



Jerzy Leszczynski—congratulations

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Abstract

Jerzy Leszczynski is a much decorated chemist. He has been the Editor of Structural Chemistry for fifteen years and we join in the celebration of his 70th birthday.

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Jerzy Leszczynski (Fig. 1), the renowned computational chemist of Jackson State University, has been the Editor of Structural Chemistry since 2004 and my friend for even a longer time. He has exceptionally broad editorial and organizational as well as research and pedagogical activities. The community of editors, authors, and readers of Structural Chemistry is joining the international community of chemists congratulating Jerzy on the occasion of his 70th anniversary.

Jerzy is a graduate of Wrocław University of Science and Technology (WUST) in Wrocław, Poland. Its name was Technical University of Wrocław in Jerzy's time. WUST is a relatively recent institution, but has built itself on rich historical traditions. Jerzy received his Master's degree in 1972 and his PhD degree in 1975, both in Chemistry. He spent the first decade working for his Alma Mater, then, spent stints at the Quantum Theory project at the University of Florida, Gainesville, and at the University of Alabama in Birmingham, before joining the Department of Chemistry of Jackson State University in Jackson, Mississippi, in 1990. He rose quickly on the academic ladder and was already Professor in 1995. Between 1998 and 2008, he directed the Computational Center for Molecular Structure and Interactions, which was an NSF Center of Research Excellence in Science and Technology (CREST). He was engaged as Expert by the US Army Engineer Research and Development Center in Vicksburg, Mississippi, between

2005 and 2013. He received the highest distinction of Jackson State University, when in 2001 he was named the President's Distinguished Fellow. From 2008, he has been directing the Interdisciplinary Nanotoxicity Center—yet another NSF CREST.

Jerzy has been recognized with awards and honors, well over fifty in number—an incredible quantity of which I single out a mere dozen here. AT&T Outstanding Faculty Award (1992); Member of the European Academy of Sciences 2002; Honorary Doctorate, Dnipropetrovsk National University (Ukraine), 2003; Honorary Member, International Academy of Engineering, 2003; Honorary Professorship, Wrocław University of Science and Technology, 2004; Member of the European Academy of Sciences, Arts and Humanities, 2004; The Maria Skłodowska-Curie Medal, Polish Chemical Society, 2007; Honorary Professorship, Chongqing Normal University, 2010; Title of Professor awarded by the President of Poland, 2010; USA Presidential Award for Excellence in Science, Mathematics and Engineering Mentoring (PAESMEM), 2010 (selected 2007). Member, National Academy of Inventors, 2011; Naming a wing of the Just Hall of Science “Jerzy Leszczynski Computational Center,” Jackson State University, 2011; Honorary Doctorate, Wrocław University of Science and Technology, 2016; Teacher of the Year, Department of Chemistry, Jackson State University, 2018.

I know that this latest one, recognizing him as a pedagogue, is very close to Jerzy's heart as is the fact that he has had 30 scholars who have earned their doctorate under his supervision, including one for whom this process is being in progress. Looking at the list of positions the 29 PhDs have occupied, one is most impressed by the diversity and scholarship they represent. It gives also an impression of Jerzy's impact and

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Fig. 1 Jerzy Leszczynski and John Pople in 2001 at the 10th Conference of CTCC (Current Trends in Computational Chemistry). Photograph by Istvan Hargittai

influence on a great variety of endeavors in science and technology far beyond the limits of Jackson State University.

Another manifestation of Jerzy's impact and influence is embodied in his editorial activities. The number of journals and book series he has founded is staggering and so is the number of books he has edited. He has initiated and organized conferences, schools, and workshops. He has reviewed papers for scores of high-quality journals. He has authored and co-authored countless book chapters, contributions to conference proceedings, and a variety of miscellaneous publications. He

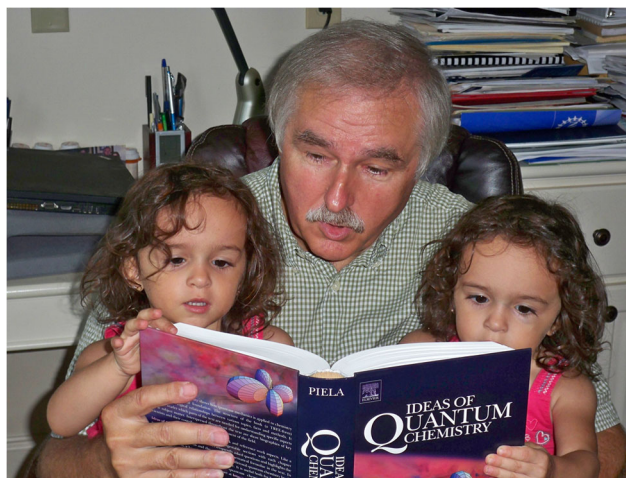


Fig. 2 Grandfather Jerzy with grandchildren (courtesy of Jerzy Leszczynski)

and his co-authors, on an international scale, publish large numbers of research papers annually.

There is a sizzling innovative and curious atmosphere around Jerzy. One would suppose that a person with so many obligations, with so many students and associates, and with so many functions, so many ideas to bring to fruition, who is multitasking much of his time, would be hurried and exhausted, too busy for everything and everybody. However, my personal experience and the personal experience of friends is the opposite. Jerzy is always ready for a friendly conversation, for a detailed explanation, for listening to others and not only to their research problems and ideas, but also to personal problems. He is a wonderful husband, a loving and caring father, and dedicated grandfather (Fig. 2).

Jerzy is a true pedagogue and researcher; a true friend; a true human being. Many happy returns, Jerzy!

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