WILLIAM ELLER

William Eller was recruited by the University in 1962 to institute a program in Reading Education. That program became one of the most outstanding in the country, with many of its graduates going on to distinguished educational careers both here and abroad. Continuously, for almost a quarter of a century until 1988, he served as department chair, first of Reading and Language Arts, then Elementary and Remedial Education, and finally Learning and Instruction. His was a voice people listened to. He was vigorous and relentless in his efforts to improve programs. Faculty, students, staff valued his advice and friendship. His awareness and sense of other people helped him to help others, and we profited from that sensitivity.

The profession recognized William Eller's accomplishments by electing him to the Reading Hall of Fame, a forty-member international organization of literacy specialists. He went on to serve as its president in 1991. He was also a past president of the 90,000-member International Reading Association and a founder and president of the National Reading Conference. William Eller was the only person to have held the top position in all three groups.

He participated in all aspects of the profession, writing books, journal articles, and instructional materials, serving on editorial boards, holding state and national office in professional organizations. He was particularly proud of his long-standing role as advisor to the National Assessment of Educational Progress, the most representative testing program in the country. For many years, every school day more than a million American elementary school pupils continued to develop their reading abilities using the Laidlaw textbook series of which Dr. Eller was senior author and editor.

He brought a standard of excellence and the utmost personal and professional integrity to everything he did, and we benefited from that example. He was an original, who will have a positive and lasting influence on students and faculty in the Graduate School of Education. We have gained much from Bill over the years. We will miss him.