Thank you for the opportunity to add a few thoughts to a remembrance of Saul Korey. Contemporary writers remind us that exceptional success in life is contingent upon being the right person, at the right time, and at the right place. To this I would add, and doing the right thing. With this addition Bill Gates qualifies as a success, Saul Korey the more so. Superbly trained as a basic scientist and clinical neurologist, Korey accepted the challenge to build a new Department of Neurology in a new medical school at a time of increasing intellectual ferment in the neurological sciences. Saul productively catalyzed this development in the fertile environment he created here.

I first met Saul Korey through his relationship with my colleague Harry Grundfest at Columbia. Harry was generally regarded in the mid-20th Century as ‘the dean of electrophysiologists’ and was passionate about good neuroscience years before the word was invented by F.O.Schmitt. Grundfest was never shy in expressing his opinions about the many distinguished scientists who visited him e.g., Eccles, Hodgkin, Fatt, etc. For Saul, Harry had the highest regard, which strongly influenced my judgment about the kind of Department of Neurology being built at Einstein.

Saul Korey’s gift to Medicine was his demonstration that disorders of the human condition could best be solved by the integration of outstanding basic science and exceptional clinical acumen. The men and women he recruited into his Department were imbued with the spirit of “translational” medicine decades before the concept gained traction. His success in this was evident to me well before I arrived at Einstein in 1967, several years after Saul’s untimely demise. There is no question but that the model for a transdisciplinary research and training program that I pursued in establishing the Department of Neuroscience here in 1974 was fashioned after that initiated by Saul Korey in the Department of Neurology. We are all beneficiaries of Saul’s magnificent obsession for excellence.

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