

Almeria Laura Natansohn
1949-2002



On September 12, 2002, family, friends and colleagues gathered in Kingston, ON, to mourn the passing of Almeria L. Natansohn, professor of chemistry at Queen's University, on September 10, 2002. Almeria Natansohn was born in Romania in 1949. She studied chemistry and obtained her PhD in 1978 from Polytechnic University in Jassy, Romania, where she also worked as a research scientist until she joined in the Weizmann Institute of Science in Israel in 1982. She joined McGill University in 1985 as a research associate in the group of Adi Eisenberg, FCIC, in 1985, before she came to Queen's University as an associate professor in 1987, having been awarded a prestigious Queen's National Scholar award. Natansohn was promoted to professor in 1993 and served as acting head of chemistry in 1994-1995. She was awarded a Canada Research Chair in materials chemistry in 2001 and became a fellow of the Royal Society in 1998.

Natansohn was an accomplished polymer chemist and made pioneer contributions to the design, synthesis and testing of photoactive polymers containing azobenzene groups with potential applications as active element in the development of optical computers. She was also an expert in the field of solid state NMR spectroscopy, especially the use of NMR techniques in the characterization of polymeric materials. An internationally acclaimed researcher, she co-authored over 130 scientific publications and seven book chapters. Eighteen graduate students finished their M.Sc. and PhD degrees under her direction. She also directed the research work of 18 postdoctoral fellows. Natansohn's achievements were recognized by various awards she received including the Queen's University Prize of Excellence in Research, the Killam Research Fellowship from Canada Council and the Macromolecular Science and Engineering Award from the Chemical Institute of Canada. She dedicated much of her time helping other researchers through collaborations, advice and her work on NSERC committees.

Natansohn was active in the Kingston community where she was well known as a teacher of Tai Chi.

Her warm and gentle presence is truly missed by her family, friends, colleagues and students.

*Julian Zhu, MCIC, Université de Montréal
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(Authors titles given as of the time of writing)