



**Dr. Danuta (Danka) Pieniazek
A.K.A. Danuta Henryka
Pieniążek**

January 19, 1946 - July 11, 2025

Dr. Danuta (Danka) Pieniazek, 79, of Parrish, FL, passed away peacefully on July 11, 2025, after a long illness.

Her husband of 55 years, Norman J. Pieniazek of Parrish, FL, will dearly miss her, as will her sister, Jolanta (Jola) Kucharek, and her two Nieces, Maria and Julia, as well as her two Nephews, Maciej and Maksymilian.

She was born on January 19, 1946, in Otwock, a southeastern suburb of Warsaw, Poland. After moving with her family to Warsaw in 1962, she enrolled in the Faculty of Biology at Warsaw University in 1964 and graduated in June 1969 with a master's degree in Genetics. A few months later, in November 1969, she married Norman J. Pieniazek, her college sweetheart. Her first job as a researcher was at the Institute for Food and Nutrition in Warsaw, where she conducted work that was presented in 1974 at the prestigious Jagiellonian University in Kraków, Poland, and subsequently earned her a PhD in Nutrition Physiology.

From 1974 to 1975, she began working at the Max-Planck-Institut für experimentelle Medizin in Göttingen, West Germany, on fungal mitochondrial proteins. Returning to Poland, she worked as a virologist at the Institute of Biochemistry and Biophysics of the Polish Academy of Sciences, moving in 1977 to the newly established Children's Memorial Health Institute as the

Head of the Laboratory of Inborn Errors of Metabolism. She received additional training at the Great Ormond Street Hospital for Sick Children in London, England.

In September 1985, she moved to Seville, Spain, where her husband was a visiting professor of molecular genetics. A year later, she moved again, this time to New Orleans, LA, where she and her husband were visiting professors at the LSU Medical Center, Department of Microbiology, Immunology, and Parasitology. Many researchers continue to cite her pioneering work on human adenoviruses 40 and 41.

A new chapter in her life opened in 1989, when she was hired by a newly organized CDC Division of HIV/AIDS. She had an outstanding career first as a molecular epidemiologist and then as an epidemiologist. She published 91 scientific papers that were cited by 5,028 other researchers. Her H-index is a respectable 38. Her most widely cited paper, published in 2000 in *Science*, was co-authored by several different researchers. It was a proposal on HIV-1 nomenclature.

She retired in 2012. Her favorite hobbies were traveling, photography, gardening, and cats. She was fluent in Polish, English, and Spanish.

For her role in the Polish Underground during the martial law declared on December 13, 1981, to suppress the Solidarity movement, she was awarded the Honorary Badge of Anti-Communist Activists in 2022 and a special pension.

A memorial service for Danka will be held at the Incarnation Parish Main Church, 2901 Bee Ridge Rd, Sarasota, FL 34239, on Saturday, July 26, at 10:00 a.m. Immediately after the service, a reception will follow at the Church Hall (not the Parish Hall). Homemade Polish food will be served.

Previous Events

Memorial Service

JUL **26**. 10:00 AM (ET)

Incarnation Catholic Church
2901 Bee Ridge Road
Sarasota, FL 34239

Tribute Wall

JÓ

“ *Taka przykra wiadomość. Przyjmij wielkie wyrazy współczucia Normanie.*

Józef - July 28, 2025 at 06:17 AM

NP

Dzięki.

Norman Pieniazek - August 10, 2025 at 07:19 PM

SO

“ *Norman, my condolences and I wish you peace at this difficult time. It was a great privilege to work with Danka at CDC. She was a great scientist and a very warm and caring person. May she rest in peace.*

S. Michele Owen

S. Michele Owen - July 24, 2025 at 05:19 PM

NP

Thank you so much, Michelle.

Norman Pieniazek - July 28, 2025 at 10:08 AM

TK

“ *Tomasz K. planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Dr. Danuta (Danka) Pieniazek A.K.A. Danuta Henryka Pieniążek.*

Tomasz K. - July 24, 2025 at 03:48 PM

MF

“ Querido Norman:

Sentimos no estar a tu lado y acompañarte en la despedida a Danka. Para nosotros ha sido un verdadero placer compartir juntos tantos momentos, desde Sevilla, pasando por Atlanta, Tenerife y Parrish. Siempre recordaremos la dulzura, el cariño y la hospitalidad de Danka.

