



Obituary

Ángela Restrepo Moreno: The wise woman par excellence!

My dear friend, I have been trusted with the task of honouring you with an obituary, which is extremely difficult since regular words cannot really describe what a wonderful human being you were, and they do not do justice to the incredibly marvelous person you were. Words will always fall short, but I will try.

When I was thinking about how I should start this obituary with, I first wrote down chronological data. She was born in Medellín, Colombia, on the 28th of October of 1931, and died at her home in Medellín this past February 3rd, 2022, at 90 years of age. But these are simply hard facts, and they do not describe the human being she was. Then I decided to come up with a list of the many academic and scientific achievements, both nationally and internationally. As a result I came up with an endless list of titles, positions, awards and recognitions, which although highly appreciated and important, they only talk, in my opinion, about one aspect of the person she was and, as such, they are insufficient! I then wanted to search for something more specific, and at the same time more comprehensive, which somehow could describe the totality of your characteristics as such a wonderful human being. After writing and deleting many ideas, I settled for these brief but profound words that, to me, define who you are: The wise woman par excellence!

I came to this point after searching the Spanish dictionary for “wisdom”, which is defined as “Highest level of knowledge”, “Prudent behavior in life or in business”, and “Profound understanding of the sciences, literature, or the arts”. Thus, wisdom is the art of knowing what is the most important thing at every moment, and applying appropriate answers and strategies to bring goodness to ourselves, but mostly to others. Wisdom is also the advanced understanding, presented as human strength, and defined as the capacity to acquire information and use it in the most positive and beneficial manner. In addition, it is a form of advanced cognitive and emotional development, derived from

experience, and it makes use of kindness, something that is not always the case in highly intelligent persons. Wisdom has always had the connotation of doing the right thing, of humanity, and of a sense of spirituality which allows for inspiring others and leads to good deeds.

Because of this, to define Ángela Restrepo as a great wise woman is nothing new. In 1993–94 she was part of the “First Mission of Colombian Wise Scientists”, which was a mission for science, education and development, with the main objective to design the strategies to enable the country’s scientific and technological development. She was the only woman in the committee, serving with other great Colombian minds including the Nobel Prize in Literature, Gabriel García Márquez.

In summary, Ángela Restrepo Moreno, a wonderful and wise woman, was, is, and will be the inspiration to many young generations that will follow her path. As she indicated “*My true medals are my disciples and students in whom I was able to awaken this incredible passion for true science*”.

I am infinitely grateful for being one of her “medals”.

With profound and eternal respect and affection,

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Appendix A. Supplementary data

Supplementary data associated with this article can be found, in the online version, at <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.riam.2022.03.001>.