

MEMORIAL RESOLUTION for
DANIEL PETER MURPHY, Ph.D.
Born 1930, Died 1987

Dan Murphy died April 14, 1987. During his life he influenced many people--students, colleagues and friends. In the phrase, "colleagues and friends," it is important that there be no comma to separate the words, as his colleagues were his friends.

He received his Ph.D. from the University of Rochester in 1959, in experimental psychology, and taught at St. Francis College, Loyola University of Chicago, and the College of St. Thomas before coming to IPFW in 1968. He left his imprint on the IPFW Psychology Department, where he was chair from 1970 to 1982. Under his direction the department grew to its present size, and, through his influence, to a group of faculty dedicated to serving the needs of students of this entire region. One of the hallmarks of his leadership is evident in a framed quote he kept on a bookshelf in his office: "It is better to debate a question without settling it than to settle a question without debating it." His was a leadership truly characterized by collegiality.

An anecdote serves to show the impact he had on his students. When one of his classes was told that, because of his illness, class would be cancelled that day, they refused to believe it, protesting instead that this was some sort of psychological experiment. Typical comments were, "Dr. Murphy is testing us, isn't he?" or "He's trying to see how we'll react. He's going to walk in here in 10 minutes and explain it was an experiment." To stress the seriousness of the situation, more details were provided, that he had had a heart attack and was in the hospital. Then students wanted to know where to send cards, and what they could do to help. Their concern made them reluctant to leave the classroom. That concern for him as a truly dedicated teacher is typical of the response he generated in students. They knew he demanded the very best from them, and respected and admired him for it. Stock phrases like, "He was a good person, dedicated to his teaching," gain freshness when applied to Dan Murphy.

Surviving are his wife, Ann, and their four children. Although Dan was a private person around the office, he could not hide his genuine pride of family. Together, Ann and Dan raised their children to excel. Daniel, Jr., is completing his Ph.D. in History at Northwestern University, Brian is working on his Ph.D. in Theoretical Physics at Purdue University, Mary Claire recently completed her baccalaureate degree in Mathematics, with a teaching certificate, and Paul is a junior at Hanover College, which is the alma mater of his brothers and sister.

Trying to characterize anyone, let alone Dan Murphy, in a few phrases is difficult, but what comes most readily to mind is his fairness, selflessness, warm wit, and generosity. He was generous to a fault with his time and his concern for others, and yet he would never burden them with his concern. We shall miss him.