scientific-institutional paths. A true representative of those men who today we would call of other times and capable by their own example of improving the contexts in which they operate and being a reference and guide, even silent, for everyone.

How can we forget his great gentlemanliness witnessed by his colleagues, his students, his patients and his friends. Gaetano Lombardi was capable of always finding a way to smooth out any contrasts and promote dialogue in any context he found himself to demonstrate his expertise and great human qualities.

From 2003 to 2007, he was President of the Board of Ordinary Professors of Endocrinology, from 2003 to 2011, he wisely directed the University Department of Endocrinology and Molecular and Clinical Oncology at the Federico II University, while there are many specialists trained under his guidance in the School of Specialization in Endocrinology and Metabolism at the Federico University from 1983 to 2003.

Over the years, he has authored more than 500 publications and joined those who were among the first Italian scientists: calm and stubborn, he saw the birth of the Italian endocrinology school when there were very few means and tools available and accompanied it through the years when technology enabled the achievement of goals at first only dreamed of, but then become reality. Gaetano Lombardi was one of the leading Italian scholars of Hypothalamus pituitary diseases.

How can we forget the years 2009–2011 when he was president of the Italian Society of Endocrinology? His calm and quiet strength enabled a 2-year reforming period for the EIS, contributing to the birth of new working groups, synergies and collaborations with other scientific societies, and a deep and renewed grounding among Italian endocrinologists. A tireless and indefatigable organizer, the congresses he promoted and organized will remain in the memory of those who had the good fortune to experience them, as will

✉ A. Colao
colao@unina.it

¹ Department of Clinical Medicine and Surgery, Endocrinology Unit, University of Naples “Federico II”, Naples, Italy

² UNESCO Chair “Education for Health and Sustainable Development”, University of Naples “Federico II”, Naples, Italy

his ability to be suddenly light-hearted and capable of not taking himself too seriously to put any interlocutor at ease.

To all he left as a dowry many lessons, but probably the most important and decisive ones are the need for the attitude of sacrifice, respect for all, the centrality of the patient and people in the activities of physicians and researchers, gratitude towards his teachers and gratitude towards his team of collaborators whom he considered as a real family.

Professor Gaetano Lombardi will be missed by the entire Italian scientific community, and those who in various capacities collaborated with him or had the opportunity to experience his great human qualities—he was always ready to help others and the great solidarity actions of which he was a promoter cannot be counted—may consider themselves fortunate, however, men and masters like Gaetano

Lombardi live on in the daily actions of those who practice their teachings.

Declarations

Conflict of interest On behalf of all authors, the corresponding author states that there is no conflict of interest.

Research involving human participants and/or animals Not applicable.

Informed consent Not applicable.

Publisher's Note Springer Nature remains neutral with regard to jurisdictional claims in published maps and institutional affiliations.