

## **Maynard Thompson**

*Professor of Mathematics; Senior Counselor to the President*

Maynard Thompson has been a faculty member's faculty member, and, at the same time, he has been a faculty member's administrator. Briefly we will attempt to describe his 45 years of remarkable service to the Department of Mathematics, to the Bloomington campus, and to Indiana University.

Maynard joined the Department of Mathematics in 1962, directly from graduate school at the University of Wisconsin, where he had completed a Ph.D. in mathematics with Professor Jacob Korevaar. Maynard has spent his entire academic career at Indiana University, always active in teaching and scholarship in the mathematics department, while also serving in many key administrative roles.

In math Maynard was quickly recognized as an outstanding teacher, and he soon became a department leader in three major activities related to teaching mathematics, activities that he continued throughout his years at IU. These are the mathematical preparation of teachers for K–12 schools, the need for serious teaching of applications at the undergraduate level, and the need to work with other departments and schools on interdisciplinary research involving mathematics. He was one of the first in the nation to develop curriculum materials for teaching mathematical modeling, and he offered a trial course in summer 1965 to in-service teachers who were part of a National Science Foundation Institute at Indiana University. This work was the start of his curriculum work in modeling, work that led to the first course in the nation in modeling for undergraduates and the first textbook, published in 1973. The fact that Maynard had first offered his modeling course to teachers is an indication of Maynard's commitment to the mathematical preparation of teachers. He was always involved with faculty members in the School of Education, working to improve the program for teachers and helping with curriculum grants that made major improvements in the teacher education program at IU.

Maynard's many years of teaching the course *Mathematical Models and Applications* brought students and faculty members to him from across the campus. He began collaborations with many faculty members, and he served on doctoral committees from fields as diverse as political science, geography, psychology, sociology, business, economics, physics, chemistry, and education. His work with these other departments involved participation on both grants and research. At the same time, he also hosted workshops for college faculty at other schools to help them begin modeling courses. Faculty who attended these workshops have remained in contact with Maynard over several decades, and they have had a major impact on curriculum work across the country.

At the same time that Maynard was active in developing materials for the modeling course, he was also active in revising the department's Finite Mathematics course and in developing course materials for that course. The resulting textbook has had many editions. A large fraction of IU grads are familiar with the topics in the book and the course.

Maynard's early work with teachers has continued and expanded through several grants from the National Science Foundation, including a major grant on problem solving, another on modeling for teachers, and his current work as the principal investigator on a large Mathematics and Science Partnership grant involving nine Indiana school districts. This grant involves more than one thousand teachers and more than 100,000 students.

Maynard's work in administration began early in his career as director of graduate studies and then chair of mathematics. In 1981 he served with distinction as an associate dean in the graduate school. Then, in 1984, Maynard was named an associate dean in the College of Arts and Sciences, where his major responsibilities dealt with the College budget. He very quickly developed the same reputation College-wide that he enjoyed in mathematics: level headed, calm at times of stress, fair, equitable in dealing with departments large and small, a good listener, and a careful and committed organizer.

The respect that he gained in the College certainly brought him attention from the campus administration. Thus, when beloved Ward Schaap retired as dean for budgetary administration and planning at the campus level, Maynard was named to succeed him. Many believed, especially those who do not know Maynard well, that no one could possibly take Ward's place. But Maynard quickly dispelled that notion by effectively managing the campus budget, again with fairness, attention to detail, and always with the attitude that no problem was too big that it could not be solved and in a manner satisfactory to all participants. Although the campus budget encountered many difficulties in those years, Maynard, first as dean and then as vice chancellor of budgetary administration and planning, is due much of the credit for maintaining the campus's strength and optimism through it all. It turned out, to the surprise of some, that he had a wonderful sense of humor, a trait not often associated with superior mathematicians. That humor, his integrity, his equal treatment of all, brought him, quite deservedly, praise from other administrators on campus as well as those in central administration. In short, he could be trusted to tell you the truth, trusted to work out any problems that seemed too challenging, and trusted as an advisor to the chancellor, who would often refer to Maynard as co-chancellor of the Bloomington campus.

When President Adam Herbert was seeking a top level academic advisor, he sought the advice of many faculty and administrators. It did not take long for the name of Maynard Thompson to rise to the top of the list and, after several conversations with Maynard and some soul searching by Maynard, true to his loyalty not only to the Bloomington campus, but to Indiana University, Maynard agreed to become the

president's academic advisor. He served in that capacity during the most difficult times of Adam Herbert's presidency, and did so with the same calm demeanor that has always characterized him as administrator and colleague, and no longer just on the Bloomington campus but throughout the IU system.

It is hard to imagine an individual who has given more of himself while seeking so little praise. That is why we believe he is not only a faculty member's faculty member, but also a faculty member's administrator. There are many on the campus and throughout the university who thank Maynard Thompson for his generosity, hard work, kindness, and commitment.

*Dan Maki and Ken Gros Louis*