

David R. Austin

Dave was raised in Hanover, Indiana, where his father was a professor at Hanover College. Following his graduation from high school he studied at Union College in Kentucky, receiving a bachelor's degree in health/physical education in 1963. Dave worked as a recreation therapist at Madison State Hospital following his graduation. He subsequently entered Indiana University where he earned his master's degree in 1965 and then assumed the position of recreation therapy supervisor at Evansville State Hospital. Dave was employed by Evansville State Hospital until 1969, eventually rising to the role of director of recreation therapy. In 1969 Dave left Evansville to pursue his doctorate at the University of Illinois. Dave has confided that when he entered his doctoral program, he was concerned that he lacked the intelligence to be successful in this endeavor. Clearly, his distinguished academic career has proven otherwise!

While at the University of Illinois, Dave began what was to become a lifetime of professional leadership in the field of recreation therapy. He was instrumental in the establishment of the Midwest Therapeutic Recreation Symposium in 1971, the longest-running regional symposium in the profession. Upon graduation from the University of Illinois he assumed a faculty position at North Texas State University in 1973. Finally in 1976 Dave accepted a position at Indiana University and has been on faculty for the past 29 years.

Dave's leadership in the profession can be seen in a multitude of his scholarly and professional activities. He has published more than 100 journal articles, as well as numerous abstracts and book chapters. He has authored or co-authored four highly influential textbooks in the field. His textbook, *Therapeutic Recreation: Processes and Techniques*, is one of the most widely used in the field. As a result of the high quality of his scholarship, Dave received the National Literary Award from the National Recreation and Park Association, and was inducted as a fellow into the prestigious Academy of Leisure Sciences.

His leadership is also evident in the fact that Dave is the only individual ever to receive the highest award – distinguished fellow – from the Society of Recreation and Parks Educators (SRPE), the American Therapeutic Recreation Association, and the National Therapeutic Recreation Society. Dave has been recognized as a leader in therapeutic recreation by the magazine *Palestra*, and has also received the Brightbill Award from the Department of Leisure Studies at the University of Illinois, recognizing the significant scholarly achievements of a University of Illinois alumnus.

In addition to Dave's scholarship and leadership to the profession, he has been one of the outstanding educators at Indiana University. He is a compassionate teacher who genuinely cares about the welfare of his students. There are very few times that one passes by Dave's open office door without seeing a student sitting on his couch. His teaching qualities have been recognized by SRPE's Teaching Excellence Award and his induction into the Union College Educators Hall of Fame. Dave would tell you, however, that the award he values the most is the Frederic Bachman Lieber Memorial Award, awarded to him at Founders Day in 1988. It is IU's oldest and most prestigious teaching honor.

In 1984 Dave was instrumental in the development and offering via television of the master's program in therapeutic recreation. This innovative degree graduated its first students in 1990; to date, 66 students have successfully completed it. Largely as a result of the success of this degree, IU alumnus Dick Enberg lent his support to create the Dick Enberg Distance Learning Studio in the School of HPER.

One could not ask for a better colleague than Dave. It's possible that as the son of a college professor, he developed his insights into the roles and responsibilities of a university professor early. His mentoring of junior faculty has provided exceptional guidance for those of us making our way in an academic career. Many of us have been on that couch in Dave's office, too: he has always had the time and understanding to listen to a colleague.

Dave married Joan, an internationally renowned professor of nursing at IUPUI, in 1965. They are proud of their daughter Janet, her husband Andy Tooze, and their first grandchild Xander (Alexander). Just ask him! Although it is hard to imagine Dave not being involved in the profession of recreation therapy, upon which he has had so great an influence, his retirement will allow him more time to pursue his avid love of golf and IU basketball. All of his colleagues will miss his leadership, scholarship, and counsel, and we wish him the best in his many years to come.

Bryan P. McCormick