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University Libraries Newsletter

January 2019

In Memoriam



Dr. Richard J. Wood was named Dean Emeritus of University Libraries at the November 2017 meeting of the University of South Alabama Board of Trustees. L to R: Kenneth O. Simon, Chair, USA Board of Trustees, Dr. Richard J. Wood, Lynne Wood, Dr. Tony Waldrop, President, University of South Alabama, and Dr. David Johnson, Provost and Senior Vice President, University of South Alabama

Dean Emeritus of University Libraries Dr. Richard J. Wood died at home on the evening of December 31, 2018 following a long battle with cancer. Dr. Wood was appointed at the University of South Alabama in 1999 and retired in 2017. As Dean of University Libraries, he oversaw the Marx Library, the

Biomedical Library and its associated hospital library sites, the Doy Leale McCall Rare Book and Manuscript Library, and provided guidance in the development of the Joseph and Rebecca Mitchell Learning Resources Center in the Mitchell College of Business.

Working with The Architectural Group, Dr. Wood led planning for a 50,000 square foot addition to and renovation of the 1968 University Library that was completed in 2003, and secured a major donation from the Marx Family Trust. This donation established an endowment for the main library, renamed the Marx Library in 2013, and funded renovations to the facility to allow the move of the USA Photographic Archives from a city location to the university campus in 2016. The McCall Collection of manuscripts, donated in 2011 and valued at \$3 million, and photograph holdings of more than one million images, are among the most notable collections held by the McCall Library. In association with the Gulf Coast Center for Holocaust and Human Rights Education, he established the Agnes Tennenbaum Holocaust Library Collection within Marx Library. As an outgrowth of this relationship, the Center arranged donations of memorabilia and personal papers associated with Mobile-area Holocaust survivors to the McCall Library.

Dr. Wood secured funds to support library collections and services and to develop library teaching spaces, study rooms, and galleries, including the Mary Elizabeth and Charles Bernard Rodning Gallery housed within the Marx Library. He arranged numerous exhibits in the library galleries, supporting Mobile and Gulf Coast regional artists. As the University of South Alabama's representative to NAAL, the Network of Alabama Academic Libraries, Dr. Wood served in many formal leadership capacities, and mentored many of the state's academic library leaders. He assisted he Executive Director of NAAL in preparing the IMLS grant to develop Alabama Mosaic, the online repository of digital materials about Alabama's history, culture, places, and people. Widely recognized for his community service, Dr. Wood was a member of the Leadership Mobile/Mobile United Class of 2005, serving as Dean of the 2008 Leadership Mobile class, and as General Chair of Mobile United in 2011. A member of the Ronald McDonald House Charities of Mobile Board, he served as its President in 2016. He was a member of the Medical Museum of Mobile Board from 2009 to 2016.

A service for Dr. Richard J. Wood will be held on Saturday, January 19 at Corpus Christi Catholic Church located at 6300 McKenna Drive (just off of Hillcrest Road) in Mobile. There will be a visitation from 10:00 am until 11:00 am, followed by an 11:00 am Mass. A reception will be held following the Mass. The family asks that donations be made in Dr. Wood's name to the Ronald McDonald House in Mobile, where Dr. Wood served as a Board member. Condolences to Mrs. Wood may be sent to

Lynne Wood
1162 Dominion Drive West
Mobile, Alabama 36695

Dr. Wood's daughter Dr. Taralyn Wood sent the following message to share with her father's colleagues.

Thank you to all who have emailed or sent private messages offering your

condolences. My family is grateful for all of the kind words, special memories shared, thoughts and prayers. Many have inquired about the services and I wanted to share that information with you for those who would like to attend. The service will be held on January 19th. We will have a memorial service followed by a mass at Corpus Christie church where he was a long-time member.

On a personal note I wanted to share that my dad fought a long, hard battle with multiple myeloma since 2012. He had many complications over the years and had recently been diagnosed with adenocarcinoma in November. My dad was a warrior and fought a good fight but was ready to rest. He was able to spend Christmas with all 3 children and all 5 grandchildren and we cherished every moment with him. He died peacefully with my mom and I at his bedside and I am so fortunate to have those last moments with him. Please remember him as I do as a strong, devoted leader, Christian, husband, scholar, friend and father.

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