



Message from Drs. Helena Hansen, Patricia Lester, Christopher S. Colwell, and April Thames

**In Memoriam:
Robert Bilder, PhD**

It is with profound sadness that we announce the passing of our esteemed colleague and friend, Dr. Robert (“Bob”) Bilder—The Michael E. Tennenbaum Distinguished Family Chair in Creativity Research, Professor of Psychiatry, and Chief of the Medical Psychology Division at UCLA—after battling a long illness. One email cannot possibly encompass all of Dr. Bilder’s talents and the many ways he enriched the lives of those around him.



Dr. Bilder’s career was defined by extraordinary intellectual vision, boundless curiosity, and an unwavering commitment to excellence in science and education. A pioneer in neuropsychology for over 35 years, Dr. Bilder’s groundbreaking work in schizophrenia, along with his studies on brain-behavior relationships, creativity, and human cognition, transformed the field. His innovative research was matched only by his dedication to training the next generation of clinical neuropsychologists to the very highest standards.

Dr. Bilder earned his BA in Biology and Psychology from Columbia College of Columbia University in 1978, followed by a PhD in Psychology with a specialization in human neuropsychology from City College, City University of New York in 1984. He completed his Internship in the Division of Neuropsychology at the New York State Neurological Institute, Columbia-Presbyterian Medical Center in 1982. Before joining UCLA in 2002, he held prominent faculty appointments at Columbia University College of Physicians & Surgeons and the Albert Einstein College of Medicine, serving as Chief of Neuropsychology at Zucker Hillside Hospital and Associate Director for Human Research at the Center for Advanced Brain Imaging at the Nathan Kline Institute for Psychiatric Research.

Dr. Bilder was awarded diplomate status by the American Board of Clinical Neuropsychology, a testament to his mastery of the field. He was a true trailblazer known for advancing cutting-edge research, building interdisciplinary collaborations, and inspiring colleagues and trainees alike. Beyond his brilliance, Dr. Bilder was beloved for his wit, humor, and generosity of spirit, qualities that made him a cherished mentor, collaborator, and friend.

Outside of academia, Dr. Bilder was an exceptionally talented bass guitar player, effortlessly crossing genres including jazz fusion, funk rock, and Americana. He performed with other UCLA faculty members and friends, bringing the same creativity and joy to music that he brought to science. Above all, he was a devoted father and husband, deeply committed to his wife and children.

The loss of Dr. Bilder leaves a profound void in our department and the wider academic community. His

legacy will endure in the countless students he trained, the groundbreaking work he produced, and the collegial spirit he cultivated.

Dr. Bilder is survived by his wife, Debbie, and their two children, Alexandra and Leo. We extend our deepest condolences to his family, friends, and all whose lives he touched. Dr. Bilder's contributions, both scientific and personal, have left an indelible mark on our field and in our hearts. He will be deeply missed.

Sincerely,

*Helena Hansen, MD,
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