



In memoriam: Matthew Walker III, 1964-2021

Matthew Walker III, professor of the practice of biomedical engineering and associate professor of radiology and radiological sciences, died April 24, 2021, at his home.

Walker, 56, designed an innovative biomedical engineering design curriculum that leveraged connections between the School of Engineering, the medical school and the biotechnology community. He served as the biomedical engineering department’s immersion coordinator, guiding undergraduate students through their immersion plans and capstone project experiences. He joined the Vanderbilt engineering faculty in 2011.

“Dr. Walker cared deeply about his students, and his innovations

made senior design and Design Day into something great. To lose him during his favorite week of the year is heartbreaking,” said Michael King, J. Lawrence Wilson Professor of Engineering and chair of the Department of Biomedical Engineering. “A decade of Vanderbilt graduates benefitted from the knowledge and experience he brought from his time in the pharmaceutical industry. Matthew was a beloved educator and colleague, and we already miss his smooth baritone voice and gregarious wit.”

Prior to Vanderbilt, Walker worked for Merck Pharmaceuticals for 10 years and co-developed three blockbuster drugs, Vytorin, Januvia and Candesarten. While at Merck, he also led the novel tech-

nologies adoption team. He spoke internationally on cardiovascular pharmacology and was working on a book about the interface of technology and personalized medicine.

“He was a genius at turning ideas into a formal design process—ultimately solving complex challenges in health care,” said Dr. André Churchwell, vice chancellor for equity, diversity and inclusion and chief diversity officer. “This is a tremendous loss for Vanderbilt.”

