

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

**ON THE DEATH OF PROFESSOR EMERITUS JAMES D. WHIFFEN**

The founder of the Biomedical Engineering Center, James D. Whiffen, MD, passed away on January 16, 2013 at the age of 82. He was born on January 16, 1931 in New York. After graduating from Wisconsin High School in 1948, where he was named the most valuable player and captain of the basketball team in 1947-1948, he spent four years studying at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, where he then continued his studies in the UW Medical School.

After graduating from the Medical School in 1955, he completed a surgical internship at the Ohio State University in 1955-1956. After completing his surgical internship, he went on to serve in the United States Navy from 1956-1958 as part of the Medical Corps on the aircraft carrier USS Philippine Sea. While serving, he attained the rank of lieutenant commander. After serving in the Navy, he continued his medical career, completing his surgical residency at the University Hospitals in Madison from 1958-1962.

Following his residency, he worked as a post doc fellow in the lab of Dr. Vincent Gott. His research interests were in biomaterials, thrombo-resistant surfaces, and myocardial revascularization. He was a highly productive researcher and successfully competed for two research career development awards from the NIH. In 1963, he was named a Markle Scholar, one of the most prestigious awards granted to young medical academicians.

From 1962-1997, he served on the faculty of the UW Medical School, attaining full professor in 1971. He served as assistant dean of clinical affairs at the William S. Middleton Veterans Administration (VA) Hospital and chief of staff at the VA Hospital from 1975-1997. He was appointed vice-chairman of the Department of Surgery by Dr. Anthony Curreri and then named acting chairman by Dean Henry Pitot when Dr. Curreri stepped down. He served in the position for three years. Eleven new surgeons were hired during his time as interim chair, and several new programs were added. Critical care/trauma surgery, burn surgery, and sports medicine were initiated, and a surgical intensive care unit and a burn unit were all opened. Following his retirement from UW and the VA Hospital, he was professor emeritus from 1997-2013.

In his spare time, he was an avid runner, winning his age class in the Mad City Half Marathon in 1998 and 2001 and the Whistle Stop Half Marathon in 2001. He also won his age class at all distances like the Independence 10K Run and the 2004 Crazylegs Classic race. He was the fastest runner over 70 in the 500-yard dash at the Badger State Games. He enjoyed fishing and sailing along with following the Badgers football and basketball teams for over 50 years. His cabin on Ballard Lake was his joy. He also enjoyed following the U.S. space program, particularly his son's role in it.

He is survived by his wife, Sally; sister Jean (Richard) Meyer of Tampa, Florida; brother John (Lucy) Whiffen of Malibu, California; son Gregory (Diane) Whiffen of Altadena, California and their children Benjamin Gregory and Ella Marie; stepchildren Michael (Susan) Van Sicklen, Kate Van Sicklen, Elizabeth (Jay) King, Ford (Susan) Runge, and Frederica (Gary) Freyberg; 12 grandchildren and 1 great-grandchild.

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