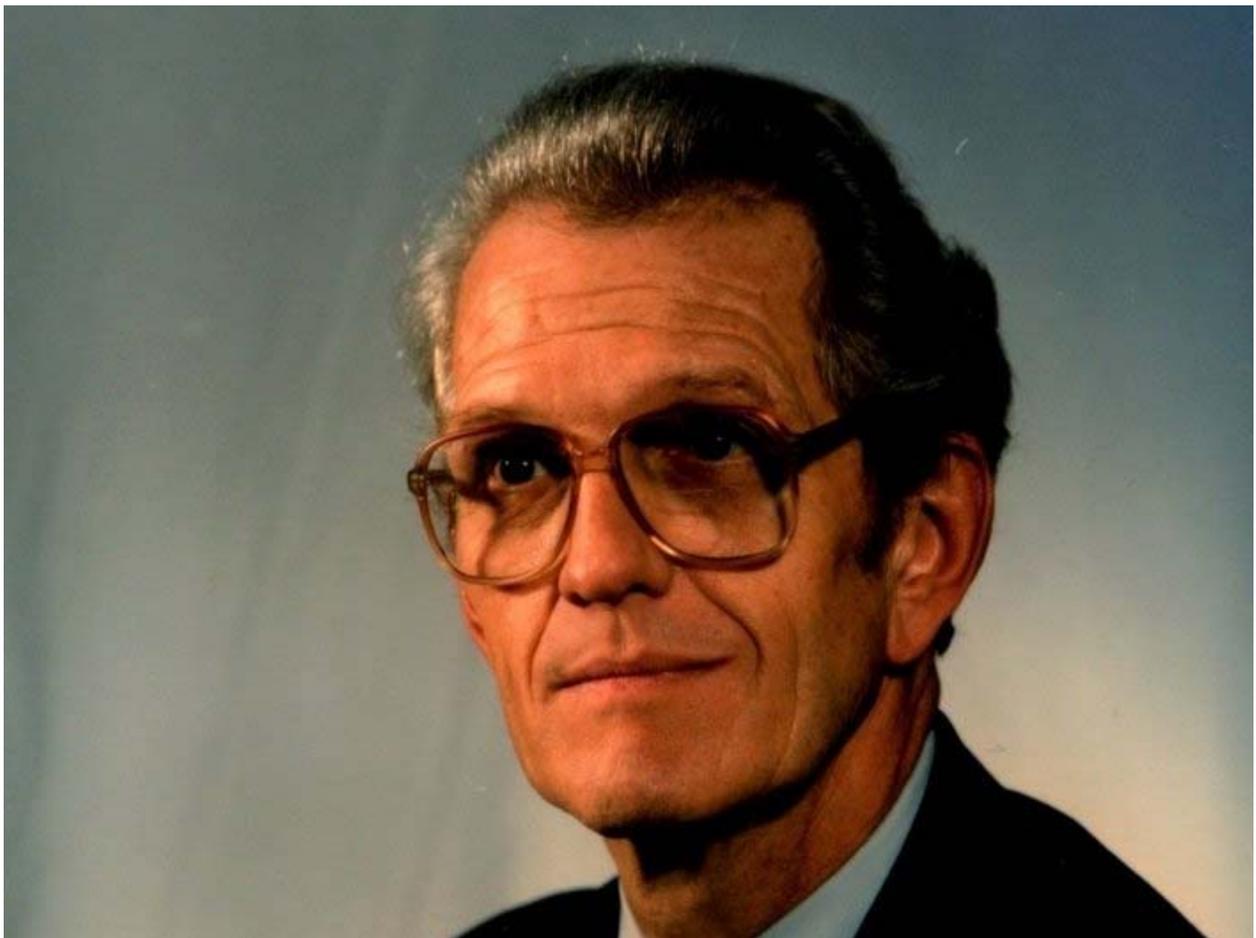


Founder Of Iconic Health Science College In Newark Passes Away

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Rutgers University: Stanley Silvers Bergen Jr. believed in health care as a basic human right and advocated for health access and equity.

