

# Ulrich K. Melcher

July 7, 1945 – July 13, 2025

Ulrich Melcher, 80, was born to Ernest and Lotte Melcher in London, UK, on July 7, 1945, and passed away in Stillwater, OK, on July 13, 2025. His parents left Germany for England at the beginning of WWII. When Ulrich was 6 years old, they immigrated to Queens, NY. Ulrich earned his bachelor's degree in biochemistry from the University of Chicago and a Ph.D. from Michigan State University. It was here that he met Karen Sandstedt, and they were married in 1968. His postdoctoral training took place in a NATO Postdoctoral Fellow program at the University of Aarhus in Denmark and then a NIH Postdoctoral Fellow at both New York University Medical School and at the University of Texas Southwestern Medical School. Dr. Melcher began his faculty career as an assistant professor at the University of Texas Southwestern Medical School. A year later, he joined the Department of Biochemistry at Oklahoma State University where he spent the remainder of his career. He served as director of OSU's Department of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology's Recombinant DNA/Protein Resource Facility as well as a member of the OSU Institute for Biosecurity and Microbial Forensics. Progressing through the ranks, he was ultimately honored as a Regents' Professor. Among his accolades were being named the inaugural Robert J. Sirny Professor of Agricultural Biochemistry as well as a recipient of the OSU Regents Distinguished Research Award. He also received the Phoenix Award for Graduate Faculty and the James A. Whatley Award of Merit for excellence in agricultural research. Dr. Melcher enjoyed teaching and mentoring students. Not only will he be remembered for his scientific brilliance but also for his generosity, mentorship, and the lasting impact he made on his students and the greater scientific community. He was a Fellow of the American Phytopathological Society and a member of the Microbial Forensics Interest Group. He served as president of OSU's Sigma Xi Chapter as well as president and treasurer of OSU's chapter of the American Association of University Professors. Further, he held leadership roles in the Oklahoma Academy of Science. He loved traveling, learning new languages, and playing music on the piano and clarinet. Dr. Melcher is survived by his wife, Karen, daughters Sonya ( husband Jonathan) Fogg, Katherine Melcher (partner Mark Johnson), and his step grandson Alex Johnson.