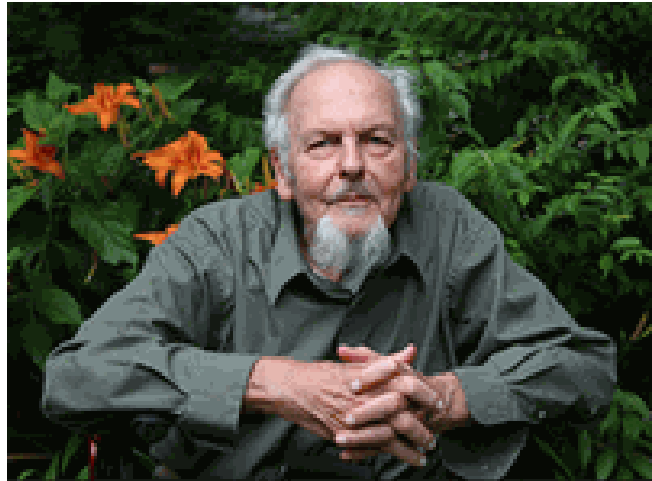


## James Duke: Beloved Professor Tribute by David Christopher, M.H.

Last month the world lost a truly wonderful man, Dr. James Duke (April 4, 1929-December 10<sup>th</sup> 2017). I am deeply blessed to have been able to work with this botanical master. Jim was brilliant and had a knack of turning extremely technical information into an easily understandable and useful curriculum. Our students loved and respected this humanitarian who was essentially overqualified, yet unassuming, and treated them as equals. His Southern charm, thoroughness, and attention to details made pharmacognosy an enjoyable subject for our Master Herbalist students. Jim would notice the mind boggling effect of the subject on the students and break the trance with his dry humor, or pull out his guitar and serenade them with witty, yet useful songs of the herbs he loved and immortalized in lyrical verse.

My only personal regret is that I didn't accompany Jim to the Amazon where he led students, professionals, and friends on trips revealing the wonderments of botanical medicines in the jungle.

His love for rainforest botanicals was fortified early in his career when dispatched to Panama by the Missouri Botanical Gardens. Here he observed and technically described the plants used by the Choco and Cuna native tribes for the Flora of Panama and published his first book, Isthmian Ethnobotanical Dictionary. Jim has published over three dozen books since then.



Jim received his undergraduate and PhD degrees from the University of North Carolina in botany. He has a long list of accomplishments and served his government as Chief of the Medicinal Plant Laboratory at USDA's Agricultural Research Service in Beltsville, Maryland.

Doctors James Duke and Norman Farnsworth were instrumental in starting The American Botanical Council with Mark Blumenthal, current Director.

I loved visiting his beautiful botanical garden behind his home. Our love goes out to his lovely wife Peggy a talented botanical artist.