In 1984, Tony joined Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL), where he built the laboratory’s robotics and automation program, leading a team of more than 30 scientists and engineers. He managed the development of more than 20 robotics systems, including the only 4 systems in the nation qualified to handle plutonium samples. He has actively promoted the extensive use of robotics technologies in the nation’s nuclear defense and energy programs.

Beginning in 1998, Tony spent 1 year in a Los Alamos–sponsored Industrial Fellow position with Parke-Davis Pharmaceutical Research in Ann Arbor, Michigan. Upon his return to Los Alamos, Tony assumed leadership of the new Los Alamos Research Park project, identifying potential tenant LANL programs. There he developed partnerships with the life science industry, worked with the chemical/biological threat reduction program, and became a division liaison officer (DLO) to LANL’s Center for Homeland Security.

Tony led the development of robotic systems used in the mapping of human chromosomes to support the Human Genome Program. He was active in extending the use of robotics and automation technologies for DNA-based procedures in clinical practice and was a champion of robotics technologies in molecular biology, biotechnology, and drug discovery.

In 1989, Tony originated the Standard Laboratory Module concept and formalism on which the Department of Energy’s multilaboratory Contaminant Analysis Automation program and an ASTM standard were based. This program grew to include 6 national laboratories, 3 federal agencies, and 2 industrial partners and has developed modular technologies for automation of the laboratory of the future.

Tony was awarded the 1986 Pioneer in Laboratory Robotics Award and had multiple patents issued. In 1994, his work was recognized with the Hewlett-Packard Award for Advances in Automated Sample Preparation. In 1996, Tony was awarded the Los Alamos Distinguished Performance Award for his contributions to the Human Genome project at Los Alamos.

In 2008, along with co-principal investigator Dr. Scott P. Layne of UCLA, Tony began development of the High Throughput Laboratory Network (HTLN) to provide a worldwide rapid response capability and surveillance system for infectious disease.

In Memoriam


Tony J. Beugelsdijk was a co-founder, charter member, and past president of the Association for Laboratory Automation (ALA) and served for 8 years on its board. He helped organize the annual LabAutomation, EuroLabAutomation, smallTalk, and LabFusion conferences for the ALA. He designed and managed the initial Web site for the ALA and was a member of the editorial board of the *Journal of the Association for Laboratory Automation*. In addition, Tony served on several scientific advisory boards and was a consultant to various biotechnology and pharmaceutical companies.

Many of us knew Tony through his tireless and enthusiastic efforts with ALA. His body of work significantly advanced the state of the art in laboratory automation. He was a warm, intelligent, and witty colleague who could lead the most complex project to achieve success for all. Tony’s insightful vision of what laboratory automation could achieve was shared unselfishly with our community. If the measure of a person is in the positive impact he or she made in others’ lives, then Tony stood 10 feet tall.

Tony’s unexpected death brings a deep sense of personal loss to all of us who knew him as well as those whose lives and work he so generously benefited.

*Andy Zaayenga*