

THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

Regents Communication

ACTION REQUEST

Subject: Report of Faculty Death

Action Requested: Adoption of Memorial Statement

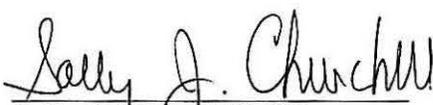
The Regents of the University of Michigan acknowledge with profound sadness the death of **MaryFran R. Sowers, Ph.D.**, John G. Searle Professor of Public Health and professor of epidemiology in the School of Public Health, professor of internal medicine and professor of obstetrics and gynecology in the Medical School, and research professor in the Reproductive Sciences Program. Professor Sowers died on July 17, 2011 at the age of 64.

Professor Sowers received her B.S. degree from Emporia State University in 1968, her M.S. degree from Oklahoma State University in 1973, and her Ph.D. degree from the University of Iowa in 1984. She joined the University of Michigan faculty as an assistant professor in 1987, and was promoted to associate professor in 1992 and professor in 1996. She was appointed associate professor of obstetrics and gynecology in 1995 and was promoted to professor in 2000, and became a research professor in 1996 and professor of internal medicine in 1999. She was appointed John G. Searle Professor of Public Health in 2005.

Professor Sowers was an internationally renowned epidemiologist whose research in two interrelated areas, the clinical presentation of diseases and women's health, placed her at the forefront of her field. Her groundbreaking studies in the areas of bone health, osteoarthritis, reproductive aging, and physical functioning contributed substantially to the development of women's health into a major discipline. Her research was characterized by originality, precision, and integrity, and reflected her view that disease prevention efforts can be more appropriately focused through a comprehensive understanding of normal physiological processes and divergences from those processes. She was renowned for her unique insights into the ways that different diseases can arise from variations of the same underlying process. Professor Sowers founded and for many years directed the Michigan Initiative for Women's Health, an interdisciplinary organization of U-M faculty, staff, and students with interests in women's health. Together with her path-breaking research, Professor Sowers's work with the initiative was instrumental in placing Michigan at the forefront of a worldwide revolution in women's health care, research, and training. A gifted teacher, Professor Sowers mentored and served as principal advisor to more than 50 master's and 25 Ph.D. students.

As we mourn the loss of our beloved colleague, we also extend our sincere condolences to her husband, Ray Sowers, and her son, Paul.

Requested by:



Sally J. Churchill, J.D.

Vice President and Secretary of the University

September 2011