A MEMORIAL
to
ANASTAS KARIPIDES

Anastas Karipides, Professor of Chemistry, died on December 7, 1994 from complications due to a heart attack suffered on the previous Thanksgiving day. With his untimely death, the Department of Chemistry and Miami University lost a highly-respected colleague who exemplified Miami's commitment to excellence in undergraduate education.

Anastas was born on July 4, 1937 in Canton, Ohio, the son of George and Anatoli Peperides Karipides. He grew up in Canton, surrounded by a devoted family and Greek community, and graduated from Canton-McKinley High School. After receiving a bachelor's degree in chemistry from Oberlin College in 1959, Anastas enrolled at the University of Illinois to pursue graduate study in inorganic chemistry. Upon completion of his doctoral thesis in 1964, Anastas accepted a position with the RCA Corporation in Princeton, New Jersey, followed by postdoctoral research at Cornell University in Ithaca, New York.

In 1968 Anastas joined Miami's Department of Chemistry and played an important role in the establishment of the Department's Ph.D.-degree program. He was promoted to associate professor in 1972 and became professor in 1984.

Throughout his career at Miami University, Anastas maintained a direct involvement with research in the area of structural inorganic chemistry. His research efforts were carried out both individually and in collaboration with graduate students, undergraduates, and faculty colleagues. Results of this work included about 30 papers, which were published on a regular basis in first-rate refereed journals. Anastas presented talks at national and regional meetings of the American Chemical Society and American Crystallographic Association. He received externally funded grants from the Petroleum Research Fund and the National Institute of Medical Sciences and was involved in a successful collaborative effort that secured National Science Foundation funding for an x-ray diffractometer. His research contract with IBM Corporation ultimately resulted in a gift to Miami of the computer system used to operate the diffractometer.

Although Anastas was actively involved in research, his greatest joy came in the classroom. He took great pride in his teaching and in the fact that he had never missed a lecture during the 26 years preceding his heart attack. While in the emergency room just hours after the heart attack, Anastas worried about how his Monday classes would be met in the event of his absence.

As a teacher, Anastas was demanding but fair. No instructor's course grades were deliberated in more detail, and "borderline" students invariably received the benefit of the doubt. He was extremely patient and unselfish with his time, devoting numerous hours to working with students outside the classroom.

Whether the course was general chemistry for freshman nonmajors or inorganic chemistry for senior chemistry majors, Anastas taught chemistry with a passion. Students quickly discovered his enthusiasm for chemistry, especially when the subject involved chemical reactions, structural features, or colors and other physical properties of substances. His lectures were supplemented with meaningful demonstrations and the innovative use of custom-designed manuals which he created to aid the student.

Anastas firmly believed in the importance of covering fewer topics in order that they be covered thoroughly. His lecture courses stressed fundamental principles which could be used to make correct predictions in newly-encountered situations. Anastas recognized that many chemical principles are best illustrated by a "hands-on" approach in the laboratory. He thus played a major role in the development and continuous improvement of the freshman and senior laboratory courses for chemistry majors. Anastas also enjoyed mentoring undergraduate research students in order to introduce them to techniques, such as crystal growing and crystal structure determination, that are not encountered in the conventional course sequence.

Anastas was a strong advocate for inorganic chemistry due to his belief in its relevance to all areas of chemistry. Not surprisingly, a number of the Chemistry Department's majors went on to pursue graduate degrees in inorganic chemistry after being exposed to the area through coursework and/or undergraduate research with Anastas.

In his spare time, Anastas was involved with a variety of activities. He enjoyed stamp collecting, specializing in United States stamps, first-day covers, and unusual cancellations. He was an avid reader of World War II history and spent many hours studying aspects of the war. In recent years, he volunteered as a timer for Miami home track meets.

One of his favorite avocations was gardening. Anastas took great pleasure in planting trees on his property and his goal was to plant as many species as possible.

Nothing gave Anastas more enjoyment than the achievements of his sons — David of Phoenix, Arizona, and Daniel of Ithaca, New York. From the time David and Daniel were young children, Anastas devoted himself to teaching them and encouraging them to learn on their own.

Colleagues, friends, and many Miami alumni will fondly remember Anastas for his enthusiastic approach to teaching, his fairness in the evaluation of students, and the high standards he set for both his students and himself. In tribute to him, his family and others have established the Anastas Karipides Memorial Scholarship which will be awarded annually by the Department of Chemistry.

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