



Inset: Bill Cott's departmental photo from 1988 and Bill after his retirement, Fathers Day 2008. *Courtesy of Barry Cott.*

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The Department of Chemistry and Biology Honour an Iconic Former Ryerson Faculty Member in the Creation of a New Student Award.

C&B Press – Recently during a Chemistry and Biology Departmental meeting the Council unanimously approved the formation of the "William (Bill) J. Cott Award for Graduate Student Excellence in Teaching." This annual award will recognize outstanding graduate

student educators within the Department of Chemistry and Biology, while honouring the commitment to student education that Bill demonstrated over his fantastic career.

"The idea for the award began after a conversation with Jill Kapuscinski, a former graduate from the Laboratory Sciences Program (class of 1988)" said Bryan Koivisto, Assistant Professor in Chemistry.

Jill Kapuscinski (currently VP of Concept 2 Clinic) credited Bill and John Easton with helping her find her first job after Ryerson. "What I remember most about Bill was how much he truly enjoyed chemistry and sharing what he knew. He was genuine and approachable, something one often feels isn't possible in a university setting," Jill said in a recent interview. "He contacted me after I graduated, and not only did he know my name, but he knew me, and enough so to make that recommendation. I was honoured and humbled. I also remember discussions with him when the Co-op program was just getting started and it brought back fond memories of his passion for learning and sharing. Hearing him speak of the students and what they were capable of, it was easy to see how exceptionally proud he was of all of them."

In 1988, Ryerson formally initiated a summer co-op for 2nd and 3rd year students under the supervision of Prof. Cott, then the Associate Director of the Chemical Engineering program. Based on this success, in 1991, Bill and Dr. John W. Easton secured a \$200,000 grant from the Federal Ministry of Employment & Immigration to fund an office and coordinator's salary for formal co-op programs to be established in the Chemical Engineering and Applied Chemistry & Biology programs.

Professor Emeritus William (Bill) J. Cott passed away with family at his side on October 20th, 2009 at 76 years of age. Bill was a great teacher and a wonderful family man. "Bill would have been thrilled with this honour," said Nancy Howe-Cott, Bill's widow.

Bill Cott was also an impeccable colleague. "My first meeting with Bill Cott was during my interview for a faculty position at Ryerson in June 1997; he was a member of the interviewing committee," said Lynda McCarthy, Professor in the Department of Chemistry and Biology. "Despite the nervousness and intimidation a first-time interviewing session engenders, my sharpest memories of that day are of a truly compassionate and understanding professor who gently led me through the questions and made the process almost bearable. When I was offered the job and met Bill several weeks later, he seemed so genuinely pleased that I was the new professor that he made my first several months at Ryerson truly enjoyable. I will always be so grateful for his kindness during my early years here. "

"As we move forward as a University, it is very important that we recognize and remember the ground work laid by so many of our exceptional predecessors," said Bryan Koivisto. "While it sets a high standard for the current faculty, what they accomplished and achieved is something for the current generation to strive towards. The creation of this award will continually inspire and remind us of the fantastic dedication, creativity in education and the exceptional character of William (Bill) Cott."