

## **Geneviève M. Clavreul – Brief Biography**

*“There are very few persons who know the history of the discovery of HIV, the scientific background prior to the discovery, and the subsequent work which led to our understanding that HIV is the cause of AIDS, and who know as well the people who made these discoveries, and the surrounding details of these events. There are still fewer who know these things from both sides of the Atlantic. Geneviève Clavreul is one such person. Ms. Clavreul has known both Profs. Montagnier and Gallo virtually from the start of this research and I believe she can and will contribute to a truthful and interesting history” – Robert C. Gallo, MD November 29, 1994*

Geneviève M. Clavreul was born in Paris, France. She immigrated to the United States in 1959. She became a United States citizen in 2001.

In 1975, in Columbus, Georgia, Geneviève divorced her husband of 13 years and with four children and her own mother to care for as a newly single woman she set about creating a new life for her family and herself. With grim determination, boundless energy, and the support of her mother and four children she returned to college, full-time to pursue not only a Bachelor of Arts degree in Psychology, but also a Masters in Education. All this while working full-time as a head nurse of a pediatric intensive care unit at the local hospital, and caring for her family.

Not long after graduating, she moved to Sioux Falls, South Dakota to undertake the challenge of being the Director of Nursing for Maternal-Child at a Sioux Valley Falls hospital. In addition she was responsible for implementing the innovative perinatal program which, provided much needed services to the at risk prenatal population of three states, South Dakota, North Dakota, and Wisconsin. It was her successful implementation of this forward-thinking program that brought her to the attention of recruiters for nursing administrators in Southern California. She soon moved to first Bakersfield where she served as not only the Director of Nursing for a major Bakersfield Hospital, but also as an assistant professor in the Department of Nursing at both California State Bakersfield and Bakersfield College. While living in Bakersfield she also continued her own educational pursuits and successfully completed her Masters in Public Administration. Her work in Bakersfield brought her to the attention of recruiters for American Medical International (which latter merged with NME, National Medical Enterprise, and is now known as Tenet Healthcare), where she was offered the challenge of implementing change at Glendora Hospital. Glendora Hospital offered the challenge of being one of AMI's lowest performing hospitals. Once again she used her ability to team-build and turn-around artistry to develop a strong-core of quality assurance and care. She was also one of the handful of directors of nursing that had a waiting list of RNs seeking employment at the hospital, this during one of Southern California's nursing shortage crisis.

It was not long afterward that Dr. Clavreul completed her studies and achieved a Doctorate in Hospital Management, and looked to the greater challenge of being her own “boss”. In 1982, she left hospital administration and put her skills and talents to work as an independent consultant for hospitals and healthcare organizations. She built a client base in Southern California, focusing on three main areas of deficiencies for hospitals, nursing recruitment and retention, quality assurance and quality of care, and J.C.A.H.O. accreditation. It wasn't long before her talents were being requested at hospitals internationally. Her most notable achievements were developing the quality assurance program for Stanford Hospital and the complete overhaul of University of California Medical Center in Irvine, which at the time had a 3 million-dollar deficit. Meanwhile, she became much sought after speaker on the hospital circuit, speaking across the United States and Internationally.

Then came the mid-'80s and G.R.I.D.S. – later to be renamed AIDS. Geneviève took care of some of the first patients to be identified as having G.R. I.D.S. while doing a field study as a registered nurse at UCLA. She experienced first hand the devastating effects of AIDS on the Gay

community, losing many friends in the late '80's and early '90's. It was her frustration at all the posturing and delays that caused her to take matters in her own hands. Placing a call to Dr. Gallo, she arranged to meet with him and discuss what she envisioned was needed to occur in order to move the negotiations forward. She did the same with Prof. Montagnier, flying to Paris, France to meet with him. Finding their common ground, she help put the "ball back into motion" and the negotiations began to resume in a positive direction. Her work as the behind the scene negotiator placed her in the forefront of the HIV/AIDS crisis.

Shortly before, she had published one of the first psychosocial papers on the impact of HIV/AIDS and homophobia. She was an original member of ACT-UP, Los Angeles and has continued her involvement in grassroots activism, as well as often being called upon to provide expert testimony. While serving at an international consultant for AMI, she worked on and helped develop the first hospital specializing in caring for people living with HIV/AIDS in Houston, Texas. She has focused her recent efforts in developing new and different models of bringing HIV/AIDS drugs, as well as other drugs to treat chronic illness, to market. She has advocated from the beginning of the AIDS crisis that it would take an international involvement to find an effective treatment and vaccine for this devastating disease.

Just as in 1975, another significant event occurred. She broke her leg and shattered her ankle while getting her morning newspaper. This traumatic accident gave her cause to refocus. After spending nearly 14 months in a wheelchair and having to have her leg re-broken and placed in an external fixator to correct the malrotation of the original break, she used her incapacitation to attend with regularity the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors board meetings. She began to, once again, speak out on the many issues, including nursing and health care, and on issues facing people living with HIV/AIDS, especially as it relates to corruption and the misuse of public funds. She has also been vocal on the nursing shortage and agreeing to help the Board of Supervisors plan and hold a public hearing on the nursing shortage, where the frontline nurses had an opportunity to provide feedback to their elected officials. She has served a commission for Supervisor Antonovich as his district representative on the Los Angeles County Commission on HIV Health Services.

In October 2001 she was nominated as one of the Los Angeles Business Journal Women Who Make a Difference. She has been a recipient of the "50 Influential Minorities in Business" from the Minority Business and Professional's Network and The Business Women's Network (BWN) with a Special Award as one of the International Entrepreneurs of the Year, at the organization's 7<sup>th</sup> Annual Leaders Summit. In 2003 and 2004 she received Businesswoman of the Year award from the National Republican Congressional Business Advisory Committee. She is the President of the Pasadena Evening Republican Women Federated.

In 2001, she launched with her daughters a new company, Solutions Outside the Box. The company was formed in order to help realize her vision of developing a strong network of collaborators from diverse fields and disciplines. She is also a featured columnist for Working Nurse Magazine. Her column is entitled "From the Floor" and has a readership of approximately 250,000 RNs in California and approximately 50,000 RNs in Arizona. At present she is working on a book entitled "In the Name of Science", which is an insider's history on the fight against HIV/AIDS.