MEMORIAL RESOLUTION
GEORGE W. KEULKS

George W. Keulks served as Dean of the Graduate School and Research from 1975 to 1997. He died after a long illness on November 11, 1997 at Froedert Memorial Lutheran Hospital. George’s ability to lead was amply demonstrated while he was ill. He was a role model and inspiration for his students and his colleagues when battling cancer. He did it with a serenity and courage that will remain an example for us all.

George earned his AB degree at Washington University in St. Louis (1960) and his Ph.D. at Northwestern in 1964. After one year of postdoctoral study at Johns Hopkins with Paul Emmett, he worked in industry as a researcher for a short time. He joined the department of Chemistry in 1966 as an Assistant Professor. He was promoted to Associate Professor in 1971 and Professor in 1975.

George was an outstanding Chairman in the Chemistry Department from 1972-74. He managed to get all of the faculty working together toward common research and teaching goals. He was instrumental in the battle for the Ph.D. program in Chemistry, traveling frequently to Madison to secure the interests of UWM. He waged this battle with his usual wit, wisdom and that great sense of humor.

From 1974-75 George served as Associate Dean of the College of Letters and Science. It was a critical time for the University when subsequently he was appointed Dean of the Graduate School and Research. The promotion of George as Dean of the Graduate School was more a challenge to his talents than recognition of the leadership that he had previously displayed. The challenge was to transform a small comprehensive institution into a first-class research University. George lived this goal for his entire career and carried the academic torch for Milwaukee for 22 years. National recognition of the status of UWM as a research university was granted in 1994 by the Carnegie Commission.

In addition to his talents as an administrator, George was an outstanding chemist and an inspiring teacher who was able to stimulate his students to “go that extra mile” in their quest for scientific knowledge. Several of his past students are at the forefront of applied research, although George always insisted on the necessity of teaching fundamentals without any predetermined judgement on their potential for industrial application. He was fundamentally a scientist, who happened to do applied research in catalysis and surface studies.

George was widely recognized by numerous scientific organizations and societies. He lectured in China, France, Japan, Belgium, and Russia. Locally, he was an active member of professional societies such as the National Corporation for Atmospheric Research, the Council for Chemical Research, and the University of Wisconsin System Task Force on University Resources for Business and Industry, as well as many others.

George was devoted to this institution, to his colleagues, and to his students in promoting a vision of what scholarship should be. That is the legacy for which he will be remembered.

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and Laboratory for Surface Studies