

# Akira Kaji, Microbiology

JUNE 20, 2023

VOL 69 ISSUE 37 ([HTTPS://ALMANAC.UPENN.EDU/VOLUME-69-NUMBER-37](https://almanac.upenn.edu/volume-69-number-37))

DEATHS

PRINT



*Akira Kaji*

Akira Kaji, a longtime professor of microbiology in the Perelman School of Medicine, died on May 13. He was 93.

Born in Japan, Dr. Kaji completed his BS at the University of Tokyo in 1953 and his PhD at the McCollum Pratt Institute of Johns Hopkins University in 1958. In 1963, Dr. Kaji joined Penn Medicine's School faculty as an associate of microbiology. The next year, he became an associate professor, and in 1973, he became a full professor.

Dr. Kaji was an important contributor to research on protein synthesis in the early days of molecular biology. He discovered that dedicated machinery was required to terminate translation and recycle ribosomes (*Almanac* July 13, 2004

(<https://almanac.upenn.edu/archive/volumes/v51/n01/research.html>)). He also

contributed to important studies of tRNA binding to translation complexes and the functional outcomes.

In 1972, Dr. Kaji earned a Guggenheim Fellowship to support his early work in protein recycling.

A memorial service was held on May 20.