

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

ON THE DEATH OF PROFESSOR EMERITA CAROLINE GOSS THOMPSON

Caroline Goss Thompson, professor emerita of the Occupational Therapy Program died on December 4, 2004 in Madison, Wisconsin at the age 95. Caroline Thompson came to the University of Wisconsin in 1945 when she was hired to be the director of the newly formed Occupational Therapy Program. It was under her leadership and with her great dedication that this small undergraduate program in occupational therapy grew into a nationally recognized site of educational excellence in the field.

Professor Thompson was born May 29th, 1909 in Middlebury, Connecticut, where she spent most of her youth. She attended Vassar College, graduating Phi Beta Kappa in 1930 with a major in English and minors in French, Italian, and Psychology. Her post-graduate work included three years at Cambridge University in England where she studied semantics with I.A. Richards. She returned to New York and studied sculpture with Genevieve Hamlin, producing a number of noteworthy pieces. With her broad educational background and diverse interests, she then entered the Philadelphia School of Occupational Therapy, graduating in 1940.

In 1945, Caroline was invited to Madison to become director of the Occupational Therapy Program, one of the earliest occupational therapy programs in the country. She held that position for 31 years, stepping down from the director position in 1976 and remaining on faculty until her retirement in 1979. During that time, hundreds of undergraduate students benefited from her advising and counsel as they prepared for careers in the profession. During her years as director of the program, she earned a master of science degree in education. In 1964 Caroline was awarded a Fulbright Lectureship and traveled to Australia to teach and consult at the Occupational Therapy School at Melbourne. During her tenure at the University of Wisconsin, Caroline also published a number of scholarly articles related to occupational therapy for patients with neurological disorders, poliomyelitis, and other physical disabilities. These publications helped establish some of the early principles of occupational therapy treatment.

Professor Thompson also contributed generously in professional service at the state and national level. Her leadership and service were recognized when she was elected to the Roster of Fellows of the American Occupational Therapy Association in 1976, one of the highest honors in the profession. Caroline was a supportive colleague and friend to faculty and staff members across the university. She brought a human touch to committee meetings and could be relied on to contribute fair and balanced judgements to committee deliberations. Her grace, warmth, and sense of humor were important elements in the life of the occupational therapy program.

She traveled widely – her travels included China, Israel, Europe, and Australia. She particularly loved wilderness trips – river floats and hiking in the wilderness areas of the Western United States and in British Columbia. Her idea of paradise was a place called Lake O’Hara in the Canadian Rockies, tucked away in a hidden valley at the foot of the continental divide. With walking stick and backpack, she scaled the peaks surrounding Lake O’Hara or fished the lake with friends.

Those of us privileged to know Caroline Thompson as a colleague and a friend will remember her tireless commitment to occupational therapy, her skills in bringing people together, her openness to new ideas, encouraging spirit, and her vision for the future. Today we honor the memory of Caroline Goss Thompson – scholar, dedicated leader, collaborator and generous friend of the university.

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