



Association of Adventist Women

Irma Bachmann Vyhmeister

— Woman of the Year —

Lifetime Achievement

2003

Born in Calvarino, Chile, South America, the ninth of ten children, Irma Vyhmeister early developed an insatiable love of learning and adventure. In 1954 she, with her husband and three children, all under age five, immigrated to Southern California, where she obtained a Bachelor of Science degree from La Sierra University and a Master's degree in dietetics from Loma Linda University. Here in her adopted country she began the pursuit of a career, which would become a lifelong mission, as Assistant Professor in the School of Nutrition and Dietetics with the School of Public Health. She was involved in community nutrition outreach programs, presented Home Nutrition Instruction

courses in both Spanish and English, spoke at camp meetings, and held cooking schools.

In 1974 she earned a doctorate in public health at The University of California, Los Angeles. Her vigorous doctoral research regarding the biochemistry of protein-amino acid metabolism, yielded more than six

peer-reviewed papers in professional journals and monograph chapters that broadly expanded knowledge concerning metabolism.

In 1981 she was invited to join the General Conference Department of Health and Temperance to pioneer the work of dietetics for the world church. She circled the globe, training



professionals and laypersons, which resulted in markedly enhancing the health of world populations.

In her uniquely entertaining way, with a mixture of English, Spanish, and German, Irma spellbound her audiences as she infused them with the desire to adopt positive, health-promoting lifestyles. During her long teaching career, she served as mentor to innumerable graduate and undergraduate students, who have become health professionals around the world.

Her distinguished career as an Adventist scientist includes publications in the field of nutrition, including best-selling books, journal articles, as well as textbook chapters used nationally in the dietetics field. Furthermore, Irma authored or collaborated in numerous research studies in nutrition and foods and in more than thirty-four articles that appeared in various professional or medical journals and lay publications.

Perhaps her most valued legacy is that of a visionary who developed a generation of professionals who learned excellent science along with a passion for sharing balanced nutrition, as she modeled and practiced both. Surely our world is a better place because of Irma Vyhmeister's over sixty years of service.

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