Un abrazo muy fuerte,

Familia Ortega Gutiérrez

MARÍA EUGENIA GUTIÉRREZ FERNÁNDEZ - July 23, 2025 at 05:02 PM

F(

“ *Familia Ortega Gutierrez (Tenerife) purchased the Arrive in Style for the family of Dr. Danuta (Danka) Pieniazek A.K.A. Danuta Henryka Pieniżek.*



Familia Ortega Gutierrez (Tenerife) - July 23, 2025 at 04:50 PM

Person icon

“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Dr. Danuta (Danka) Pieniazek A.K.A. Danuta Henryka Pieniżek.

July 22, 2025 at 08:09 AM



“ *Full Of Love Bouquet was purchased for the family of Dr. Danuta (Danka) Pieniazek A.K.A. Danuta Henryka Pieniążek.*



July 22, 2025 at 08:09 AM



“ *Country Basket Blooms was purchased for the family of Dr. Danuta (Danka) Pieniazek A.K.A. Danuta Henryka Pieniążek.*



July 22, 2025 at 03:46 AM



“ *Drogi Normanie,*

Przyjmij moje wyrazy współczucia z powodu śmierci żony. Jest mi bardzo przykro, Danka była moją pierwszą szefową w pracy w Instytucie - Pomniku Centrum Zdrowia Dziecka w Warszawie od 2 września 1980 roku. Zналиśmy się z Danką zatem 45 lat!

R.I.P.

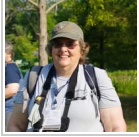
Staszek Plewako

Stanisław Plewako - July 22, 2025 at 02:28 AM



Dzięki, Staszku.

Norman Pieniazek - July 22, 2025 at 05:01 PM



“ Oh no! Norman & family, I'm so sorry to hear this! I remember all of the great times that I had with both of you.

Roberta Klisiewicz - July 21, 2025 at 08:23 PM

NP

Then COVID smartypants ruined everything.

Norman Pieniazek - July 22, 2025 at 05:02 PM

SM

“ Sherry M. planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Dr. Danuta (Danka) Pieniazek A.K.A. Danuta Henryka Pieniążek.

Sherry M. - July 21, 2025 at 07:52 PM



“ Drogi Normanie,

bardzo nam przykro. Przesyłamy Ci najserdeczniejsze wyrazy współczucia.

Lena, Alicja i Andrzej Hennelowie

Andrzej Hennel - July 19, 2025 at 06:19 AM

NP

Dziękuję z całego serca.

Norman Pieniazek - July 22, 2025 at 05:02 PM



“ *Full Of Love Bouquet was purchased for the family of Dr. Danuta (Danka) Pieniazek A.K.A. Danuta Henryka Pieniązek.*



July 19, 2025 at 06:09 AM



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Dr. Danuta (Danka) Pieniazek.

July 19, 2025 at 06:09 AM



“ *With great grief we Roy Meléndez, Leilany de Meléndez and our 3 daughters mourn the passing away of our dear friend Danka, and we express this sad sentiments to his husband Norman. We are Venezuelans and we met then on 2009 at their home in Atlanta. Life is like a trip in a train, Danka and Norman enjoyed together 55 years that trip. Thanks the Lord for such happy life. Sincerely, Roy & Leilany and family.*

Roy Melendez - July 17, 2025 at 05:42 PM



Gracias, Roy.

Norman Pieniazek - July 22, 2025 at 05:02 PM

KT

Eternal rest grant unto her, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon her.

Our sincerest condolences for you Norman at this time. You have our deepest sympathy and unwavering support. Wishing you peace, comfort, courage, and lots of love at this time of sorrow. Our hearts go out to you at this difficult time.

We wish we could be there with you now, but please be assured of our prayers for you

Danusia was the most wonderful person. Her warmth and happiness were so contagious.

May she rest in peace.

Krysia i Grzegorz

Krystyna & Gregory Tautt - July 25, 2025 at 10:45 AM

MK

Drogi Normanie,

Ze smutkiem przyjęliśmy wiadomość o odejściu Twojej Zony, Danki.

Hania z rodzina miała przyjemność poznać Ja osobiście.

Myśmy już nie zdążyli.

Nasze myśli i modlitwy są z Wami..

Marychna i Michal

Maria i Michal Kepkowie - July 25, 2025 at 05:55 PM

NP

Dziękuję Wam za słowa otuchy.

Norman Pieniazek - July 28, 2025 at 10:08 AM