

THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

Regents Communication

ACTION REQUEST

Subject: Report of Faculty Retirement

Action Requested: Adoption of Retirement Memoir

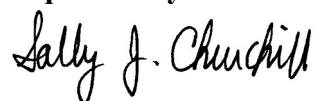
Rita Karen Loch-Caruso, Ph.D., professor of toxicology in the School of Public Health and professor of Program in the Environment in the School for Environment and Sustainability, retired from active faculty status on December 31, 2020.

Professor Loch-Caruso received her B.S. (1976), B.A. (1976), and Ph.D. (1982) degrees from the University of Cincinnati. She joined the University of Michigan faculty as an assistant professor in 1986, and was promoted to associate professor in 1993, and professor in 2001, making her the first female full professor in the history of the department. She was the director of the Toxicology Program from 1999-2012 and interim chair of the Department of Environmental Health Sciences from 2004-05.

Professor Loch-Caruso was an expert in reproductive and developmental toxicology. She began her research career working on lead (Pb) neurodevelopmental toxicity, contributing to our early understanding of lead's effects on brain and behavior. As a postdoctoral fellow, she became interested in toxicant impacts on labor and delivery and went on to produce the first reports of environmental chemical disruption of uterine contractions and intercellular communication. Her subsequent work critically expanded our understanding of toxicant actions on the placenta as a mechanism underlying adverse birth outcomes such as preterm birth, working with experts across the scientific spectrum. She led numerous research projects funded by the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences (NIEHS), National Institutes of Health. From 2011-19, she directed the Michigan Lifestage Environmental Exposures and Disease (M-LEEaD) Center, an Environmental Health Sciences Core Center funded by the NIEHS. Professor Loch-Caruso's research was developed in close collaboration with her trainees. She directed the research of 22 Ph.D. dissertations, 10 postdoctoral trainees, 15 M.S. theses, and three undergraduate honors theses, with many of these trainees earning awards for their research. In addition, she co-chaired five other dissertations and was a member of 24 additional dissertation committees. She directed a highly productive training grant from NIEHS (1999-2018), overseeing the training of scores of other predoctoral and postdoctoral trainees. She received the Society of Toxicology's Women in Toxicology Mentoring Award in 2019.

The Regents now salute this distinguished faculty member by naming **Rita Karen Loch-Caruso, professor emerita of toxicology and professor emerita of Program in the Environment.**

Requested by:



Sally J. Churchill, J.D.
Vice President and Secretary of the University

December 2020