

Gary Wiggins

Librarian and Adjunct Professor of Informatics

Dr. Gary Wiggins was head of the Chemistry Library and Chemical Information Center at Indiana University from 1976 to 2003, during which time he developed widely lauded courses in chemical information handling and authored a seminal book for chemistry librarians, *Chemical Information Sources* (McGraw-Hill, 1991). He also created the Chemical Information Specialist Program that is the only one of its kind in the United States. This program prepares library science and information science students for the challenges of searching for chemical information on the Web and in traditional online services. The Indiana University Chemistry Library was one of the earliest adopters of information technology in the United States. For many years Dr. Wiggins oversaw the production of several standard interest profiles (current awareness serial publications) that were generated from the *Chemical Abstracts* tapes and found subscribers throughout the United States. Through the Chemical Information Center, IU was for several years the only place in the entire state of Indiana to offer to the public online searches from the SDC (later ORBIT) and Lockheed (later Dialog) databases. When the STN Academic Program was introduced to allow low-cost searching of the *Chemical Abstracts* databases, IU became one of the first libraries in the world to offer the service. Likewise, Dr. Wiggins led the transition to SciFinder Scholar at IU as soon as that remarkable tool was introduced.

Dr. Wiggins had a major impact on the chemical information community through the creation of CHMINF-L, the Chemical Information Sources Discussion List. Initiated in 1991, it was one of the first attempts to provide an electronic communication venue for those interested in the field of chemical information. Over 15 years later, CHMINF-L is still acknowledged as the premier virtual meeting place for publishers, database producers, chemists, librarians, and others who want to keep up with the rapidly changing information in this field. Dr. Wiggins persuaded the chemical information divisions of the American Chemical Society, the Special Libraries Association, the Royal Society of Chemistry, and the American Society for Information Science and Technology to endorse CHMINF-L as their official means of communicating electronically.

In 2000 Dr. Wiggins was appointed part-time director of chemical informatics and bioinformatics in the newly formed School of Informatics. Initially he held this position in addition to his existing responsibilities, but in 2003 he accepted full-time directorship of the programs. During his time at the school, he initiated and developed a pioneering cheminformatics educational program, the first of its kind in North America, and a leading bioinformatics program. Initially these programs offered M.S. degrees, but later they were expanded to include Ph.D. degrees as well. Additionally, he began an innovative graduate certificate program in chemical informatics; its distance education format greatly increased the number of students who could be exposed to this growing field. In his directorship of these programs, he attracted leading faculty to the school and presided over the creation of

strong new research groups. Of particular note, Dr. Wiggins was instrumental in attracting over \$1 million of federal funding to establish research in chemical informatics.

Dr. Wiggins is the recipient of numerous awards, including the American Chemical Society (ACS) Herman Skolnik award (1998), distinguished service awards from Indiana University, and very recently the ACS Patterson Crane award (2007), as well as an appointment to the Special Libraries Hall of Fame. His retirement was marked at the ACS National Meeting in Chicago in March 2007 with a symposium in his honor.

Dr. Wiggins is also very active in the Bloomington community, including founding the Bloomington Community Band. He and his wife, Mia, have generously donated to the university, including a recent \$50,000 gift to set up an informatics scholarship for undergraduate students in honor of Cecil "Corky" Richmond Jr.

David Wild