I lost a friend recently from HFpEF: William Anlyan, MD, Chancellor Emeritus and Duke University Trustee.

Dr. Bill Anlyan (Figure 1) died peacefully on January 18, 2016, in the health system he built, at age 90. Dr. Anlyan was singularly credited for transforming Duke University Hospital from a segregated regional teaching hospital to an international health system. He became a leader in innovative health care, research, and education, a visionary vascular surgeon and vascular medicine expert who became the Dean of the Medical School from 1964 to 1983 and subsequent Chancellor for Health Affairs, Chancellor for Duke University, and founder of the Institute of Medicine. Through his commitment to medical education, clinicians, clinical investigators, and leadership, he was able to build a health system that, amongst many attributes, distinguished itself as an international leader in cardiovascular medicine. During his time, he recruited eventual Nobel Prize winner Robert Lefkowitz, cardiothoracic surgeon David Sabiston, and cardiologists Joseph Greenfield and Robert Califf, amongst many nationally recognized leaders.

Transformative in his leadership skills as a dean, Dr. Anlyan never forgot where the CCU was and where post-operative complicated cardiovascular patients recovered. During his time in leadership in the health system, he created a medical school curriculum that rewarded innovation and research by allowing third-year medical students to pursue investigative activities in basic and clinical laboratories. He rewarded clinicians and clinical investigators to a similar extent that he rewarded basic scientists, and mentored over 5,000 medical students during his tenure. In addition to all his accomplishments, he was one of my most influential mentors and a personal friend.

Over the past 15 years that I cared for him with heart failure with preserved ejection fraction (HFpEF), he benefited from the success of cardiovascular therapies targeting comorbidities and risk factors, that were developed, in part, through the inspiration of his medical students and his trainees. The academic
community is grateful for over 50 years of contributions and leadership that Dr. Anlyan has given to all of us today. In particular, we are grateful for his commitment to the clinical investigator and clinician in the world of academic medicine. Although we never hope that a day like this comes before us, it is with great honor and privilege that I can say as a friend to Bill Anlyan, it was a life well lived, with passion, enthusiasm, and contribution. Thank you, Bill, for all you have done for academic medicine today.

Sincerely,

Your colleague, friend, mentee, and doctor,

Christopher M. O’Connor, MD, FACC

ADDRESS FOR CORRESPONDENCE: Dr. Christopher O’Connor, Editor-in-Chief, JACC: Heart Failure, American College of Cardiology, Heart House, 2400 N Street, NW, Washington, DC 20037. E-mail: jacchf@acc.org.