Famed chemist, teacher and nuclear pioneer passes on

Word has reached Hanford of the death of Dr. Paul K. Kuroda, distinguished nuclear chemist and professor emeritus of the University of Arkansas in Fayetteville. Kuroda died at his home in Las Vegas on April 16 at the age of 84.

Kuroda was a student and faculty member at Imperial Tokyo University before becoming the first Japanese chemist to immigrate to the United States after World War II. In his career at the University of Arkansas, he taught 64 doctoral students, including some who work at Hanford.

Senior technical advisor Steven Bakhtiar of Hanford's Waste Management Project has fond memories of his doctoral studies at Arkansas. "Professor Kuroda was an inspiration to all his students," Bakhtiar said. "We are very grateful to have known such a wonderful, caring human being and to have had him as our teacher."

Bakhtiar said Kuroda's two unfulfilled wishes in life were to study nuclear physics under Enrico Fermi and nuclear chemistry under Glenn Seaborg. Kuroda published nearly 400 peer-reviewed scientific papers throughout his life and was the recipient of many honors and awards in both the U.S. and Japan. He is best known for his hypotheses concerning the Oklo Phenomenon and Pu-244 in the early solar system. ✦

Kuroda