

JOSEPH A. DAVIS

SEPTEMBER 30, 1926 - MARCH 4, 2004

Dr. Joseph A. Davis, Professor Emeritus of Chemistry, Indiana University Purdue University Fort Wayne, died on March 4, 2004. Joe was a respected and dedicated member of the Chemistry Department over the many years of its existence, until his retirement in 1995. At the time he was hired as an Assistant Professor in 1966, there were two separate Chemistry Departments, one for Indiana University and one for Purdue University. Joe was hired by Indiana University and became part of the Purdue system when the two departments were merged in 1967.

Working for Purdue University was probably not very easy for Joe to initially accept since he was a staunch Indiana University man, having received his B. S. in Chemistry in 1951, his A.M. in Chemistry in 1952, and his Ph.D. in Inorganic Chemistry in 1955, all from IU. However, he continued to be an enthusiastic educator and was promoted to Associate Professor in 1968. He served as the Department Chairperson from 1971 to 1974 during which time he did a great job, making all the chemistry faculty feel as though they were contributing their efforts to a very worthwhile enterprise. Joe saw the department through a difficult period of significant change as it evolved into one which values both teaching and undergraduate research as vital to its mission. He continued to exert considerable insight and influence in the affairs of the department after his tenure as chair. His concern for good teaching was always apparent, and his advice was always thoughtful and useful.

Joe had extensive experience with industry, having worked as a chemist at Standard Oil, RCA Electron Tube Division, and ITT Industrial Research Laboratories before coming to IPFW. In 1972 he helped establish the Dental Research Institute on this campus, and became its first Director. He was very active in the Northeastern Indiana Section of the American Chemical Society, serving on its Executive Committee for 18 years, acting as Chairperson twice, in 1977 and 1994, and being awarded the Chemist of the Year for 1977. During his career, he was the author or coauthor of several scientific publications and patents.

Joe is survived by his wife, Anita, with whom he celebrated his fiftieth wedding anniversary in June 2003. He is also survived by seven children, 11 grandchildren, and 1 great-grandson. He was preceded in death by one son.

The IPFW community, and the Chemistry Department in particular, fondly remember Joe Davis and the lasting impact he has had on all of our lives.