

# Willys Kent Silvers, PSOM

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DEATHS

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*Willys Kent Silvers*

Willys Kent Silvers, a former professor of human genetics in the Perelman School of Medicine, died on January 24. He was 95.

Born and raised in New York, Dr. Silvers graduated from the Ethical Culture Fieldston School in 1946. He pursued his premedical studies at Johns Hopkins University, where he remained until 1950. While at Johns Hopkins, Dr. Silvers spent several summers at the Jackson Laboratory in Bar Harbor, Maine, as part of the laboratory's summer program. He worked with psychologist Joseph Royce on dog behavioral studies, earning scholarships for his contributions. Afterwards, he earned his PhD from the University of Chicago. Dr. Silvers dedicated himself to research upon graduating, embarking on a prestigious postdoctoral fellowship funded by the National Institute of Health at Brown University.

Dr. Silvers and his wife moved to Philadelphia in 1957. He took a position at the Wistar Institute while his wife, Abigail Silvers, began her studies at the University of Pennsylvania Medical School. Dr. Silvers was recruited to the University of Pennsylvania to help develop the department of human genetics, where he served as the chair of the genetics graduate program. His research primarily centered on pigment cell biology and transplantation biology. He coauthored *The Immunobiology of Transplantation* in 1971 before authoring *Coat Colors of Mice*, a book focusing on the genes that influence coat color in mice.

Dr. Silvers received recognition for his substantial contributions to academia, earning accolades such as the Mary F. Lindback Award for Distinguished Teaching and the Dean's Award in Graduate Teaching. He retired from his position at Penn in 1996 but remained active in research at the Chase Cancer Center, where he focused on the development and treatment of melanomas.

Dr. Silvers is survived by children, Deborah and Kent; and grandchildren, Nicholas and Willys Kent, III.

Dr. Silvers expressed his wish for no funeral services. In lieu of flowers, contributions in his memory can be directed to the Abigail Adams Silvers Scholarship Fund, care of the Baldwin School at 701 Montgomery Avenue, Bryn Mawr, PA 19010.