



American Society for Virology



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Dear colleagues,

2/27/2023

We are establishing a lectureship through the American Society for Virology to honor our dear friend and colleague, Dr. Mavis Agbandje-McKenna.

Mavis was a world-renowned virologist employing structural (crystallography and cryo-EM) techniques coupled with a battery of biochemical assays to study ssDNA viruses. She was a pioneer towards understanding the fundamental structure-function properties of Adeno associated viruses, contributing greatly towards their development in translational medicine and gene therapy.

Originally born in Nigeria, she lived with her grandmother during her early years before moving to London to join her parents when she was 11 years old. She excelled in school, eventually earning a Ph.D. in chemistry from the University of London, where she met her husband and research partner, Dr. Robert McKenna. They conducted postdoctoral training with Dr. Michael Rossman at Purdue, followed by faculty positions at the University of Warwick, and ultimately joined the University of Florida faculty in 1999.

In addition to being a stellar and creative scientist, Mavis was adored as a wonderful colleague, fierce mentor, and a beacon of light to the virology community. Her enthusiasm for science and life were equally infectious, and she will be missed by many. Her dedication to ASV was clear through her constant participation in the annual meeting over many years. To honor her career and legacy, it is most fitting to have a Plenary Talk in her name her honor during the annual ASV meeting. Our goal is to have the named lectureship be offered every year; to do so, we will need to raise \$55,000 April 2024. If we do not reach the full fundraising goal, we will offer her named lectureship every 2 years until the funds are used.

Recipients of the endowed lectureship will be under the discretion of the ASV president and voted on by the ASV council. Recipients of the Agbandje-McKenna lectureship may include scientists working in gene therapy/translational medicine, women speakers, structural biologists, junior faculty, faculty recognized for their outstanding mentoring, and speakers from Africa or from other underrepresented groups. Mavis touched many from a variety of walks of life and we would like to honor that in the choice of speakers.

Donations can be made through the ASV member site, for members. Nonmembers can contact asv@asv.org via email to set up donations.

Please help us to make this lectureship possible and do not hesitate to reach out to us for additional information.

Sincerely,

Rebecca Dutch

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Kristin Parent