Barbara Zielinska, Ph.D., Emeritus Member of A&WMA, passed away on July 26, 2017. A member for almost 30 years, Dr. Zielinska was actively engaged in the Association’s leadership, most recently serving as Chair of the Chemistry Committee (2006–2009), Vice Chair (2009–2011) and Chair (2011–2014) of the Basic Sciences Division, and Air Group Coordinator (2014–2016).

Dr. Zielinska was a renowned atmospheric chemist with notable contributions through both research and scientific community service. Her research areas included the collection and analysis of trace atmospheric organic species in both the gas and particle phases; development of analytical methods for primary and secondary particulate organic matter speciation; kinetics and products of gas-phase reactions of organics; measurement methods for volatile, semi-volatile, and particulate-phase compounds in ambient air; and particle-associated and volatile organic compound emissions from various sources, including diesel- and gasoline-powered vehicles, wood combustion, biomass burning, and meat cooking.

Dr. Zielinska earned her M.Sc. from the Technical University of Lodz (1969) and Ph.D. from the Polish Academy of Sciences (1979), both in chemistry. Upon completion of her studies, she became an associate research chemist for the Statewide Air Pollution Research Center (SAPRC) at the University of California, Riverside, where she conducted research on mutagenic derivatives of polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons under the influence of gaseous atmospheric pollutants. After six years with SAPRC, Dr. Zielinska was recruited by the Desert Research Institute (DRI) as an associate research professor in 1989 and was promoted to professor in 1997. She established DRI’s Organic Analytical Laboratory (OAL) and served as the lab’s director until her retirement in 2015. With Dr. Zielinska’s leadership, DRI grew to become a global leader in organic chemistry analysis.

Dr. Zielinska published more than 125 peer-reviewed papers that spanned a range of topics with implications to atmospheric science, air quality planning and management, and air pollution health impacts. She was particularly well known for her work on polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs), biomass burning emissions, vehicle emissions, and secondary aerosol formation. She was also a national leader in service to the scientific community, including a recent role on the National Research Council’s Committee on Risk Management and Governance Issues in Shale Gas Development and on the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency’s Clean Air Scientific Advisory Committee (CASAC). In 1999, Dr. Zielinska was recognized with DRI’s Women of Achievement Award, and in 2002, received DRI’s top honor in recognition of scientific accomplishment, the Alessandro Dandini Medal of Science.

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