MEMORIAL TO PROFESSOR ALICE CHUNG PHILLIPS

Alice Chung received her doctorate in theoretical chemistry from the University of Chicago under the guidance of Professor Michael J S Dewar, a very renowned organic chemist who engaged in molecular orbital theory. Alice's area of expertise was in theoretical computational chemistry. She was employed by Argonne National Laboratory before coming to the Chemistry Department when it was still housed in Old Hughes Hall (now Kreger Hall) to give a seminar. The lecture was so superbly presented that the younger faculty demanded that John Buckingham (then Chair) find the money to give her a position with us.

She quickly became part of the cadre of young faculty hired to help the Department establish its doctoral program. Upon receiving accreditation from the North Central Association of Colleges in 1972, the first student to receive his doctorate from the Miami Chemistry Department was James Kao, who was mentored by Alice. She continued mentoring two more students --- Joe Eyermann and Keith Aufderheide. Keith went on to a successful career at Oglethorpe University, and Joe developed professional expertise in drug design working in industry and academia. Her graduate students published several first author papers. Not many students came to Miami to be theoreticians, but Alice soldiered on doing research, publishing research papers up to 2005, including one in chemical education.

John Sebastian and I obtained a computational program from a consortium at Indiana University. Alice and Art Feiser got the program installed on the IBM mainframe. Alice maintained the source deck for the CNDO/INDO program. John and I had a fruitful collaboration that would never have occurred if Alice had not generously devoted her time to help us.

Alice's commitment to research was demonstrated by her attempts to obtain funding for her work. She was a gifted writer which I discovered while serving on the Faculty Research Committee. Her successful proposal was the best one I had ever read. She received funding from the NIH-Area program in 1995 for her computational work on biomolecules.

Alice was an excellent lecturer and patient teacher. I remember coteaching general chemistry with her and her husband David, who was also a very generous person and colleague in the department. I became aware that after listening to me some of my students went to hear her lecture. I did not mind because I knew how excellently she presented the material. Ann Hagerman remembers Alice patiently guiding her in the art of writing exam questions for a general chemistry lab class. Others benefitted from her gentle criticism of their questions as well.

Towards the end of her career Alice established a very successful collaboration with a young faculty member in our Department, Carolyn Cassady, who now has retired from the Faculty at the University of Alabama. The result was several publications on the Gas Phase basicity of amino acids and small peptides. Dr. Cassady informed me that one of their papers is her most often cited. She also said that Alice was one of the best people to come into her life.

There was a very great deal of socializing amongst young faculty at the time. Dave and Alice lived on Country Club Lane in a split-level house with Alice's mother. My wife and I were invited to dinner to experience a real Chinese meal. The dumplings just melted in my mouth. Alice played the piano for her own enjoyment. But I discovered that she had a real competitive streak when I played her in Table Tennis. I got schooled as she held her paddle in the Chinese style.

Her colleagues will always remember her for her constantly outgoing kind personality and her generous spirit. After suffering from profound Alzheimer's disease, she passed away January 2026.

Respectfully submitted, John R. Grunwell