

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

ON THE DEATH OF PROFESSOR EMERITUS EDWIN MERRITT LARSEN

Edwin Larsen, emeritus professor of chemistry since 1986, died on May 28, 2001 in Madison. He was born on July 12, 1915 in Milwaukee, Wisconsin and graduated from North Division High School. He attended the University of Wisconsin and received his bachelor of science degree in 1937. Upon receiving his Ph.D. degree in chemistry from Ohio State University in 1942 he joined the faculty at the University of Wisconsin as an instructor. From 1943 to 1946 he was granted a leave of absence from Wisconsin to work on the Manhattan Project with the Monsanto Chemical Company in Dayton, Ohio where he served as leader of a group doing classified work on polonium.

In 1946 he returned to Wisconsin as an assistant professor to teach and conduct research in inorganic chemistry. He was promoted to associate professor in 1950 and to full professor in 1958. His research centered on the chemistry of hafnium and zirconium and 31 of his students received the Ph.D. degree under his supervision. In later years, he was part of the Wisconsin Fusion Technology Institute and his research focused on the study of lithium and its compounds for use in nuclear fusion power plants. His collaboration with the nuclear engineering faculty on campus led to understandings of the properties of materials suitable for nuclear fusion reactors. His research was supported by the Office of Naval Research, the National Science Foundation, the Department of Energy, the West German Government, and private companies including Esso and Stauffer.

For forty years Ed taught introductory level courses, advanced undergraduate courses, and graduate courses including selected topics in inorganic chemistry. He introduced Chemistry 108 for non-science majors and developed numerous laboratory experiments suitable for all courses he taught. He had a great interest in lecture demonstrations and was instrumental in maintaining the department's reputation for excellence in teaching and research.

Ed served as associate chair of the Department of Chemistry from 1977 until his retirement in 1986. His departmental service included chairing the inorganic chemistry division, the safety committee, the building committee, and the undergraduate curriculum committee. He was a long-time member of the finance committee (1962-1986.) On campus he served on many committees including the safety committee, the commission of faculty compensation and economic benefits, the committee on premedical program, the committee on student academic affairs, and the organizing committee of the molecular biology curriculum.

Ed was very active in professional organizations including the American Chemical Society (chair of the Wisconsin section, councilor for 24 years), Alpha Chi Sigma Chemistry Fraternity (president of the Alpha Corporation, which owns and maintains the Alpha Chi Sigma House, for almost 30 years), Society of Sigma Xi (chair of the Wisconsin section), Gordon Research Conference (chair of the inorganic section), the Advisory Council on College Chemistry, and the ACS divisions of inorganic chemistry, physical chemistry, and chemical education. He was a member of the American Nuclear Society, Phi Lambda Upsilon, the Wisconsin Academy of Arts, Letters and Science, and was elected fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science. Ed was a Fulbright lecturer in Austria and a visiting professor at the University of Florida. He lectured extensively in the United States and abroad on his research and his education interests.

Respected by students and colleagues Ed was a model of integrity in all his dealings with everyone. He mentored many young faculty and facilitated their professional development. He was keen on promoting contacts with alumni and former students. He was the long time associate editor of the *Badger Chemist*.

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In 1946, Ed married Kathryn Behm of Dayton, Ohio. They raised three children, Robert, Lynn, and Richard. He is survived by his widow Katie and three children and their families. Two of his children are UW alumni and a grandchild is currently a junior in the College of Letters and Science. Ed was a founding member of the Friends of Hoyt Park--one of the oldest parks in the City of Madison. He enjoyed gardening and attending to his extensive apple orchards at a property he owned near Marquette, Wisconsin.

His devotion to Wisconsin is typified by his generous contributions to the Department of Chemistry and by establishing the Edwin M and Kathryn M. Larsen Scholarship Fund at the UW Foundation.

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