Memorial Resolution for Werner Baum

Werner Baum studied mathematics and meteorology at the University of Chicago during the war years, where he was elected to Phi Beta Kappa and Sigma Xi, among other honors. Because of the demonstrated value of meteorology during military operations, departments of meteorology sprang up around the country. Baum started the department at Florida State University, where he taught and held administrative posts from 1949 to 1963. From there, he held administrative positions at increasingly high levels at NYU and Miami, and from 1968 to 1973 was president of the University of Rhode Island. In 1973, he came to UWM as chancellor, with a commitment that UWM would start a department of meteorology. For some years, meteorology existed as a Committee, with Baum as chair, but then became part of the Department of Geology and Geophysics rather than an independent department. In 1979 Baum resigned as Chancellor of UWM due to medical reasons, and returned to Florida State University as a Dean.

Baum edited the Journal of Meteorology (now Monthly Weather Review) from 1949 to 1961, and held other editorial and administrative posts within the American Meteorological Society. He was elected a Fellow of the society in 1967, and was its President from 1977 to 1978. He also was a Fellow of the American Geophysical Union and the American Association for the Advancement of Science. The latter organization in 1985 honored him with the "Scientific Freedom and Responsibility" award for his "courageous and successful challenge, while Chancellor of the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee from 1972 to 1979, of the security practices of two federal agencies, resulting in a greatly improved national climate for the intellectual freedom of academic scientists." This citation refers to his action in which he defended the academic freedom of a UWM faculty member who had used unclassified data in a cryptological paper that the National Security Agency tried to ban. Baum resisted the interference with academic work and forced the agency to back down, a defense that properly was the major item in his obituary in the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel. Baum died on September 4, 1999.