

Marie Maynard Daly

Science Pioneer

(1921-2003)

Marie Maynard Daly was the first African American woman to obtain a PhD in chemistry in the United States.



Daly was born in Queens, New York on April 16, 1921. She attended Queens College and graduated magna cum laude in 1942.

After graduating she received a scholarship to New York University to study in their master's program.

After New York University she enrolled in the doctoral degree program at Columbia University. While studying at Columbia, she conducted research on how the body's chemicals aid in the digestion of food. Daly received her PhD degree in chemistry from Columbia in 1947.

In 1948 she received a grant from the American Cancer Society to examine how proteins are created in the body. She later worked with a colleague on research that showed the relationship between high cholesterol and clogged arteries. Their research advanced the understanding of how foods and diet affect the heart and circulatory system.

Daly also taught at several universities, including historically black Howard University.

She was committed to increasing the enrollment of minority students in science programs, and in 1988 established a scholarship fund for African American students at Queens College in honor of her father.