

Murcia awarding the Gold Medal of the Region of Murcia to the Faculty of Chemistry at the University of Murcia in 2015. This award, which is the highest distinction of the region, coincided with the 75th anniversary of the first graduation of chemists, as a “recognition of the social and economic importance of its training and its role as a reference in the formation of human and scientific capital of the region, as well as for its scientific productivity and contribution to the increase of excellence research at the University of Murcia”, as stated in Decree 77/2015, BORM on 15 May 2015. It was the first time that the Government recognized and awarded a university centre. Without any doubt, the chemistry and chemical developments in the Murcian industries have decisively contributed to the economic development and the standard of living of Murcia.

In this context, and promoted by the Faculty, this year a consortium of twelve of the most important companies from Murcia, (including AMC Juices Ltd, Tecnological Centre of Marble, Crown Food Spain Ltd S.A., Grupo Fuertes Ltd., Hero Spain Ltd.; Estrella de Levante Ltd; Hidrogea Ltd.; Linasa Ltd., J.J. Albarracín Ltd., Marín Giménez Ltd, REPSOL Ltd. and TAHE Cosmetic Ltd.), also wanted to pay tribute to the Faculty of Chemistry for the important role played in the development of the industrial sector of Murcia. The construction of the giant periodic table has been the aim, made possible by the particular design of the building of the Faculty of Chemistry where the façade is formed by glass windows and walls arranged in bevel. Eduardo Batán, architect of the University of Murcia, provided the technical feasibility. Each of the 118 chemical elements is included on a coloured metal panel (0.75 x 0.75 m), and represented by its symbol, atomic number, and atomic mass. These panels are screwed onto screens located directly on the facade of the Faculty. The surface of this giant periodic table is approximately 150 m², likely the largest permanent Periodic Table in the world. This large size allows all the elements to be seen when walking around the perimeter of the University of Murcia campus or even from the tramway.

The artistic ensemble will be finalized with a 50-seat grandstand. Every year, the Faculty meets students from many high-schools as prospective students in the chemistry program. Usually, we prepare a complete journey for the young students, including a tour of the Faculty, a simple experiment conducted in the lab, and now a seminar about the periodic table using this grandstand as an open-air classroom for their “first lesson” at the university.

The periodic table built on the facade of the Faculty of Chemistry at the University of Murcia converges

past and future, work and perseverance, training and economic development, science and beauty. This facade is a new icon for chemistry and the city of Murcia, and we encourage all chemists to visit Murcia.

In the Faculty of Chemistry at the University of Murcia, we are extremely proud of the work we have done in these 77 years, and sincerely grateful to the Region of Murcia and its industries for this recognition, which supports us for the important pages of the future that we must write together.

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