



An outstanding Ukrainian scientist, a walking encyclopedia, a man of exceptional creativity wedded to science since his youth and devoted to science till the last breath, left us on October 8, 2014. Vadym Kavsan was born on June 17, 1939 in Donetsk. Doctor of Biology, Professor, a corresponding member of the NAS of Ukraine, a laureate of State Prize of the USSR started his working life as an orderly man at the Kyiv city emergency station. After graduation from the Kyiv Medical Institute and the post-graduate studies at the Institute of Microbiology and Virology of the Academy of Science of Ukraine, Vadym worked at the Institute of Molecular Biology and Genetics of NAS of Ukraine for over 40 years. He was among scientists who created one of the best institutes in Ukraine. The public image of the Institute, well-known far beyond the boundaries of our country, its world-renowned scientific status has been established to a large extent thanks to Professor Kavsan. He was known and respected in many countries of the world, he cooperated with outstanding scientists in Europe and the USA on equal grounds, and often it was him who generated scientific ideas in these collaborations. He worked in the major scientific centers of the world, including the University of California, the National Institute of Health, the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, the Colorado State University, the Eleanor Roosevelt Institute for Cancer Research (USA), and the Canterbury University (New Zealand).

Since the very beginning of his scientific carrier, Vadym was trying to be at the front line of science, in «hot spots», to solve the most complicated problems. For instance, in early 1970s he and his wife and colleague Alla Ryndych were the first in the USSR to isolate

CHRONICLE AND INFORMATION

In memoriam:

V. M. Kavsan (1939–2014)

and characterize the reverse transcriptase, a key enzyme for molecular biological research, and set up its production in the USSR and several foreign countries. He was among the first researchers in the world to synthesize and define the nucleotide sequence of a eukaryotic gene, and one of the founders of National scientific projects, called Reverse Transcriptase and Revertase-Oncogene, which served as the foundation for the development of gene engineering in the USSR. Professor Kavsan received the State Prize of the USSR in 1979 for his fundamental scientific achievements in the course of implementing these projects. Together with academicians Yury Ovchynnikov and Evgeny Sverdlov, he synthesized the human alpha-interferon gene. It was patented in 1983 and allowed creating the interferon-producing strains.

Vadim's recent studies were dedicated to genes involved in glial brain tumors, the process of immortalization in cell cultures and to the role of signaling pathways in the malignant transformation. Professor Kavsan also worked on growth inhibition of glial brain tumors using nanoconjugates of antisense-oligonucleotides of oncogenes and antibodies, specific to oncoproteins. His work will be continued by his collaborators and students. Indeed, he was always surrounded by young people, students, post-graduates and young scientists, being rather a strict teacher who always cared about their future.

Vadym was a man of great erudition who loved theater, collected rare editions, kept company with painters, loved and knew Kyiv very well and took pride in showing the city to his foreign colleagues. All his friends, colleagues and disciples will cherish the memory of the outstanding scientist and a unique personality – Vadym Kavsan.