



Pamela C. Champe, PhD

After completing her undergraduate degree at Stanford University and her master's degree in microbiology at Purdue, Pam Champe came to Rutgers University in Piscataway in 1969 to study for a doctorate in microbiology. While pursuing her doctorate, she began teaching at Rutgers Medical School, and discovered a facet of medical education that would become a theme of her career: encouraging underrepresented minorities and women to excel.



Dr. Champe accepted a full-time position at Rutgers Medical School in 1973 in the Minority Student Summer Pre-matriculation Program. After serving on a committee to evaluate the school's undergraduate programs for underrepresented minorities, she went on to direct the entire minority student effort. She noted that "the goals of the program are very compatible with my personal beliefs and goals ... it was a perfect fit." Dr. Champe's efforts to recruit and retain minority and women students have left a lasting imprint on the admissions process at Robert Wood Johnson Medical School.

Dr. Champe was an excellent and innovative teacher. She taught science in the form of a story, with a beginning, middle, and end, and still included all the facts. Her teaching methods drew students into a continuing saga.

Her talent for explaining complex biochemical concepts in an enjoyable way found many outlets. She participated in national review programs to help students prepare for the United States Medical Licensure Exam (USMLE).

Dr. Champe became an assistant professor of biochemistry in 1977 and was promoted to associate professor in 1984. She collaborated with colleague Richard Harvey, MD, professor emeritus of biochemistry, on a text series, Lippincott's Illustrated Review. More than a million copies of these titles have been purchased. Dr. Champe passed away in 2008.

She retired in 1996 as a professor of biochemistry but continued as an adjunct professor. To mark her retirement, the school designated "Pam Champe Day." It was a special event to say goodbye to a gifted teacher who was also a mentor and confidante, especially to minority and women students.

Dr. Champe earned every teaching award offered by Robert Wood Johnson Medical School. In addition, the student body created the Lifetime Achievement Award for Teaching and Support of Students especially to honor her. For her contributions to the education of women in medicine, Dr. Champe received the American Medical Women's Association's first Gender Equity Award, in 1994. She also received the 1995 National Alpha Omega Alpha Teaching Award, presented annually to a medical school teacher in the basic sciences. At the time of her retirement, she said the award was "the icing on my professional cake." Dr. Champe passed away in 2008.