

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

ON THE DEATH OF PROFESSOR EMERITUS HOWARD E. WAKEFIELD

Howard E. Wakefield, professor emeritus of educational administration, University of Wisconsin-Madison, died at Mason, Ohio, on February 26, 2007 at the age of 89. He is survived by his wife, Ocie, two children, James and Linda, and six grandchildren.

Howard Wakefield was born August 26, 1917 in Santa Monica, California. His mother died when Howard was three years old, and his childhood was rather chaotic. His father was a traveling salesman, and Howard lived with a succession of relatives or friends during his formative years, attending six elementary schools, seven junior high schools and two high schools. After graduating from a nontraditional high school at the age of 16, he held a variety of jobs including stocking shelves at grocery stores. His uncle was instrumental in connecting him with the Church of Christ in Montabello, California, where the minister, a graduate of Cincinnati Bible College, encouraged him to attend college and found a job for him at a headlamp factory in Cincinnati. He attended Cincinnati Bible College for one year and, deciding he would rather teach than preach, eventually entered the University of Cincinnati where he received his B.S. degree in education in 1942.

Howard taught in the public school in Trenton, Ohio in 1942–1943 where he met his wife, Ocie. After their marriage on August 20, 1943 he entered military service with the Air Force, serving in Panama and the Galapagos Islands. After his discharge from service, Howard resumed teaching in the public schools of Ohio while earning his M.Ed. degree from the University of Cincinnati in 1949. He continued his graduate studies at Teachers College, Columbia University where he received his Ed.D. degree in 1953. He was project coordinator of the School-Community Development Study at The Ohio State University from 1953–1956 and assistant professor of education at the University of Minnesota from 1956–1958.

In 1958, Dr. Wakefield joined the faculty of the School of Education as associate professor of education and director of the newly created Cooperative Educational Research and Services (CERS). The mission of CERS was to provide research, advice and consultation to Wisconsin school districts on the problems and issues confronting them. Through its outreach activities, CERS was to manifest the “Wisconsin Idea” in the field of education. Dr. Wakefield was involved in at least 95 CERS projects with local school districts in Wisconsin between 1958 and 1978, many of them as principal investigator. They involved topics ranging from curriculum planning to community relations to educational facilities. His ability to work with school districts throughout the state was aided greatly by his skill as a pilot, which enabled him to minimize his travel time. In addition to his own work, he facilitated the involvement of many School of Education faculty members in service to local school districts. He also served as coordinator of Extension Services in Education from 1961–1965 and was chair of the Department of Educational Administration from 1976 until his retirement in 1979.

Professor Wakefield was either principal investigator or a co-investigator of six research or demonstration projects funded by the U.S. Office of Education, including a grant for the establishment of the ERIC Clearinghouse on Educational Facilities, which he directed. He was one of two faculty members who visited Nigeria in the mid-1960s and prepared the proposal funded by USAID that became known as the Northern Nigeria Teacher Education Project.

Professor Wakefield served as faculty advisor to 29 students who completed master’s degrees; 16 students who completed an Education Specialist Certificate; and 33 students who completed a Ph.D. degree. He was unusually gifted in working informally with his graduate students and did some of his most effective

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teaching in informal situations. A Ph.D. graduate who had been a project assistant in CERS made the following comment in a letter supporting Howard's promotion to full professor in 1961: "I am convinced that the most significant educational experiences of my graduate work were gained in our staff discussion relative to CERS projects, or in our informal office 'seminars' when questions of educational significance were discussed."

Dr. Wakefield was deeply committed to the work of the Church of Christ. He was a member of the board of elders of his local church at the time of his death. After his retirement from the University of Wisconsin-Madison, he served as a faculty member at Cincinnati Bible College and at Louisville Bible College. Howard and Ocie also team-taught a 6th grade class at the Camarillo, California, Christian School and later also served as co-administrators of the school.

Howard took his flying seriously. Among the planes he owned and flew was a co-owned twin engine Cessna 310. Howard made sure he logged sufficient flying hours to keep his license current and continue as a safe pilot. He was an instrument-rated and commercial-rated pilot, and he engaged his flying friends in refresher flights on a regular basis. A morning flight to a remote airport for breakfast was a common event. An afternoon of travel to a variety of airports for landing practice in southern Wisconsin was also an enjoyable and common event.

His sense of humor was as unique as the man himself. Some can remember the image of Howard standing at the end of the hall in his slightly bowlegged gun fighter stance. His voice, mimicking John Wayne, said "Do you want to see my quick-draw?", and after a slight pause with no motion on his part, he spoke, "Do you want to see it again?"

Howard Wakefield will be most remembered as a treasured colleague who combined three wonderful qualities: motivational leadership, personal integrity, and an infectious, wry sense of humor. Not only will his fine professional career be remembered by those with whom he associated but also his exemplary personal qualities.

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