Winston Van Horne Memorial Resolution

Emeritus Professor Winston Van Horne died on May 24, 2013. For over more than three decades, Winston Van Horne made overwhelming contributions to the advancement of the discipline of Africology, success of the UWM Department of Africology, and continued growth of the College of Letters and Science, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee and University of Wisconsin System. Throughout his tenure, he demonstrated an unflinching commitment to improving the quality of all facets of these institutions.

He was a well-respected scholar who is principally responsible for navigating the department from a Black Studies program to the Department of Afro-American Studies and finally to the Department of Africology. He infused the highest level of academic quality into the university’s Africology PhD program, of which he was the principal author. As three-time chair of the Department of Africology, Professor Van Horne encouraged interdisciplinary scholarship and directed the department toward a larger, more expansive scholarship of the African diaspora around the world. In fact, as one of his colleagues wrote, “he birthed a discipline, at once father and mother, but he would always say, that africology was simultaneously the newest and the oldest discipline.”

At the campus level, his service record was second to none. He strongly advocated for faculty rights and shared governance throughout his 24 years on the Faculty Senate and helped guide the libraries through budget cuts and sweeping technological changes during 20 years on the Universities Libraries Committee. Moreover, he served on the codification committee, rules committee, economic benefits committee and senate subcommittee on the evaluation of administrations. He also played an instrumental role in the development of Spaights Plaza.

Major contributions made to the UW System included directing its Institute on Race and Ethnicity, twice being part of search committees for its Vice President for Academic Affairs, and helping the administration understand the necessity of graduating a culturally aware student body and therefore to embrace the idea of a three-credit cultural diversity requirement.

In Milwaukee, he was among the founders of the Community Brainstorming Conference, the long-running forum that brings together citizens from all walks of life to learn more about the issues of the day and individuals addressing them.

In many ways, all of the institutions he touched would not be what they are today were it not for his passion, intellectual curiosity and dedicated service.

Submitted by: Doreatha D. Mbali, Professor and Chair  
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