

# JAMES P. WILLIAMS

James Patrick (Jim) Williams attended Catholic Central High School in Detroit, Michigan, during the years 1951-55 and then matriculated at the University of Detroit, receiving his B.S. degree (*magna cum laude*) in 1959. At this time he commenced his graduate education at the University of Michigan (Ann Arbor), receiving his M.A. in mathematics in 1960. Jim then interrupted his educational program briefly to accept a position as an applied mathematician with the Sperry Gyroscope Co. in New York. While employed by Sperry, he continued to take graduate courses in mathematics at Adelphi University and also at NYU. In 1962, he returned to full-time study at the University of Michigan, where he remained until 1966, receiving his PhD at the end of 1965. During his years at the University of Michigan, Jim taught courses in the Mathematics Department (both in Ann Arbor and in Flint, Michigan) and served as a member of the Institute of Science and Technology of the University of Michigan. In 1966 he accepted an appointment to the position of Assistant Professor of Mathematics at IU and took up his full-time duties here in September of that year.

When he joined this faculty, he was one of only two of its members who specialized in operator theory. Later, the operator theory group here emerged as one of the strongest in the world, and certainly part of the credit for this development must be given to Jim Williams. His research and scholarship earned him an international reputation. In 1972-73 and again in 1980-81, he was named a Science Research Council (Great Britain) Senior Research Visiting Fellow. He gave invited addresses at conferences in Aberdeen,



Scotland (1971) and in Timisoara, Romania (1980). In the United States, he was an invited colloquium speaker at many universities and was appointed Distinguished Visiting Professor at Bucknell University in 1975.

Jim's enthusiasm for mathematics was contagious. This, coupled with his warm and outgoing personality, drew him close to many of our graduate students. He began directing doctoral dissertations almost immediately upon arriving here, and he always had at least one doctoral student working under his guidance. All told, he directed six PhD theses, but he contributed substantially to many others.

Born: Highland Park, Michigan January 15, 1938  
Died: Bloomington, Indiana May 1, 1983  
Years at IU: 1966-1983

See also the James P. Williams Memorial Award