

Dr. Manuel Luis Hernández-Ávila

Some considered him a visionary; many asserted that he has been a true leader--a man who strongly believes that education and research are inseparable and that science without humanities is futile. Dr. Hernández Ávila always worked with passion and dedication to accomplish his goals. He laid the foundation for a greater cooperation between academia, government, and industry; promoted interdisciplinary work, intramural practice, and what was called *Total Quality Management (TQM)* which corresponds to today's *Lean Six Sigma*.

Dr. Hernández-Avila was born on April 15, 1935 in Quebradillas, Puerto Rico. After four years in the US Air Force (1954-58) and two years as an electronic technical representative for Boeing Airplane Company at Cape Kennedy, Florida, he obtained his Bachelor in Science degree from the University of Puerto Rico, Río Piedras Campus (1967) and the Masters in Marine Sciences from the Department of Marine Sciences in UPRM (1970). He obtained his Ph.D. in Coastal Physical Oceanography from Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge (1974).

His expertise in Physical Oceanography and his prolific work as Director of the Department of Marine Sciences for 16 solid years (1977-1991), Sea Grant College Program (1980-1995), NIH/MBRS (1986-1995), and the R&D Center (1994-1999) made him recipient of many honors: To mention some, in 1989, under his directorship, the University of Puerto Rico was designated a Sea Grant College Program by the US Department of Commerce and the National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), the 25th in the nation. In 1990 he was appointed by the Governor of the Commonwealth of PR to be Member of the Advisory Council on Environmental Protection of the Environmental Quality Board. In 2002 the Secretary of the US Department of Commerce appointed him to the National Sea Grant College Program Review Panel, a committee that oversees the evaluations of all Sea Grant programs in the nation.

His biographical sketch has been included in, *Who's Who in Frontiers of Science and Technology*, *Who's Who in America*, *Who's Who in the World*, the *Dictionary of Today's Puerto Rico Personalities*, the *Puerto Rican Biographical Archives* and *American Men and Women of Science*.

His experience in management brought him recognition among his colleagues and from administrators of other institutions in Puerto Rico and overseas: In 1989, he was invited by *Universidad de Cádiz*, Spain, to be advisor in the development of a Graduate Marine Sciences Curriculum and Program. In 1991 he was invited as a speaker and was also appointed to the Advisory Board of the Symposium *Mediterranean Seas 2000*, held in Santa Margherita Ligure, Genoa, Italy.

Dr. Hernández has served in international committees as representative-delegate of the USA in administrative and planning conferences by UNESCO/IOC/IOCARIBE (México, Costa Rica, Argentina, Italy, Panamá, Venezuela, Trinidad-Tobago, Martinique, and Chile.

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As director of the R& D Center, Dr. Hernández was a pioneer by instituting the use of the **American Express Corporate Card**, which has been a major accomplishment in the research community. The Office of External Resources was also established under his tenure. He also wrote and submitted the first document for the creation of a Deanship for Research and Graduate Studies; established the R&DC Seed Money Program; organized the first R&DC Advisory Committee to work in the strategic plan of the Center; enforced the creation of a web page through the Office External Resources (<http://ore.upr.clu.edu>; not current); obtained the assignment of 75 percent of indirect costs for the development and operation of the R&DC; in 1999 it was reduced to 55 percent. He also hired new employees (22) and restructured and furnished facilities to be used for other institutional programs.

Dr. Manuel L. Hernández Avila has been a role model for many who knew of worked with him. He has been an outstanding professional, a committed educator, a wise counselor and the best of friends.