GHANA’S GREATEST SCIENTIST EVER?

Born on the 9th of August 1932, Francis Kofi Ampenyin Allotey, popularly known as professor Allotey is considered one of the greatest scientists to emerge from Ghana. He was a mathematical physicist and one of two Ghanaians to first obtain a doctorate in mathematical sciences. It is believed that this great mathematician was named after his paternal uncle, except that his uncle’s name “Kojo” was replaced with “Kofi.”

Professor Allotey hailed from Saltpond in the Central Region of Ghana and was born to Mr. Joseph Kofi Allotey and Madam Alice Esi Nyena Allotey. Both parents were Catholics, and as such passed on this faith to him. Even in his last years, Professor Allotey never seized to be committed to his religious activities.

His interest in science stemmed from the numerous scientists he read about in books from his father’s library.

Professor Allotey obtained both his Master’s and Doctorate degrees from Princeton University. During his time, he was privileged to have been tutored by Abdus Salam, the Pakistani Nobel prize-winning physicist, and was as well under the mentorship of noble physicists such as Robert Dicke, Val Fitch, Robert Oppenheimer, Paul A.M. Dirac and C.N. Yang.

Professor Allotey was known for the "*Allotey Formalism.*" A classic piece of work which emerged from his work on soft X-ray spectroscopy. His work earned him the *UK Prince Philip Golden Award* in 1973.

His quota to the educational sector within the country cannot be overlooked. Among his numerous positions, he was a founding fellow of the African Academy of Sciences, he also became the first Ghanaian full professor of mathematics and the head of Department for Mathematics and Dean of the Faculty of Science at the prestigious Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology. That aside, he was the founding director of the KNUST Computer Centre before he eventually took up the position of Pro-Vice-Chancellor of the university and as well helped establish the African Institute of Mathematical Sciences in Ghana in 2012

Internationally, Professor Allotey gained prominence through his indulgence in running a number of scientific organizations. These included the Abdus Salam International Centre for Theoretical Physics Scientific Council, the Ghana Institute of Physics and the African Physical Society. Additionally, he paved way for Ghana to join the [International Union of Pure and Applied Physics](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/International_Union_of_Pure_and_Applied_Physics), making the country one of the first few African countries to join the Union. Again, he collaborated with the [IUPAP](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/International_Union_of_Pure_and_Applied_Physics) and [ICTP](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/International_Centre_for_Theoretical_Physics) to encourage [physics education](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Physics_education) in developing countries through workshops and conferences in order to create awareness on the continent.

Some of the positions he occupied are listed below:

* Chairman of Board of Trustees of the [Accra Institute of Technology](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Accra_Institute_of_Technology)
* President of the [African Institute for Mathematical Sciences,Ghana](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/African_Institute_for_Mathematical_Sciences#AIMS_Ghana).
* Honorary fellow of the [Institute of Physics](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Institute_of_Physics).
* Honorary Fellow of the Nigerian Mathematical Society among others.
* Consulted for many international institutions such as the [UNESCO](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/UNESCO), [IAEA](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/International_Atomic_Energy_Agency) and [UNIDO](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_Nations_Industrial_Development_Organization).
* Vice president, 7th General Assembly of [Intergovernmental Bureau of Informatics](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Intergovernmental_Bureau_for_Informatics) (IBI).
* One of the key pioneers of [computer education](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Computer_education) in Africa and worked closely with organisations such as the [IBM International](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/IBM) and the International Federation for Information Processing
* In 2004, he was the only African among the 100 most eminent physicists and mathematicians in the world to be cited in a book titled, "*One hundred reasons to be a scientist*.
* Recipient of the Millennium Excellence Award in 2005 by the Ghana government
* Received the [Order of the Volta](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Order_of_the_Volta) and was posthumously awarded the *Osagyefo Kwame Nkrumah African Genius Award* in 2017.

Professor Allotey died on 2 November 2017 at a hospital in Germany. He was succeeded by four children and twenty grandchildren.