In Memoriam: Robert G. Volz

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Dr. Robert G. Volz, professor emeritus of orthopaedic surgery, co-founder of the University of Arizona Arthritis Center and founder of the University of Arizona Orthopedic Research Laboratories, died on Dec. 17 at 91 years old.

Volz joined the University in 1973. He built the total joint surgery program in the Department of Orthopaedic Surgery, where he served as head from 1985 until he retired in 1992. The orthopedic research laboratories were renamed the Robert G. Volz, MD, Orthopedic Research Laboratories in April 2013.

"Known as an innovator, visionary and collaborator, Dr. Volz combined his love for practicing medicine with his passion for teaching and research," wrote Dr. Michael Abecassis, the Iovanna C. Lopez Dean of the College of Medicine – Tucson, in a message to colleagues on Dec. 20.

While at the University, Volz designed some of the first artificial joints in the United States, including his total wrist prosthesis, which was one of only two such devices in the world at the time. Volz's prosthesis was first implanted in 1974 and its success paved the way for use in medical centers throughout the world, according to the University of Arizona Arthritis Center.

Volz is survived by his wife, Ann, and children Kathy, Thomas, Amy and Jack. A memorial service was held Jan. 12 in Tucson. In lieu of flowers, the family has asked that donations in memory of Volz be directed to the Arthritis Center or Saint Philip's in the Hills Episcopal Church.

Read more about Volz's accomplishments and legacy in a story on the University of Arizona Health Sciences website.

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