Obituary

Dr. Julio Guillermo Contreras Koder

Julio Guillermo Contreras Koder was a Pharmaceutical Chemist professional began his academic life at 25 years old as Assistant Instructor at the Central Institute of Chemistry of the University of Concepción (1963). His specialty, inorganic and theoretical chemistry was materialized at the Simon Fraser University, Vancouver, Canada, where he received his Ph.D. degree in Chemistry in 1974. Returning to Chile at the same year and he reached the academic hierarchy of Professor.

He developed its teaching and research in the area of inorganic chemistry, mainly in theoretical and experimental chemistry of coordination compounds and in recent decades he was devoted to the study of chemical compounds of biological interest, by means of computational chemistry. He was author of a large number of publications and a book on Molecular Structure and Raman Spectroscopy. Also he was author of national and international research projects and advisor of PhD and undergraduate thesis.

Currently, several of his undergraduate and graduate thesis students are part of the teaching staff of our faculty.

For more than 30 years he taught postgraduate courses in our Programs of Doctorate and Master’s degree in Chemistry. Moreover, he taught an International Postgraduate Course at the Max Planck Institute for Solid State Physics, Stuttgart, Germany.

His remarkable productivity and personal conditions, did so to be recognized by his peers in important institutions that are institutional pillars of chemistry, for example, at the University of Concepcion he was Director of the Graduate Program in Chemistry (1974-1976), Director of the Department of Analytical Chemistry and Inorganic Chemistry (1979-1980), Director of the Department of Chemistry (1980-1982), and President of the Chilean Chemical Society (1997-2001), Editor of the Journal of the Chilean Chemical Society (2002-2004), among other charges.

The recognition of his career was also recognized by the community of Concepción, he received the Municipal Award of Sciences of the Municipalidad de Concepción in 1988. During his career he received also other awards as a fellowship of the American States Organization for a stay in Uruguay (1966), during his Ph.D. studies at the Simon Fraser University he received the grant University President (1972) and the scholarship to the best graduate student (1973).

His research received financial support from DIUC-Universidad de Concepción, the National Science Foundation, PNUD, and Fondecyt.

For his long career as a researcher he was known to national and international level, so he was permanent Referee of Conicyt of Uruguay (since 1995) as well as also referee of important scientific journals, Journal of the American Chemical Society, Journal of Physical Chemistry, Journal of Molecular Structure, Bioorganic Chemistry, Theoretical Chemistry Accounts.

Guillermo, named Willy by his close, leaves us a legacy full of works that are part of the history of chemistry in our University. They will miss his long-winded anecdotes, his comments about his sports passion “golf”, the successful and optimistic advices, good humor and pleasant conversation without distress.

Professor Julio Guillermo Contreras died in July 2012, leaving behind him nearly 50 years of dedication and successful academic and professional performance at the University of Concepción. His vast knowledge, intelligence, and great analytical capacity were reflected in his brilliant academic works undertaken with generosity, humility and joy.