

Biographical Description for The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with William Davis

PERSON

Davis, William C., 1926-

Alternative Names: William Davis;

Life Dates: August 22, 1926-March 16, 2022

Place of Birth: Waycross , Georgia, USA

Residence: San Antonio, TX

Occupations: Chemist; Chemistry Professor

Biographical Note

Research chemist and chemistry professor William C. Davis was born on August 22, 1926 in Waycross Georgia to parents Kenice and Laura Jane Davis. In 1941, Davis moved to New York City to live with his brother, Ossie Davis, and attend college. Following graduation from Dwight High School in 1945, Davis attended City College of New York and New York University before enrolling at Talladega College in Florida. Davis left school and briefly served as second lieutenant of engineers in the Korean War. Returning to Talladega College after the War, Davis earned his B.S. degree in chemistry in 1956. Davis went on to earn his M.S. degree in organic chemistry from Tuskegee Institute in 1958 and his Ph.D. degree in biochemistry from the University of Idaho in 1965.

Upon graduation, Davis was appointed research director at Physicians Medical Laboratories. As director, Davis was credited with discoveries leading to or improving numerous amenities, among them the potato chip, the instant mashed potato, soft serve ice cream, and the organic glue that holds together wood-chip and particle board. Davis' research was public in academic journals such as Journal of Medical Technology and European Journal of Pharmacology. From 1974 to 1975, Davis continued research as a visiting scientist at the George Hyman Research Institute in Washington, D.C.; and again between 1976 and 1982 when he was a research associate at the University of Texas Health Science Center. Davis was named full professor of chemistry at St. Philip's College in 1995. In addition he served as chair of the Natural Sciences Department and director of Renewable Energy. When Davis retired in August 2009, he was named professor emeritus of the natural science department and the science building at St. Philip's College was named in his honor.

Davis' professional and academic affiliations included the American Chemical Society,

the Health Physicist Society, the Society of Nuclear Medicine, and the American Association for the Advancement of Science. He was a recipient of Tuskegee Institute's George Washington Carver Fellowship, the U.S. Armed Force's Purple Heart Medal, and was inducted to the Texas Hall of Fame in 2000.

William C. Davis was interviewed by The HistoryMakers on February 1, 2013.

Davis passed away on March 16, 2022 at the age of 95.

Related Entries

Tuskegee University [STUDENTOF]
[from ? to ?]

Ph.D.

Tuskegee University [STUDENTOF]
[from ? to ?]

M.S.

Talladega College [STUDENTOF]
[from ? to ?]

B.S.

City College of New York [STUDENTOF]
[from ? to ?]

Freshman and Sophomore Years

Dwight High School, Manhattan [STUDENTOF]
[from ? to ?]

Diploma

Dasher High School [STUDENTOF]
[from ? to ?]

University of Washington [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 1966 to 1967]

Chemistry Technician

United Medical Laboratories [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 1964 to 1978]

Clinical Chemist

Warner Pacific College [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 1967 to 1976]

Physical Science Instructor

College of Naturopathy [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 1960 to ?]

Academic Dean

University of Texas Health Science Center [EMPLOYEEOf]
[from 1979 to 1982]

Research Associate

Immutech, Inc. [EMPLOYEEOf]
[from 1938 to ?]

Laboratory Director

St. Phillips College [EMPLOYEEOf]
[from 1983 to 2009]

Professor Emeritus

Sigma Xi, The Scientific Research Society [MEMBEROf]
[from 1965 to ?]

Life Member

American Chemical Society (ACS) [MEMBEROf]
[from 1965 to ?]

Member

Registry of American Medical Technologists [MEMBEROf]
[from 1967 to ?]

Member

American Nuclear Society [MEMBEROf]
[from 1969 to 2012]

Member

Abundant Grace Lutheran Church [MEMBEROf]
[from 1990 to 1995]

Organist, Lay Pastor