The editor in chief and the editorial staff of the journal BIOCELL offer this obituary in the memory of its first editor and founder.

On September 22th, 2012, Dr. Mario H. Burgos began his journey to eternity at the age of 91. Behind his steps stands his outstanding labor that was installed since he was young. His vocation and enthusiasm for the secrets of science carried him throughout many pathways. At the early contacts with scientific research, he was influenced by the strong figure of Medicine Nobel Prize, Dr. Bernardo Houssay, whose imprinting was Dr. Burgos’ guiding spearhead.

Mario H. Burgos traveled to the USA since 1953 for internships in scientific and academic institutions. He was fellow, professor and scientist in Harvard, Washington and Cornell Universities and later at the Marine Biological Laboratory, Woods Hole. In these places he performed his initial research work in Cellular Biology using electronic microscopy as a revolutionary and advanced tool of those times. At those places he had the opportunity as well, to enrich his career and meet crucial contacts that were further invested in the sake of our national science. This intensive training allowed him to become an outstanding young specialist in the fields of cellular biology and reproduction. Dr. Burgos came back to Argentina in 1957 after receiving an invitation from his mentor and friend, Dr. Bernardo Houssay, who was, at those times, committed into the creation of the National Research Council of Argentina (CONICET).

That was undoubtedly a crucial choice, to come back to his country as a pioneer instead of the more secure and most probably successful life offered by the American academy. Burgos did not hesitate, prepared his luggage and soon was back to Argentina and once at the city of Mendoza, he was deeply involved in the huge task of starting a scientific school that would acquire national and international renown.

Dr. Burgos set the Institute foundations starting with just an optical microscope placed in a tiny room at the Hospital Central of Mendoza. His visionary view, most probably inherited from the hispanic conquerors and a mix of determination and endeavor allowed him to sort all kind of hindrances, many of them short eyed and petty. Nothing of this intimidated him, finally his work was fertile after acquiring the first electronic microscope with the collaboration of the Rockefeller Foundation. His actions were motivated by ideas of progress, deep love for science and to his people. Continuing his work as Professor of Histology and Embriology at the Universidad Nacional de Cuyo and as an Established Researcher of the National Research Council of Argentina (CONICET), counting with his great ability in management and with the collaboration of the authorities of the University and CONICET and also with the access to national and international grants, he was able to create the Instituto de Histología y Embriología (IHEM-UNCuyo-CONICET).

The time dedicated to work and his passion for science was shared with his family as a loving father and husband. His profuse production of papers published in national and international journals were milestones in the cell biology, reproduction and endocrinology of those times. The study of the inherent mechanisms of spermiation, nuclear DNA, the ultrastructure of the testicular cells, the incipient contributions to cell biology and physiology of female reproduction and the studies applied to the Chagas disease were some among many other contributions that our beloved Mario left to Science. His endowment will be reflected in the cohort of students that from national and international stands will remember his teachings delivered through inspiring classes. Also in the basic results and discovery that endorsed advances in reproductive technology and in the fellows and doctorate students that always counted on his critical advise, his counseling and generous support.

The staff of the IHEM wanted to honor him and the IHEM was named after him while alive. Nowadays a new building is rising at the University Campus. The new generations of the young argentinian scientists will have in Dr. Burgos the eloquent testimony of a meritorious life dedicated to Science and to his country.