

## Dr. Juan José Rodríguez Moncalvo (1956/2022)



I met Dr. Juan José Rodríguez Moncalvo (called “Juanjo” by his friends) when he was a resident in Internal Medicine at CEMIC and did a rotation at the Hospital Ferrer. I was the Clinical Director, and I was looking for someone to take on the position of Chief Resident at the Hospital. As chance would have it, we attended a medical conference at CEMIC together. On the way back to the Hospital Ferrer, as we were passing by the *Obelisco*, I asked him: “Juanjo, would you like to be Chief Resident?” He looked at me surprised and replied with his usual modesty: “Sir (we still addressed each other formally), do you think I’m capable of taking on that challenge?” I told him of course he was, and he accepted. I never regretted that decision.

That’s how Juanjo began a brilliant career in what became his lifelong hospital, though he always remained connected to his beloved CEMIC. Over time, Juanjo was staff physician and eventually became Director of the Clinical and Experimental Research Laboratory at the Hospital María Ferrer. This laboratory had been created by none other than Dr. Aquiles Roncoroni and was one of the most distinguished hospital sectors for being at the forefront of Pulmonology.

Throughout his tenure, Juanjo led the modernization of the laboratory by incorporating new techniques, such as cardiopulmonary exercise testing. He spared no efforts in promoting whatever activity that would improve the capabilities of his laboratory. He provided the hospital with every argument necessary to fight for the incorporation of new technology despite the budgetary constraints that we always faced as a public institution. He was obsessed with calibration and the correct use of the equipment. This virtue was crucial in ensuring that the results he obtained were absolutely accurate in an area where precision is essential. As a chief, he always took care of his staff. He always ensured that they were receiving training and also supported them in personal matters. As a result, he always had the unconditional collaboration of the people who were part of his professional and non-professional team.

He was also an avid seeker of new ideas. We had countless scientific discussions where I was able to admire his reasoning abilities and the originality that emanated from him. Unlike others, Juanjo was able to materialize his thoughts into lines of research. His work in the pharmaceutical industry gave him additional tools for understanding in detail the development of well-designed protocols and obtaining accurate conclusions.

He knew how to work as a team and participated in multiple multicenter studies and teaching initiatives, both in the AAMR and the ALAT.

Lastly, Juanjo was not only an excellent doctor in his field but also a great friend and very loving with his family. I shared with him countless moments of science and life. I will never forget him in the midst of a discussion of new ideas in the hospital or sharing anecdotes and curiosities of everyday life in a café or restaurant. Juanjo, you left us too soon, and we miss you very much!!!

**Eduardo Schiavi**

Former Director of Hospital María Ferrer, Buenos Aires  
Former President of the Argentinian Association of Respiratory Medicine (AAMR)

Juanjo, this is probably the task I least expected to do at some point and for whom I would have never thought of doing it.

Thank you for allowing our friendship to grow, and for being a generous, sincere, and selfless person. I am grateful to have had the opportunity to know you and also to have been able to share with you trips, coffees, studies and publications. Thank you for sharing your knowledge with us, allowing us to grow both professionally and personally. Thank you for being a constant stimulus for the growth of our Society and Section, teaching us everything you could, often sacrificing a significant part of your personal time in order to promote quality knowledge in physiopathology and the pulmonary laboratory.

I also want to thank you for allowing me to get to know your lovely family, whom we will try to support in navigating your absence and continuing with their lives, just being there for them.

My friend, I will surely miss you!

**Javier Brea Folco**

Director of the Pulmonary Laboratory, Hospital de Clínicas, Universidad de Buenos Aires.  
Former Coordinator of the Physiopathology and Pulmonary Laboratory Section of the AAMR

Being from a generation after his, I met Juanjo, like many others, during my rotation at Hospital Ferrer in 2004. Of course, he was already the Laboratory Director and invited me to tour the place and undergo a plethysmography: that was my first access to such a practice. From that moment on, he became one of the main references for me in the field, and I would try to listen to him whenever he was invited to give a lecture.

Over the years, we crossed paths frequently at scientific and social gatherings. The initial generational asymmetry gradually softened, and I was able to get to know the person behind the professor. A methodological obsessive, he loved to discuss and argue about the subject matter that concerned us. Those discussions could reach unexpected levels of intensity, yet he would never lose his composure and impeccable manners. With a refined sense of humor and a vast general knowledge, he was excellent company during dinners and coffee gatherings.

Paradoxically, my greatest interaction and collaboration with Juanjo occurred at a time when the world was most divided: the pandemic. Through video calls, he regularly brought together colleagues to debate and analyze the evidence that would guide biosafety in the field, not only in Argentina but also in a large part of the region.

Like everyone else, I heard the news of his passing one spring afternoon. We had spoken just a few days before and had a pending dinner with other colleagues. Maybe, to reconcile through another discussion.

**Santiago Arce**

Director of the Pulmonary Function Laboratory Medical Research Institute Alfredo Lanari, UBA.  
Former Coordinator of the Physiopathology and Pulmonary Laboratory Section of the AAMR

My dear Juanjo... I remember when I was a resident in the Internal Medicine Department of my hospital and went to do a rotation at Hospital Ferrer (a rotation that changed my professional life). I met you and learned to admire your wisdom and depth of reasoning, so humble and obsessive...It was the winter of 1988. You were already the Director of the Clinical and Experimental Research Laboratory at Hospital María Ferrer. Years went by, and in 1999, me being a pulmonologist, I saw you become the foundational pillar, along with other dear friends, of the Physiopathology Section of the AAMR. With passion, you began spreading knowledge through training courses for colleagues and technicians in the art of spirometry and pulmonary laboratory techniques over the next 20 years and more, together with other dear friends, in our country and in Latin America. Your obsession with details and your depth of knowledge in everything related to the respiratory function always stood out. In the early years of the new millennium, we shared the ATS MECOR course, and then the deepest and most beautiful dimension of our human relationship began. That time served as a pretext to get to know the human being behind the doctor. Over the past 15 years, you were all smiles, you offered me your friendship and your time, chatting over coffee with me about life, and I admired you more each day. That's why, besides thanking you for your great contribution to Pulmonology in our country, as one of the founding stones in our AAMR and the Physiopathology and Pulmonary Laboratory Section, with these words I want to highlight your tireless passion for improving knowledge and sharing it, but above all, the humble, profound, calm, and generous human being that you were. Farewell, Juanjo, and thank you for everything you gave us!

**Martín Sivori**

Chief of the Pulmonology and Tisiology Unit, Hospital Dr. Ramos Mejía, Buenos Aires