

IN MEMORIAM

As this volume was going to press, the world lost one of the greatest interdisciplinary mathematicians of this century. Richard Bellman passed away leaving behind a legacy which only historians of science and mathematics will ever be able to evaluate.

I will not review the achievements of Richard Bellman here. I will leave that to others who are more qualified to do so. Rather, I would recount a short story.

I met Richard Bellman when I was a postdoctoral student at the University of Southern California. Despite the fact that he was immensely busy, he took the time to invite me to his house where we discussed a number of mathematical problems of mutual interest. His interest in my work on the mathematics of senescence led us to discuss my future career possibilities. He encouraged me to remain in the field of interdisciplinary applied mathematics, arguing strongly for the need for that type of research. Knowing of my difficulty in finding an academic position, he made a great effort to provide numerous contacts, allowing me to use his name as reference.

Though my career has been rocky, I remain—to this day—inspired by Dick Bellman's comments on the need for interdisciplinary applied mathematicians. And, I thank him for encouraging me to stand in the face of the storms he knew would come my way. The joy my research has provided me would have been lost, had he not been so encouraging. Most likely, I would have given up what I was doing to pursue a more established discipline.

A brilliant mind, a compassionate human being, and a consummate interdisciplinary researcher has left us. Though Richard Bellman is gone, he is certainly never to be forgotten by those of us whose lives he touched.

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Editor

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