



Dr. Clayton Wilson Bates Jr.

SEP 5, 1932 - FEB 18, 2024



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Dr. Clayton Wilson Bates Jr.

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Dr. Clayton Wilson Bates, Jr., an esteemed electrical engineer and physicist, passed away peacefully on February 18, 2024, surrounded by his loving family. He was 91 years old. He is survived by his three children, Katherine Bates, Christopher Bates, and Naomi Haines, son-in-law, Jason Haines, and grandson, Jett Haines. He was predeceased by his wife of 52 years, Priscilla S. Bates, his parents Clayton W. Bates, Sr. and Arline Bates, and older sister, Barbara V. Walker.

Clayton was born on September 5, 1932, in the vibrant neighborhood of Harlem, New York City, to the late Clayton W. Bates, Sr., and Arline Bates. His early years were marked by a deep fascination with science and engineering, a passion that would shape his remarkable career and leave an indelible mark on the world.

After attending New York Public School 119 and New York Junior High School 43, Clayton graduated from Brooklyn Technical High School in 1950, where he excelled both academically and athletically. It was during these formative years that Clayton's love for baseball, basketball, and track flourished, alongside his burgeoning interest in science and engineering.

Driven by his childhood dreams of becoming a pilot, Clayton pursued his academic journey with unwavering determination. He earned his Bachelor of Science degree in electrical engineering from Manhattan College on a full academic scholarship. Subsequently, he obtained master's degrees from the Polytechnic Institute of Brooklyn and Harvard University before earning his Ph.D. in physics from Washington University in St. Louis, Missouri, in 1966.

Throughout his illustrious career, which spanned several decades, Clayton's innovative spirit and dedication to scientific advancement were evident. From his pioneering work at Varian Associates to his influential tenure at Stanford University, where he became the first African American to hold a tenure-line appointment in the School of Engineering's Department of Materials Science and Engineering, and later as the associate dean of graduate education and research for Howard University's College of Engineering, Architecture and Computer Sciences (CEACS). Clayton's



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contributions to the fields of electrical engineering and physics were profound. His research in x-ray technology and materials science paved the way for groundbreaking discoveries and patents, leaving an enduring legacy in the scientific community.

Clayton's impact extended far beyond the laboratory. He was deeply committed to promoting diversity and inclusion in STEM fields. He co-founded the Society of Black Scientists and Engineers at Stanford University and served as a mentor and advisor to countless minority students. His passion for education and advocacy also extended to his role as the associate dean of graduate education and research for CEACS, where he continued to inspire and empower future generations of scientists and engineers.

This commitment and his impact were digitally captured in 2005, when he was recognized as a SCIENCEMAKER by The History Makers, a non-profit research and educational organization dedicated to preserving and sharing the personal stories of African Americans, both famous and unsung. His digital archive can be found here:

<https://www.thehistorymakers.org/biography/clayton-w-bates-jr-39>

Beyond his professional achievements, Clayton was a devoted husband to his beloved wife, Priscilla, a loving father to their three children, Katherine, Christopher, and Naomi, and proud grandfather to his grandson Jett. He cherished his family and was a source of inspiration and support to all who knew him.

In reflecting on Clayton's life and legacy, we celebrate not only his remarkable achievements but also the profound impact he had on those fortunate enough to know him. His kindness, wisdom, and unwavering dedication to excellence will forever be remembered.

A memorial service will be held on Saturday, March 9, 2024 at St. Thomas Aquinas Church, 751 Waverley St, Palo Alto, CA 94301, 1:00-2:00PM PT to honor Clayton's life. A reception will follow, at 339 Kellogg Ave, Palo Alto, CA 94301, to celebrate the beautiful legacy he leaves behind.

Though Clayton may have departed this world, his spirit will live on in the hearts and minds of all who were touched by his kindness, generosity, and boundless passion for science and education. May his soul rest in eternal peace.



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Favorite quote:

"I believe that there are greater things in life than life itself. I believe in climbing upward even when the spent and broken thing called my body calls halt." - Elias Lieberman, Credo



Tribute Wall

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Katherine Bates shared a photo to the **Family Photos** album.



February 29 at 10:58 AM



Media

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The Prof



Memories only last if you share them

Join us in honoring Clayton by contributing to a collection of shared memories.



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