

Obituary

Ronald K. Eby



May 7, 1929 – June 27, 2006

Ronald K. Eby was an Ohio Eminent Scholar (Emeritus) and Robert C. Musson Professor of Polymer Science (Emeritus) at the University of Akron. His interests focused on the physics of polymeric materials, including the structure, morphology, and properties of plastics, rubber, advanced fibers, silks, laminates, composites and other heterogeneous materials. His research areas included physical acoustics, non-destructive evaluation, microscopy, X-ray scattering, thermal analysis and computer modeling.

Ron Eby received his Bachelors of Physics degree from Lafayette College and went on to receive his Doctorate of Philosophy degree in Physics from Brown University. Immediately following his graduate work, Ron Eby worked at the DuPont Experimental Station in Delaware for six years. He then moved to the Polymers Division of the National Bureau of Standards (now the National Institute of Standards and Technology) in Gaithersburg, MD for 21 years. He served as

Chief of the Polymers Division for 16 of those years. He also was a Charter Member of the U.S. Government's Senior Executive Service. He then became a Professor of Materials Science and Engineering at Johns Hopkins University for six years. Then in 1990 he joined the University of Akron. During his career, Professor Eby prodigiously authored more than 185 publications, and guided more than 35 students to graduate degrees.

Professor Eby was highly respected and widely honored in his field. He received the Alexander von Humboldt Senior Research Award, the International Research Award of the Society of Plastics Engineers, and the Japanese Government Research Award. He was a Fellow of the American Physical Society, the Acoustical Society of America, the Society of Plastics Engineers, and the North American Thermal Analysis Society. He served as Chair and Division Councilor for the American Physical Society Division of Polymer Physics, as Chair of the American Chemical Society Division of Polymer Chemistry, and as Chair of the ASTM Committee D20 on Plastics. Professor Eby was recently recognized by the National Institute of Standards and Technology as a Member of the NBS/NIST Distinguished Scientists, Engineers and Administrators, and he had been awarded the Meritorious Service Medal from the Department of Commerce. He was a member of the 1970s U.S. Agency for International Development (AID) team that established standards for Korea and Thailand which led to the establishment of the Korean Advanced Institute of Science and Technology.

Professor Eby's love for teaching and mentoring has profoundly impacted the careers of many students and notable scientists in the field of polymeric materials. Through Ron Eby's advice, mentorship, and advocacy, he has helped shape a generation of polymer and materials physicists. His deep personal commitment to education led to the establishment of the Professor Ronald K. Eby Award in Polymer Science in 1999, for graduate students at the University of Akron. His kindness and humor have left an indelible mark on all who knew and loved him.

As the Editor and Advisory Board Members of *Polymer*, we specifically recognize Professor Eby's contribution to the journal. He served for 23 years as the North American Editor

of *Polymer*. During his tenure as Editor, *Polymer* grew tremendously in size and stature to become one of the leading journals in polymer science and engineering. He also served on the Editorial Boards of several other journals. Taking all of this into account, one can see the vast and varied impact Ronald Eby had on the field of materials science, and know that his presence will be missed.

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