Javier Servat, MD

Fasanella-Servat became a household term in the field of ophthalmology in the second half of the 20th century. As closely as the 2 names were linked to a procedure developed by and named for its inventors, just as closely were the 2 men linked by a long-time friendship. On December 1, 2000, that friendship was interrupted by the death of Dr Javier Servat.

Dr Servat completed his medical training in Lima, Peru, his native country, before coming to the United States for a 1-year internship at Presbyterian Hospital in Knoxville, Tenn. The following year, 1959, the talented young Peruvian came to New Haven, Conn, for his ophthalmology residency at Yale University under the mentoring of Dr Rocko M. Fasanella, the Chief of the Eye Service.

Fasanella and Servat shared an interest in ptosis, and on a busy surgical day in 1960, they were faced with a child with minimal ptosis who required multiple transfusions for Cooley anemia. Speed was of the essence, and it was on that child that the operation, which would soon become known as the Fasanella-Servat procedure, was first performed. Although most of the world knows the name Servat because of this classic operation, his countrymen of Peru will remember him for much more.

Upon completing his residency at Yale, Dr Servat returned to Peru, where he quickly rose to the rank of professor of ophthalmology at the University of Trujillo in Trujillo, Peru. Under his leadership, the Instituto de Oftamologia of the Universidad Nacional de Trujillo grew in stature, training ophthalmologists throughout Peru and neighboring countries and providing modern eye care for countless patients. Dr Servat became recognized as one of the leading ophthalmologists in South America and, in 1999, his university gave him the supreme honor of naming his ophthalmology institute, Instituto de Oftamologia Javier Servat Univazo.

Dr Servat is survived by his wife, Elizabeth, and their 3 children, Ramona, Juan Javier, and Juanita. He will be remembered by his family as a loving husband and father, by his many students as a teacher, role model, and friend, by his countless patients as a caring physician, and by the world as the man who, more than 40 years ago, helped develop one of ophthalmology’s most useful operations.

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