



Beloved School of Dentistry faculty member, Dr. Sonia Makhija, passes away

It is with great sadness that we let the university community know of the loss of Sonia Makhija, DDS, MPH, Professor in the Department of Clinical and Community Sciences. Dr. Makhija passed away as a result of surgical complications on October 6th at the age of 46.

Dr. Makhija graduated from the University of Missouri - Kansas City School of Dentistry in 1998. Following a period in private practice of general dentistry in Montgomery, AL, she became a clinical examiner for two years in the National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey. She then moved to UAB and received her MPH degree from the School of Public Health and did a three-year research fellowship in caries research. In 2002 she joined the faculty at the School of Dentistry as Instructor, rose through the ranks efficiently, and was promoted to Professor, effective this month.

Always willing to be helpful, she was active in numerous committees at the school, university, national, and international levels, including being elected in 2019 as Director of the Behavioral Sciences, Epidemiology, and Health Services Research Group of the International Association for Dental Research. She also served as Director of Communications and Dissemination for the National Dental Practice-Based Research Network. Having obtained international recognition for her clinical research and academic expertise, she was named a Fellow of the International College of Dentists in 2019.

Dr. Makhija was widely loved for her collegial attitude and widely respected for her expertise in clinical, research, teaching, and administrative matters, as well as her ability to achieve the perfect work-life balance, making plenty of room for her two children, whom she loved passionately.

Dr. Makhija is survived by her husband, Grant, and two children, Isabella and Maks, both age 9, as well as her mother, Nina Makhija, her sister, Dr. Sharmila Makhija, formerly a faculty member at UAB in the Department of Obstetrics & Gynecology but currently Professor and University Chair at the Albert Einstein College of Medicine in New York, New York and her brother, Dr. Ajay Makhija. She was preceded in death by her father, Dr. Suraj Makhija.