

Biographical Sketch, Alan S. Rabson, M.D.

A native of Brooklyn, New York, Alan Rabson received his B.A. degree in Biology from the University of Rochester in New York. Two years later, he received his M.D. degree from the State University of New York.

Dr. Rabson's early education in biomedical sciences included a year as a pharmacist mate in the U. S. Maritime Service. He went on to complete his medical degree at the State University of New York. After additional training, residency and fellowships he found himself back at sea as a medical officer aboard the U. S. Coast Guard Cutter INGHAM. In 1955 he returned to dry land as a resident in pathology at the NIH Clinical Center, virtually at its opening. He rose to the position of Deputy Chief of the Laboratory of Pathology and moved on to become the Director of the Division of Cancer Biology in 1975. There he became the intellectual leader who directed the research efforts of 400-500 scientists. Dr. Rabson held that position for more than 20 years, after which he became Deputy Director of the NCI, where he serves today. Concurrently, he has held positions as Director of the NCI's Division of Cancer Biology, Diagnosis, and Centers; and extramurally as Clinical Professor of Pathology at Georgetown University, George Washington University, and the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences.

As Deputy Director for NCI, Dr. Rabson is one of the strategic leaders for a Federal Agency of over 4,000 employees with a fiscal year budget of approximately 5 billion dollars. At the same time, he has held a number of "acting" positions, including Acting Director for Extramural Science and Acting Director for Technology and Industrial Relations. In his more than half-century of service at NCI, he has served ten Directors.

Dr. Rabson has received numerous honors, including the Meritorious Service Medal and two Distinguished Service Medals from the U.S. Public Health Service. In 1987 he was elected to membership in the Institute of Medicine, National Academy of Sciences. In 1992 the American Association for the Advancement of Science elected Dr. Rabson to the rank of Fellow. He received the 2002 President's Award of the United States and Canadian Academy of Pathology, along with his wife, Ruth Kirschstein.

In addition, Dr. Rabson has received kudos and affection initiated by the investigators that he has nurtured. In 1998, the NCI dedicated the Conference Room 4B51 in Building 10 as the Alan S. Rabson Conference Room. In 2005 the annual Alan Rabson Prize Lecture was established by the NCI and is presented to an outstanding intramural NCI investigator at the yearly NCI Retreat.