

**Wilfred Rupert Chan (26 Apr 1931 – 27 Sep 2017)**



**The Caribbean Academy of Sciences**, regrets to inform you that one of our Foundation Fellows and Former President, Professor Wilfred Rupert Chan, passed away on September 27, 2017

Professor Chan (Willie) was born in New Amsterdam, British Guiana (Guyana) and attended Rosignol Government School and received a scholarship to Berbice High School in 1941. He completed his Senior Cambridge Certificate, earning a scholarship to Queen's College in 1946 where he achieved the London Higher Certificate and at 18 he earned an Open Scholarship to The University College of the West Indies (UCWI) Open Scholarship. He left for Mona, Jamaica to pursue studies in science at The UCWI, becoming the first graduate to complete a PhD (London) at the institution. He started his academic career in 1958 at UCWI and spent the next ~40 years teaching Organic Chemistry and mentoring post-graduate students in the field of Natural Products research at UWI, Mona, Jamaica and at St. Augustine, Trinidad and Tobago.

In 1966, Willie Chan was co-founder and Organising Secretary of a Biennial International series of symposia attended by leading Natural Products Chemists globally. This series, now called The Mona Symposium on Natural Products and Medicinal Chemistry is well established and recognised as the longest running symposium in Latin America and the Caribbean. Along with the lineage of a myriad of graduate students, this symposium attests to Willie's

legacy of excellence. The 1992 Symposium was dedicated to him and he was named Conference Life Chairman in recognition of his esteemed international reputation in the field of Natural Products Chemistry.

His distinction as a researcher and his international influence gained him a Personal Chair in Organic Chemistry in 1970 and in 1996, on retirement from UWI, he was awarded the title of *Professor Emeritus* of Chemistry. He was made a Foundation Fellow of the Caribbean Academy of Sciences at its inauguration in 1988 and was President of CAS between 1998-2002. Willie is one of [NIHERST's Caribbean \*Icons\* in Science, Technology, and Innovation](#).

In recognition of his outstanding achievements, Professor Chan was awarded a Centenary Medal by the Institute of Jamaica in 1981, and was named a Distinguished Graduate of The University of the West Indies at the 50th Anniversary Celebrations held in 1998. In 2000 the Government of Jamaica awarded him the Order of Distinction, Commander Class (CD).

CAS extends condolences to his wife Audrey, children: Suzanne, Robert and Carolyn, daughter-in-law: Wendy, grandchildren: Marlon, Lian and Elliott, and to colleagues, and friends, as well as his many graduate students dispersed around the globe.