Saul Korey was my mentor.

I met Professor Korey when I was a first-year medical student at Western Reserve School of Medicine. He was running an elaborate biochemical laboratory teaching exercise that began at 11:00am and did not conclude until 8:00pm. I was among the lucky few who stayed to the end, impressed by his charisma, his passion for science, and his passion for teaching. He became my mentor, giving me reading lists in neurology and neuroscience, and offering much helpful guidance, even after he left to found what is now the Saul R. Korey Department of Neurology at Albert Einstein College of Medicine. His love of neurology was so contagious that I would go to the VA hospital to work up neurology patients on my free days (in those halcyon days at Western Reserve, Thursdays in the first two years were free to do anything we wanted). While still at Reserve, he found a place for me to learn about laboratory research (then students at Reserve all were required to carry out a research project culminating in a thesis) on an immunology project.

When I reached the clinical years, I asked him if he could find me a place as an orderly or nurse’s aid at Einstein; he responded by finding me a place as a summer student at Einstein. I became the first medical student on the wards at Einstein, even before the first crop of Einstein medical students, mentored by the brilliant Milford Fulop. I was the only medical student present when the formidable Professor Irving London made Chief of Service Medical Rounds, for which the superb resident staff carefully rehearsed me.

After what was then called an Internship in Medicine, I became a resident in Neurology at Einstein. Dr. Korey created a remarkably splendid department of Neurology, with superb clinicians and scientists. When I was a second-year resident, he had me give a course on language and its disorders, requiring attendance by everyone, faculty and residents; amazing. In my third year he gave me fellowship in the Interdisciplinary Program, which he had created
to foster neuroscience at Einstein, and he spared me the pains of Chief Resident, allowing and encouraging me to do research. And he obtained a place for me in the laboratory of the great pharmacologist Murray Jarvik, who gave me space, supplies and laboratory equipment, and taught me the rudiments of cognitive psychology.

After my residency in Neurology, I moved to Stanford University School of Medicine, attracted by it’s chairman, Professor Frank Morrell, who was one of the then too few neurologists concerned with cognition. Six months later Dr. Korey again offered me a position at Einstein; before it could happen, he was gone. Gone but never forgotten.

Professor Saul R. Korey was unique; we could use a few more like him, but his talents, aspirations, vision, and contributions are all too rare. Those of us who were fortunate enough to come under his umbrella received priceless gifts that transformed our lives as neurologists and as individuals.

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Herman Buschke, M.D.
Professor, The Saul R. Korey Department of Neurology
Professor, Dominick P. Purpura Department of Neuroscience
Lena and Joseph Gluck Distinguished Scholar in Neurology