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AP Chemistry p.4

Reaction paper: Sam Wait interview

Dr. Wait spoke to us as though we were his own students clearly explaining various details of his life. Our questions lead him on long and interesting tangents during which he revealed fascinating details about his work that would not have come out in normal conversation. It was very exciting to delve into the life of such a genius as he walked us through his thought process in his work and his achievements.

He discussed his life chronologically explaining how as a young child he became particularly interested in chemistry when he would use his home chemistry set. This interest that was sparked at such a young age stayed with him throughout his entire life. He pursued his passion at RPI and landed many jobs working in industry. An avid traveler, he broadened his horizons and his perspectives on the world by his journeys overseas. It was very interesting to see how travel had such a major impact on his life. He told us that if he had not studied in England, he would not have been inspired to conduct his own research; rather, he would have continued working for industries. Something that struck me was how he was frustrated with working in industry because he felt the need to conduct his own research and follow his interests rather than pursuing those of others. He began conducting research about molecular symmetry which was not a very common field of study at the time. His initiative was outstanding as he followed his own passions and studied what interested him. It takes enormous courage to leave a steady job to pursue the unknown. Through teaching he was able to share his knowledge and wisdom with the next generation of brilliant scientific minds. Even though he prefers

research to teaching, he is able to give his students a preview of the great successes they can achieve if they have the work ethic and drive to study something that many people know very little about.

I was awe-inspired to be in the presence of a genius. He was faced with many challenges during his life but always continued to stay focused on his research. His diligent work ethic motivated me to put my all into everything I do and taught me to always have a passion for what I am doing. It is important to fully pursue every dream and work hard for things you want to achieve. Persistence and effort will ultimately be rewarded by success. His long life was devoted to the advancement of scientific knowledge which will lay a great foundation for further developments in his field of interest. The world needs more intelligent, hardworking and devoted thinkers and researchers like Sam Wait. If more people had his determination, revolutionary advances could be made in scientific research.