

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

ON THE DEATH OF PROFESSOR JOSHUA LOWE POSNER

Joshua L. Posner, professor of agronomy, died on April 3, 2012. He was born on July 23, 1947 in New Rochelle, New York.

Josh completed his undergraduate studies at Amherst College in Massachusetts. His interest in agriculture was initiated while serving as a Peace Corps volunteer in Cote d'Ivoire (Ivory Coast), Africa in a school gardening program. By the end of his assignment, he left a functioning "lab" school in place and almost 50 schools producing vegetables and poultry for their school lunch programs. During this time, Josh discovered that he loved working with farmers and trying to find solutions to the enormous challenge of poverty alleviation.

After serving in the Peace Corps, he and wife Jill sought graduate degrees at Cornell University. He completed a PhD in agronomy with a minor in agricultural economics in 1978. Josh and Jill's first international adventure as a married couple was in Honduras working directly for the ministry of agriculture. Their daughter, Jessica, was born there in 1979. After a brief interlude in New York as a Rockefeller Foundation Fellow, the family returned to West Africa and spent most of the 1980s in what was then the Senegambia. Their son, Matthew, was born in Senegal in 1983.

In 1986, Josh was hired by the University of Wisconsin-Madison to participate in a research project in Banjul, Gambia. In 1993, Josh began a long involvement with Andean agriculture with his family moving first to Bolivia, and then to Peru in 1998. In Bolivia, he led an interdisciplinary team from Wisconsin in a research and development program at the Bolivian Agricultural Research Institute. In Peru, he worked for the International Potato Center and was responsible for strengthening a fledgling consortium for sustainable development in the Andes (CONDESAN) that now includes more than 70 organizations from all seven Andean countries. His most recent international work was as the principal investigator of a National Science Foundation training grant to support University of Wisconsin-Madison graduate students in conducting their dissertations in biodiversity conservation and sustainable livelihoods in the Yunnan Province of China.

In Wisconsin, Josh sought to improve land stewardship via low external-input cropping systems. His pioneering work on the Wisconsin Integrated Cropping Systems Trial, a 20-year research trial, was one of his most important domestic legacies. His research involved many students and colleagues, on and off campus, and has examined a large number of agronomic, environmental, and economic issues related to grain crop and forage production systems in the Midwest. His international experiences equipped him well to develop and teach "Cropping Systems of the Tropics," a course that is popular with students across campus.

Josh had a unique ability to connect with people. His interactions with others were grounded in equality and social justice. He used humor, passion, and his ability to tell a good story to connect with people from all walks of life and diverse cultures on equal footing.

Josh was a dedicated husband, father, grandfather, friend, and teacher. He embraced life and lived it to the fullest. He is survived by his wife of 40 years, Jill Posner of Madison; daughter Jessica Posner, son-in-law Steven Brown, and two granddaughters, Sophia and Isabelle Posner Brown, of Washington, DC; son Matthew of Brooklyn, New York; and three siblings, Prudence, Deborah, and David Posner, who reside in the New York area. His parents, Harold and Ronah Posner, were social activists dedicated to civil rights and a host of humanitarian causes during their lifetimes. Their commitment to others and family, as well as their humor and graciousness, had a profound effect on his character and life.

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