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In Memoriam of Marcelo J. Lippmann 1939–2018



Marcelo J. Lippmann, Editor-in-Chief of Geothermics from 2004 to 2008, passed away at his home in Berkeley, CA, on September 10, 2018, after a long bout with cancer. Marcelo was born in Buenos Aires, Argentina in 1939, and received his BS in geology from the University of Buenos Aires in 1966. He and his wife Martha then moved to California, where Marcelo continued with his studies, receiving his MS in 1969 and his PhD in 1974 in Civil Engineering from UC Berkeley as part of Prof. Paul Witherspoon's group. After a short stint working at UC Berkeley, where he conducted research on numerical modeling of heat and mass transfer in geothermal systems, Marcelo moved up the hill to join Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory in 1977, where he worked the remainder of his career. Marcelo's expertise was in the modeling of geothermal systems, with a focus on their commercial longevity and designing sustainable exploitation strategies. Some of the systems he studied included Cerro Prieto, Mexico; Heber and The Geysers, USA; Miravalles, Costa Rica; Ahuachapán and Berlín, El Salvador. Together with Paul Witherspoon, he helped lead the Mexican-American cooperative program at the Cerro Prieto geothermal field from 1977 to 1982 and was a key member of many other international geothermal research projects. Marcelo was in charge of LBNL's geothermal program from 1985 to 2000, helping establish Berkeley Lab as a world leader in geothermal research. He authored or co-authored more than 100 scientific papers and reports. While Marcelo officially "retired" from LBNL in 2005, he continued on as a rehired retiree until 2015, and remained active as a lab affiliate up until the time of his passing.

In addition to his contributions as a scientist, he selflessly devoted much of his energy to the international geothermal community, serving as an advisor and mentor. In addition to his stint as Editor-in-Chief, Marcelo was Associate Editor of Geothermics from 1992 to 1995 and 2009–2010; as Emeritus Editor after 2010, he continued to review articles to the very end. As an editor of Geothermics, he devoted countless hours helping authors polish their manuscripts. When one of us (Sabodh) succeeded Marcelo as Editor-in-Chief, he graciously agreed to stay on as Associate Editor; the new Editor-in-Chief greatly benefited from Marcelo's sage advice.

Marcelo was tireless in his support of the Geothermal Resources Council, having served as a board member from 1999 to 2000 and 2004–2009, and was a member of the Education, Honors and Awards, and International committees. The GRC recognized his extensive scientific achievements and contributions to the geothermal community in 2010 with the Joseph W. Aidlin award, the highest award bestowed by the Council. Marcelo cared deeply about his colleagues, and was instrumental in nominating several of them for GRC awards. In his last conversation with Sabodh, he inquired about the 2018 GRC awardees.

Marcelo was also given a special award by the Asociación Geotérmica Mexicana in 2015 for his many contributions to geothermal energy research in Mexico. Marcelo also served as a board member for the International Geothermal Association from 1993-1998. Marcelo is well known and admired throughout the global geothermal community for his generosity and willingness to help and his fostering of international collaboration. Those of us who knew him well will miss him dearly. He is survived by his wife Martha, his son Julian, his daughterin-law Jessica Owley, and two granddaughters.

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