

**MEMORIAL RESOLUTION OF THE FACULTY
OF THE UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON**

ON THE DEATH OF PROFESSOR EMERITA BETTY JANE BAMFORTH

“Dr. Betty Jane Bamforth was a consummate teacher, administrator, researcher and practitioner at UW Medical School for 38 years. An anesthesiologist with a keen interest in the history of her specialty, she trained over 250 residents and fellows, lead the anesthesiology department for three years and served as mentor to the medical school class of 1992.”

--UW Medical Alumni Quarterly Magazine Honoring School Leaders

Betty J. Bamforth was born on January 20, 1923 in New Britain, Connecticut. She graduated from Bates College in Lewiston, Maine and obtained her M.D. degree from Boston University. In 1951 she completed residency training in anesthesiology at Wisconsin General Hospital under the chairmanship of Dr. Ralph M. Waters, the first full time academic anesthesiology professor and chair in the world. She served on the faculty of the University of Oklahoma from 1951 until 1954 when she returned to Madison as associate professor. She was the first woman to receive tenure in the department. She worked closely with Drs. William Young and George Rowe in establishing the first UW Hospital intracardiac surgery team. In 1964 she was promoted to professor and remained active in clinical practice and academic affairs until she retired in 1992. She was interim chair of the department, assistant dean for student affairs of the Medical School and served for four years as the Mentor of the Medical School Class of 1992.

Dr. Bamforth had many academic interests, but above all she was dedicated to her students. Whether in the operating room teaching residents how to hold a mask for a difficult airway or in the office counseling medical students on their aptitude for different specialties, Dr. Bamforth was respected and admired for her genuine concern and sage advice. She continued to serve her former students and classmates as president of the Medical Alumni Association and Board Member of the Wisconsin Medical Society Foundation and its Medical Student Scholarship Fund. Her keen interest in the history of anesthesiology led to the formation of the Anesthesia History Association, of which she was a founding member and president. Dr. Bamforth wrote and spoke widely as one of the ‘aqua alumni’, a term used affectionately to refer to Ralph Waters’ trainees, many of whom also became international leaders in the expansion and advancement of Anesthesiology and Critical Care. Dr. Bamforth delivered several distinguished invited international lectures, often as the first woman to be so honored. Her success was recognized by Boston University when she received the Distinguished Alumna Award.

Betty had other equally passionate interests, including sailing, athletics, gardening, ornithology, ecology, economics, and philanthropy. She was the first woman commodore of the Mendota Yacht Club. She served on the UW Athletic Board, as well as the boards of the Arboretum, the First Unitarian Society Foundation, and the Altrussa Club. These and other service activities were recognized when she received the YWCA’s Women of Distinction Award. She established the Betty J. Bamforth Research Professorship in the Department of Anesthesiology, and her memory will be honored as one of the named Learning Communities in the new Health Sciences Learning Center.

Dr. Bamforth died on October 11, 2001 after a brief illness. She is survived by her sister Jean S. Bamforth of Boston, several cousins, her loving neighbors Selma, Dan, Laila and Masarah VanEyck,

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colleagues, collaborators, friends, and countless students, who were her favorite group and one that she so powerfully supported and enhanced over her career. The university was enriched by her intellect, commitment to education and clinical training, and generous economic support of the pursuit of new knowledge. Her passing diminishes us.

MEMORIAL COMMITTEE

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