



Dear ICS members,

I cannot believe I am writing this message about our dear friend and colleague, Distinguished University Professor Yitzhak Apeloig of the Schulich Faculty of Chemistry at the Technion, who passed away last night. The funeral will take place tomorrow, May 29, at 11:00 at the Sde Yehoshua Cemetery.

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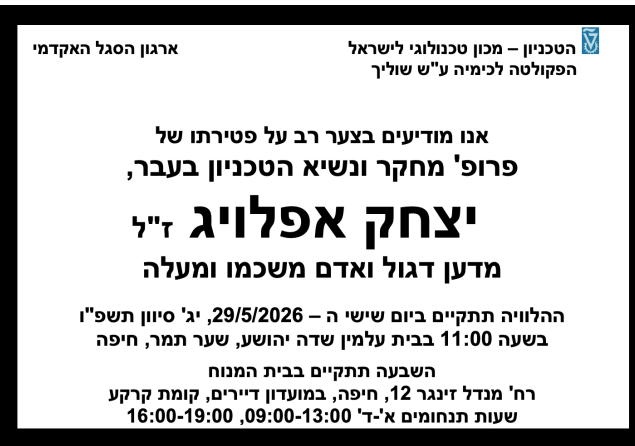
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Prof. Yitzhak Apeloig (1944 – 2026)

Yitzhak Apeloig was born on 1 September 1944 in Bukhara, Uzbekistan, after his family fled from the Nazis following the invasion of Poland. In 1947, when he was three years old, the family immigrated to Palestine and settled in Ramat Gan. Yitzhak served in the Nahal Brigade and the Paratroopers (1962-1964), then studied chemistry and physics at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. He completed his BA in physics and chemistry (1967, summa cum laude). In the Six-Day War (1967), he was drafted to his reserve paratroop unit and fought in the Sinai Desert and the Golan Heights. He joined the lab of Prof. Zvi Rappoport, studying vinyl cations, which chemists at the time were debating whether they existed, and obtained his MA (1969, summa cum laude) and PhD (1974, Yashinski Prize for an outstanding PhD thesis). In the Yom Kippur War (1973), he fought in the Golan Heights and then spent five months near the Suez Canal. In a tent in the desert, he found time to write his PhD thesis. After two years as a postdoctoral fellow with P.v.R. Schleyer (Princeton University) and Nobel Laureate J. A. Pople, he joined the Faculty of Chemistry at the Technion in 1976, becoming a full professor in 1988 and a Chair incumbent in 1993. In 1996, he established, together with Sason Shaik, the Lise Meitner Minerva Center for Computational Quantum Chemistry and served as its co-director. He served as Dean of the Faculty of Chemistry (1995-2001) and then (2001-2009) as President of the Technion. During his presidency, Apeloig recruited more than 150 elite scholars and scientists to the Technion. He also established several interdisciplinary research centers such as the Russell Berrie Nanotechnology Institute, and the Lorry I. Lokey Interdisciplinary Center for Life Sciences and Engineering. He was a Visiting Professor at Cornell University, with Prof. Roald Hoffmann (1983-1984), the Technische Universität Berlin with Prof. Helmut Schwarz (1985, 1991, 1994, 1997, 2017, 2018, 2010, 2020), Kyushu University, Japan (1991), Universität Ulm (1997), Tohoku University, Sendai, Japan (1999), University of Utah, Salt Lake City, USA with Prof. Peter Stang (2000, 2011), and Tsukuba University, Japan (2010).

His research focused on organosilicon chemistry, including multiple bonds to silicon, silyl anions, silyl cations, silyl radicals, silylenes, metallocsilanes, and polysilanes. His work on organic reaction mechanisms included reactive intermediates, such as carbenium ions and strained molecules. Apeloig was one of the world's pioneers in using computational chemistry as a reliable research tool. His theoretical predictions inspired and guided numerous experimental groups. A unique characteristic of his research is the synergistic "in house" use of experimental and theoretical methods, leading to seminal contributions to the fundamental understanding of the properties and synthesis of multiple bonds to silicon and of silicon-centered reactive intermediates, compounds that only a few decades ago were widely believed to be non-existent and now are often used. His list of prizes includes the ICS Gold Medal, the ICS Prize for the Outstanding Scientist, Humboldt Senior Award, Japan Society for the Promotion of Science Award, Wacker Silicone Award, and ACS Frederic Stanley Kipping Award in Silicon Chemistry. He is a foreign honorary member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences and a member of Academia Europaea. He received Honorary Doctorate from Technische Universität Berlin, Order of Merit of the President of Germany, and Honorary Citizenship of the City of Haifa (Yakir Haifa).

Yitzhak is survived by his wife Tzipi, son Shai, daughter Noa, and four grandchildren.

The ICS, the entire Israeli science community, and the global scientific community mourn the loss of an outstanding scientist.

Ehud Keinan