

## **Memorial Resolution – James Knickmeyer July 19, 1951 – August 27, 2012**

Jim Knickmeyer, Associate Dean for Administration in the Graduate School, died on August 27th at the age of 61. His distinguished career at the University spanned more than 37 years. Throughout those years Jim accumulated warm friendships with colleagues all across campus. This memorial resolution gives these devoted friends an opportunity to honor his contributions to the University formally even as we informally honor him by carrying on his good work. Thank you to the Academic Staff Assembly and everyone here today for taking the time for this observance.

Jim is survived by his cherished family: his wife, Mary; his children Adam and Jamie, their spouses Nicole and Josef, by his grandchildren: Ella, Ben and James, as well as his mother Jean, brother Bill, sister-in-law Donna and extended family.

Jim's death came unexpectedly on a Monday morning when we were looking forward to hearing fish tales from his weekend Great Lakes outing. The news that we had lost him was met with disbelief in the Graduate School and beyond, as he had been a source of strength for all of us; we relied heavily on his knowledge, wisdom and support as well as his lively spirit. We assumed he would be with us for many more years, providing guidance. We miss him. But Jim made us smile when he was with us, and will continue to do so as he lives in our memories.

He was a "Badger" even before joining the staff, having grown up in the Madison area - in the Town of Oregon, where he enjoyed a youth spent waterskiing and ice fishing and developing his life-long love of the out-of-doors. He earned his bachelor's degree at UW-Whitewater and his MBA here at UW-Madison. His pride at being a part of this institution was evident in his dedication to his work.

His roles at the University included serving as an Indirect Cost Accountant, Assistant Dean for Accounting, and ultimately as the Associate Dean for Administration; a position he held for the past decade. His in-depth understanding of the arcane details behind processes was impressive, and he had a great ability to quickly discern the administrative implications of a decision. He was never wrong in his analysis. Even so, decisions sometimes went the other way; but in these cases Jim readily helped to implement the outcome effectively; he was an absolute team-player.

Jim shared an attitude of service. He was a mentor to many, including myself. He helped staff to understand not just the mechanics of administration, but also the University culture that he respected and valued. He was glad to do anything to help, whether it involved managing the complexities of the Graduate School budget, contributing to campus-level decisions or an ordinary task such as training a new Associate Dean how to make coffee for meetings or even rescuing staff from a Bascom bat.

His professional contributions are numerous. He protected the long-term financial health of the Graduate School. He provided a critical perspective to many campus-wide initiatives, including the byzantine F&A rate proposal, the cluster hire program, and the tuition remission process. He made complex things work, and always attempted to do so as simply as possible to ensure success in the future and to limit administrative costs.

One of his most important contributions was setting a standard of kindness and courtesy that his colleagues will aspire to keep alive in Bascom. And in the same way, he shaped our culture through his mischievous spirit. He knew when a little humor would boost morale and build camaraderie.

Jim made our work community a better place; his sense of humor brought smiles in good times and his sincere personal generosity brought comfort in trying times. Today we share our gratitude for what Jim gave to us as our colleague, our mentor and our friend.

Respectfully submitted,  
Petra Schroeder, Assistant Dean for Research, The Graduate School