

CHANCELLOR BROSKI'S SPEECH
FALL 1996

It is a pleasure to present the Woman of the Year Award, because of the number of highly qualified, competent, dedicated women who contribute to the vitality of UIC across all of our missions -- research, teaching, and service. This award has distinguished itself by honoring those women who have made exceptional contributions to the progress of women at UIC. This year's honoree, Dr. Kate Barany, Professor of Physiology and Biophysics, is no exception to the trend.

Kate is a remarkable woman who has earned the admiration, respect, and affection of students and colleagues across the campus in her twenty-two years at UIC. A distinguished research scholar in the fields of muscle physiology and the physical chemistry of proteins, and the author of over eighty scientific papers, she has also won numerous awards for her dedicated teaching, including awards for teaching medical students, international students, and minority students. She has served as a role model to women in the university and scientific professions, an advisor and mentor for women students and colleagues, and a dedicated activist to improve conditions for women at our university and in the nation. For twenty years she served on the Chancellor's Committee on the Status of Women and has been a leader in campaigns for the West Side child care center, for flexible tenure compatible with family responsibilities, for career guidance for women in science, and for female-friendly facilities and policies on campus and in the nation, including a successful campaign to get the Teachers Insurance and Annuity Association fund to give equal pension benefits to men and to women.

Born in Hungary, her childhood was disrupted by war, poverty, and the horror of a year in the Auschwitz concentration camp. With her husband Michael, she had to flee Hungary in 1957, pregnant and with a toddler. She then earned her Ph.D. in Germany before coming to this country in 1960. She persevered in her scientific interests despite being one of very few women in her field, and one with family responsibilities. Since 1974 she had been at UIC, actively engaged in research, often with her husband.

The head of her department of Physiology and Biophysics notes how many women have entered the department since Kate arrived and how successful their female students have been in national and international competitions as a result of her encouragement and example. Her help to students has included everything from clear

lectures to aid in writing grant applications to babysitting. Several successful women physicians and faculty members say they would have dropped out of school were it not for her encouragement.

Colleagues describe Kate as unfaltering in her attention to teaching. They say she approaches “barriers, frustrations and injustices with a quiet, strong resolve.” Typical remarks of those who wrote in her behalf include:

“She has touched and inspired hundreds of women scientists who are attempting to match her dedication and productivity. In addition, Kate continues to work to improve the future for women in science.”

Another writes, “In a male dominated field, where having children is still looked down upon, [her] type of encouragement is crucial for young women.”

Many students remember her telling them that “success in science and success in your personal life are not mutually exclusive.”

Former students wrote to say, “Dr. Barany has personally built a coalition among women graduate students in physiology, biochemistry, and nursing.”

“Dr. Barany is *the* leading reason I pursued my dreams of becoming an M.D.”

A former student, now a professor, writes that “more privileges are available to women scientists now because of decades of commitment, vision, and effort of those like Kate Barany.”

It is therefore with very great pleasure that we announce Dr. Kate Barany as this year’s Woman of the Year.