In 1967, he was one of the founding faculty members of the UCSD School of Medicine, joining UCSD as a Professor of Surgery and Head of the Division of Anatomy. Dr. Halasz was also the founding Director of the UCSD Transplantation Program, and he performed the first kidney transplant in San Diego. He developed one of the best human anatomy courses for medical students in the country. He received numerous awards and prizes, both as an undergraduate and postgraduate, and was a Markle Scholar in academic medicine from 1964 to 1969. He holds the record at UCSD for receiving the Kaiser Award for Teaching Excellence in four separate years. He was also awarded the Chancellor's Associate Award for Excellence in Teaching in 1989, and was voted Physician of the Year at UCSD Medical Center in 1994.

Nick Halasz was known as a teacher and mentor for generations of housestaff and medical students. An outstanding clinician, teacher, researcher, and colleague, he was a "renaissance man" in the truest sense of the term. He has unselfishly served the Department and the University in multiple important roles and on countless committees. He has acted as interim Division Chief and Program Director in General Surgery during the period of 1981-83. When he retired from full-time University employment in 1994, he undertook the position of Chief of Surgical Services at the V.A. Medical Center in La Jolla, where his organization, leadership, ingenuity, and sense of fairness helped reorganize and rejuvenate surgical practice and teaching at that institution. His published contributions of over 170 papers covered a wide variety of general surgery topics from transplantation to trauma, hepatobiliary disease, wound healing, gastrointestinal disorders, etc., etc. He was a member of virtually all the prestigious national and international surgical organizations and societies and participated in the affairs of very many of them in active fashion. He served on the Editorial Board of several peer-reviewed journals. He was a board member/Director of the American Board of Surgery, from 1984-1988. He has been President of the San Diego Society of General Surgeons, California Society of Transplant Surgeons, and Western Association of Transplant Surgery.

In spite of all his achievements and contributions, Nick was a quiet, modest, and unassuming person. His dedication to surgical education was genuine. He made a lot of personal sacrifices to help others in our department. He was one of the few true surgical scholars that I have met. He was a world traveler, knowledgeable in the arts, literature, wine, and especially surgical history. He invariably had one or more surgical vignettes to share with us at our weekly grand rounds and mortality and morbidity conference on Saturday mornings. He never missed any such meeting when he was in town.

Nick faced his final illness with the same calm dignity that he approached any problem. He was a model patient and was genuinely considerate to his doctors and nurses. He was at work in his office 10 days following a major thoraco-abdominal operation! Once he realized that his disease was terminal, he planned his departure with thoughtfulness, taking care of all his affairs to spare his family and friends any potential hardship or difficulty later on.

Last, but not least, Nick was a good family man and a loyal friend. He is survived by his wife, Diane, and by his two children, Peter and Katherine. He is missed by all of us. As a mark of posthumous recognition, the General Surgery Service at the V.A. Medical Center and the Anatomy Dissecting Room at UCSD have both been named after him. In addition, the Department of Surgery has established a Nicholas A. Halasz Endowment Fund for this yearly memorial lecture.

- A.R. Moossa, M.D.
Dr. Keith D. Lillemoe received his undergraduate education at the University of South Dakota and his MD from The Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine in 1978. He served his entire surgical training at The Johns Hopkins Hospital from 1978 to 1985. He joined the Active Staff at The Johns Hopkins Hospital in 1985 and rose to the rank of Professor of Surgery in 1996. He served as Program Coordinator for the Surgical Residency at the Johns Hopkins Medical Institutions from 1993 to 2003 and Vice-Chairman and Deputy Director from 1997 to 2003. During his time at Johns Hopkins, he was recognized with the Department of Surgery Faculty Teaching Award on five occasions. In September 2003 he was appointed the Jay L. Grosfeld Professor and Chairman of the Department of Surgery at the Indiana University School of Medicine.

Dr. Lillemoe is a member of most surgical societies and has held office in many. He has served as Secretary, President and Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the Society for Surgery of the Alimentary Tract. He has previously served as President of the Society of Clinical Surgery and Secretary and President of the Society of University Surgeons. He currently is the Recorder for the American Surgical Association and serves on their Executive Council. He also serves on the Executive Councils of the American HepatoPancreatoBiliary Association and the Halsted Society. Dr. Lillemoe is a Senior Director of the American Board of Surgery.

Dr. Lillemoe’s research interests have ranged from basic science investigations into the pathophysiology of gallstones and other benign biliary tract disease to the clinical management of pancreatic carcinoma and bile duct injuries. He has been funded in the past by the National Institute of Health and with numerous grants from industry. His bibliography lists over 285 journal articles and 100 book chapters. He has served as a visiting professor over 60 times and has spoken nationally and internationally on over 290 occasions. He is currently the Editor of one of the leading surgical texts Surgery: Scientific Principles and Practice and serves on the editorial board of seven major surgical journals - including serving as the Associate Editor for Annals of Surgery.

Dr. Lillemoe’s clinical interests are in gastrointestinal and pancreaticobiliary tract surgery. He has contributed to major advances in the management of pancreatic cancer, bile duct injuries and strictures, and numerous other abdominal conditions.

The Department of Surgery has created an endowment with the purpose of fundraising for the Nicholas A. Halasz Chair at UCSD. All contributions are tax-deductible and should be made payable and addressed to the 
“Nicholas A. Halasz Endowment Fund” in care of the 
UCSD Department of Surgery 
200 West Arbor Drive, Mail Code 8400 
San Diego, California, 92103-8400