

***Remembering Dr. Howard Jones, father of in vitro fertilization in the United States
Eastern Virginia Medical School • Media Campaign (July/August 2015)***

Background: How do you ensure a medical pioneer's life is appropriately celebrated by the media after his death? Extensive preparation and a digital delivery method. The father of in vitro fertilization in the U.S., Dr. Howard Jones had reached his 104th birthday. There were no guarantees of future celebrations. Thus began months of interviews and information gathering. And when the sad day arrived, we provided a wealth of support to media within an hour of his death while still delivering original content and staffing school ceremonies.

Research: We knew Dr. Jones' death would garner coverage. But we wanted to ensure a fitting tribute to him while also ensuring representation for the medical school. Our research began with searches for existing primary sources (videotaped footage, previous content, historical photos and facts about his service). We also researched articles published by local media about Dr. Jones as they were most likely to have current information. In addition to the obvious facts (years of service, how he came to EVMS, etc.), we realized we could add value by providing a depth of insight about his scientific work as well as the personal details that would allow media to report on the physician scientist as an actual person — and we could facilitate Dr. Jones doing much of this in his own voice.

Planning: We developed four objectives: To place multiple messages and quotes in regional and national news stories with a particular focus on the AP given its reach; to place EVMS-created resources in media; to develop original content that would demonstrate the viability of the story and be used in our publications, social media, and website, as well as at memorial events; and to be among the first to publish news about Dr. Jones' death. In January 2015 (shortly after Dr. Jones' 104th birthday), we began scheduling a series of interviews with him to document his legacy, to recount his extraordinary partnership with his wife, and to capture his personality. We also traveled to Boston to personally interview Elizabeth Carr, the first in vitro fertilization baby born in the U.S. as we knew she would have a unique insight to share but may not be readily available when Dr. Jones died. We also began reviewing our analog archives and digitizing several years of images and video to which we had rights (from lab shots to the first IVF birth to Jones' 100th birthday) to ensure resources were quickly available. We also interviewed EVMS leadership to ensure that they could easily be included in external coverage.

Execution: In the seven months between Dr. Jones' birthday and his death on July 31, 2015, we developed an original news story, seven video packages (not including two b-roll segments for use by journalists), social media content, a digital timeline and downloadable resources. We established two Web pages that could be published at any time. One provided original content for viewing by the general public in addition to media and a second page targeted media professionals providing b-roll and images for use in news stories. These pages were published and a news release was distributed within an hour of his death.

Evaluation: Our preparations allowed us to exceed our expectations in meeting our objectives. Our results:

1. *Place key messages, quotes, statistics and information in regional and national news stories with a particular focus on the AP* — The AP reporter used two quotes from EVMS leaders and numerous details from our archive. This led to publication of these elements via the AP wire (*See highlighted segments of sample articles*). Major national media covering the news included *The Washington Post*, *Huffington Post*, *New York Daily News*, *Boston Globe*, *USA Today*, and *Miami Herald* (*See included media reports*).
 - Our media-monitoring report records 287 total hits of which 159 were EVMS-impacted (55.4%).
 - These stories represent 706,355,189 unique views of which 600,143,067 were EVMS-impacted (84.96%)*Note: These data were drawn from Meltwater monitoring and may not reflect all media reach.*
2. *Place EVMS-created resources in media* — Two regional TV stations (WTKR & WAVY) embedded our video packages online in lieu of creating their own (a rare event for our market). Additionally, the regional newspaper (*The Virginian-Pilot*) embedded our tribute video in their coverage of Dr. Jones' memorial later in August. Tribunemedia, WGNT.com, Rapid News Network and Wikipedia also embedded video. *Fertility Magazine* asked in January to reprint our 6-page feature in their July 2106 issue that will coincide with the meeting of the European Society of Human Reproduction and Embryology.
3. *Develop original content that demonstrates the viability of the story and that is usable internally* — The original content provided online inspired an EVMS magazine feature and videos that were showcased at the on-campus memorial. This re-use allowed us to meet campus needs while also responding quickly to media requests.
4. *Be among the first to publish news about Dr. Jones' death* — We were the second source to publish the news. Dr. Jones' assistant notified the local newspaper reporter first. We published within an hour of his death.