

HAMPTON UNIVERSITY

Highlights



"THERE IS ALWAYS A HIGHLIGHT AT HAMPTON UNIVERSITY"

April 2007

Dean dedicated his life to continual learning

Lawton secured grant to enable adults to finish college

Through all of his endeavors here at Hampton University, Dr. W. O. Lawton, founding dean of the College of Continued Education (CCE), routinely demonstrated his belief that everyone should continually learn new skills and challenge their minds. In recent years, he successfully established classes at the HU College of Virginia Beach, launched the highly successful Osher Lifelong Learning Institute, co-owned Lawton's Travel Service, Inc., and authored several books including "Lincoln and Davis: Two Opposite Sides."

Outside of HU, he exemplified this belief through his participation on several boards including the National Association of Workforce Boards and the Hampton YMCA. He served as a docent for the Hampton History Museum, belonged to the Kappa Alpha Psi fraternity and the Phi Delta Kappa honorary society, and served as the president of the International Travel Agents Society.

On March 1, Lawton passed away unexpectedly. Yet, his legacy continues on at CCE through a new grant he recently worked to obtain. The grant will continue his philosophy that it's "another day to excel!"

In January, the Bernard Osher Foundation granted \$50,000 to CCE to establish the Osher Reentry Scholarship Fund, enabling local individuals to move closer towards completing their bachelor's degree. Beginning this semester, CCE will select 25 individuals between ages 25-50 whose HU undergraduate studies have been interrupted by circumstances beyond their control for approximately five years or more and are resuming their studies to complete their first baccalaureate degree.



Dr. W. O. Lawton

Each selected Osher Reentry Scholar will receive \$2,000 per year to defray education expenses. Each individual is eligible to receive the scholarship for up to three years without having to reapply as long as he or she holds a 2.5 GPA or higher.

"We are delighted with the emphasis your institution has placed on addressing the specific needs of reentry students, and the Foundation is pleased to support your efforts in this regard," wrote the Bernard Osher Foundation in its congratulatory letter to CCE.

"This is a golden opportunity to get individuals to continue education and graduate from Hampton with assistance from Osher," said Lawton upon receipt of the grant.

The grant may be renewed annually for up to three years, with the prospect after demonstrated success of an endowment gift of \$1 million.

Lawton saw the scholarship fund as a stepping stone for its recipients to use to either advance in the workplace or advance towards earning additional degrees as he did. Lawton graduated from South Carolina State University and later from Lincoln University of Missouri with a master's degree in education. He also earned a

Dr. Lawton was a loyal dean and a dear friend. While Hampton University has suffered a great loss, we should honor his legacy and make today, as he always said, "another day to excel."

- President William R. Harvey

doctorate in education administration from George Washington University.

Prior to joining the HU family, Lawton served as a colonel in the U.S. Army for 30 years, earning numerous medals and awards along the way. He was respected and loved by all who knew him, as was demonstrated by all in attendance at his memorial on March 7 at HU Memorial Chapel. "He was a great person," said Joyce Richway, secretary to the dean at CCE.

University Chaplain Rev. Dr. Timothy Boddie led the memorial service, with the rich sounds of "Amazing Grace" resounding through the chapel air. Alongside two selected family members and a representative from the National Association of Workforce Boards, HU President Dr. William R. Harvey spoke highly of Lawton. Harvey shared his memories of Lawton's quick-witted banter with other deans during council meetings, loyalty to the University, and of their final conversation where Lawton concluded with the words, "Roger, that."

The Hampton University community mourns the loss of Dr. W. O. Lawton and he will be greatly missed.

-Alison L. Phillips

