

Obituary for Prof. Dr. Umberto Sammarco



The A.I.C.C. (Italian Leather Chemists Association) informs with regret, that Professor Dr. Umberto Sammarco passed away on the 29th April of 2010, at the age of 64. He is survived by his wife, Gilda, and his son Mirko.

Umberto was one of the first graduates of the then newborn Arzignano Leather Tanning School (ITIS Galileo Galilei), during the school year 1964/65. It was one of the most brilliant students and after his graduation, he went to the University of Naples where he got his degree in Chemistry.

He retained his love and passion for the leather tanning chemistry, therefore, he moved back first as a teacher at the Arzignano Leather Tanning School. Then, thanks to his wide chemical know-how and his organisational capabilities, he took managerial positions in multinational leather chemical companies like Trumpler and TFL and then in tanneries like the Italian Gruppo Mastrotto where he led the Research Activities.

Umberto was also Professor at the University of Padua, where he was a teacher for the Leather Chemical Degree. Finally he was an International Leather Consultant for private companies and for the Italian Foreign Commerce Ministry.

In all these years, he never forgot the Arzignano Leather Tanning School, which gave to him the basic know-how of the tanning chemistry. He has always closely followed the activities and the destiny of this Leather Institute. He was convinced that the success of the Arzignano Leather District was linked to the increasingly and better qualification of the new generations of the Leather Chemists.

For this, also as member of Directive Council and ultimately as Secretary of the A.I.C.C., he organised, together with other A.I.C.C. members, meetings and seminars to present to the students the evolving "state of the art" of the leather processing. Also the teachers of the Leather Institute used the opportunity offered by these meetings to keep up-to-date with their knowledge.

He published the important book "Tecnologia Conciaria" (Leather Technology) in the year 2007. This book is used as the reference text for the tanning sector and also as an educational instrument. The teachers of the Arzignano Leather Institute immediately adopted this book as text-book for all the three years of the leather tanning specialisation course.

Umberto loved football and especially his heart-team, Internazionale Milan, which recently won the Champions League.

He always put in the first place the eco-sustainability of the leather making process, with extraordinary strength. He was always saying that all tanning activities can not exist without putting the health of the workers and of the territory at the first place.

We are all sure that his scientific and moral message will remain and will be kept moving forward by all students and people which met him.

Umberto, we will miss you!

A.I.C.C., May 2010