By [Eric Kiefer, Patch Staff](#) | May 1, 2019 2:01 pm ET | Updated May 1, 2019 2:06 pm ET



Stanley Silvers Bergen Jr. passed away on April 24, 2019. (Photo: Rutgers University)

NEWARK, NJ — Stanley Silvers Bergen Jr., the founding president of the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey (UMDNJ), passed away last week, according to Rutgers University.

Bergen died on April 24 at his home in Stonington, Maine. He was 89, Rutgers University reported.

Rutgers administrators provided the following biographical information about Bergen's life and diverse contributions to his community.

"Recognizing New Jersey's need to educate its own physicians and dentists, researchers, nurses, behavioral health specialists and allied health professionals, Bergen broke ground for the health

sciences campus on July 6, 1971, in central Newark, which has become Rutgers Biomedical and Health Sciences.

"He called serving as the founding president of the state's first health sciences college "the opportunity and challenge of a lifetime ... for someone who grew up in New Jersey, graduated from a New Jersey university and then was forced to leave the state to attend medical school in New York City."

"Bergen was a believer of health care as a basic human right and an advocate for health access and equity. He was born on May 2, 1929, in Princeton, N.J., and served as president of UMDNJ from 1971 to 1998.

"He was the first senior vice president of the New York City Health and Hospitals Corp. when he was selected by the state of New Jersey to direct the creation of the College of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey. Before Bergen established UMDNJ, the state had no medical school and had a shortage of physicians and dentists.

"The school opened on the heels of the Newark riots in 1967. Under the Newark Agreements of 1968, the college, in exchange for 167 city acres, agreed to accept primary responsibility for the city's public health care services, step up recruitment of minority students, provide employment and give the community a voice in shaping the school's goals.

"During Bergen's 27-year tenure, the institution achieved university status in 1981 and grew to eight schools on five campuses, with a major teaching hospital and affiliations with more than 200 health care and higher education institutions in New Jersey. UMDNJ also had one of the largest student minority populations among medical and dental schools nationwide and implemented a long list of community service programs.

"Bergen was instrumental in creating the Cancer Institute of New Jersey, the state's only Comprehensive Cancer Center as designated by the National Cancer Institute and the International Center for Public Health, a leading center for infectious disease research in Newark.

"A defining figure among New Jersey health care policymakers and higher education, Bergen was a founding member of the University Health System of New Jersey and a member of the boards of trustees of Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital, Hackensack University Medical Center, Bergen Regional Health Center and the Cancer Institute of New Jersey. He served as chairman of the Advisory Graduate Medical Education Council of New Jersey; treasurer and member of the executive board of the New Jersey Presidents' Council of the New Jersey Commission on Higher Education and a member of the board of directors of the New Jersey Association of Colleges and Universities, with two terms as its chairman.

"The Stanley S. Bergen Building on the Rutgers Biomedical and Health Sciences Newark campus and the Stanley S. Bergen Medal of Excellence, which recognizes exceptional scholarly achievements across the biomedical sciences, are named in his honor.

"Bergen graduated from Princeton University in 1951 and earned his medical degree in 1955 from Columbia College of Physicians and Surgeons. He served in the New Jersey National Guard. When he finished his medical education, he was recalled into the Army as a doctor and served at Fort Jay on Governors Island in New York Harbor.

"He is survived by his wife of 53 years, Suzanne E. Miller; children Amy Larranaga of Montclair, N.J.; Victoria Hilles of Hampton Bays, N.Y.; and Stuart Bergen of New York City; and five grandchildren. He is predeceased by his sons, Stanley S. Bergen III and Steven R. Bergen, as well as by his sister, Marion Bakoulis.

"In lieu of flowers, contributions may be made to Opera House Arts in Stonington, Maine, where a celebration of Bergen's life will be held on May 11, 2019."