

MEMORIAL RESOLUTION

WILLIAM GRANT IRESON (1915 – 1989)

William Grant Ireson, Professor Emeritus, former Chairman, and co-founder of the Department of Industrial Engineering at Stanford University, died on June 14, 1989, after a several month struggle with mesothelioma, an asbestos-related cancer. Born in Tazewell, in the mountains of western Virginia, Grant Ireson derived pleasure and relaxation from camping and fishing throughout his life. His first academic position was at Virginia Polytechnic Institute, where he received both his Bachelors and Masters degrees in Industrial Engineering. During the period from 1941 to 1948 he rose from Assistant Professor to the level of Acting Professor and Chairman of the Department of Industrial Engineering. He also served as Professor of Industrial Engineering at the Illinois Institute of Technology (1948-1951) before coming to Stanford. His appointment to the Stanford faculty in 1951 anticipated his role as co-founder, with Eugene L. Grant, of the Department of Industrial Engineering in 1955.

Grant Ireson developed a distinguished international reputation for his work in quality control, engineering economics, industrial development, and engineering education in developing countries. He was well-known for his several successful handbooks and textbooks, one of which is currently in its ninth edition. Among other awards, he received the Frank and Lillian Gilbreth Award of the Institute of Industrial Engineers, the Eugene L. Grant Award of the American Society for Quality Control, and the Wellington Award for his contributions to engineering economics. The Order of Civil Merit of the Government of South Korea was presented to him by the President of the country in 1981 for his contribution to the establishment of the Korea Advanced Institute of Technology. He was also the 1981 recipient of the School of Engineering's Tau Beta Pi Award for excellence in undergraduate teaching.

Students and faculty who worked for and with Grant knew him as a caring, gentle man, who was always available, considerate, and encouraging. In the late 1950s, he was able to attract an outstanding faculty to his young Department, and by the early 1960s, it was widely known as the best in the country, surely a remarkable accomplishment. One of his legacies is a strong tradition of collegiality and participation that has persisted in the Department that he founded and chaired from 1954-1975. Another is the Stanford Faculty Club building. Grant's dedication, energy, and discipline provided much of the impetus for the process of planning, designing, and initiating operation of the Faculty Club building.

After becoming Emeritus in 1981, Grant continued to do occasional teaching for the Department and consulted in engineering economy and reliability for governments and businesses in the U.S., Mexico, Taiwan, Singapore, Bangladesh, and the People's Republic of China. He also continued his contributions to the establishment of new university programs in engineering and science in several countries. I-Es goal in these activities was to help create an international technical community for addressing the problems of development.

Professor Ireson is survived by his wife, Amy, of Stanford, sons Randy and Rob, four grandchildren, and a brother, J.C. of Tazewell, Virginia. He will be missed by the many who knew him as gentleman and teacher as well as those who knew him as a friend and colleague.

James V. Jucker, Chair
Robert V. Oakford
David A. Thompson