

Alumni Award

John E. “Jack” McKinnie

Class of 1954

As a Delaware, Ohio native, Jack was destined to be attached to this wonderful small town for life. He loves to tell the story of how he was raised in the Delaware County Jail, though he eventually will mention that it's because *his father was the sberiff, and he lived in that building!*

Jack was (and remains) a loyal member of Phi Gamma Delta. He played varsity football and basketball, was a member of the varsity track team and W-Clan, and was active in Circle K and the student Y. After his graduation from Ohio Wesleyan, Jack, an economics major, served three years in the United States Air Force as a statistical services officer. He then began a career in marketing with The Standard Oil Company, now BP Amoco, working in Cleveland, Cincinnati, Pittsburgh, Columbus, Philadelphia, and Wilmington, Delaware before returning to Cleveland. He retired from the company after 35 years.

However, Jack's real career and his life's work is Ohio Wesleyan and Phi Gamma Delta. He bleeds the red and black, and the purple! He has served the University in virtually every capacity; class agent for more than 50 years, Decade Chair, OWU Associates, alumni admission representative, president of the Alumni Board of Directors, Annual Fund Council, Team OWU, president of the Alumni Interfraternity Council, chair of the Cleveland Alumni Committee, Tower Society, and member of the Board of Trustees. Every year, he calls each member of his class, seeking gifts on behalf of the Ohio Wesleyan Fund.

Not only that, when called upon to assist the University in a different way, Jack slipped seamlessly into the role of Interim Vice President for University Relations for six months in January-June of 2006. During that time, he would not accept a dollar of pay for his full-time work.

Jack is also the consummate Phi Gam, active as an alumni advisor, president of the House Corporation, and member of several national fraternity convention committees. He has been instrumental in the re-colonization of the fraternity at Ohio Wesleyan and is chairman of the board of advisors as Phi Gam during returns to campus. As any Phi Gam will tell you the FIJI Pig Dinner bears the unmistakable McKinnie stamp, and the chapter even bestows the Jack McKinnie Award on alumni who perpetuate the goals of the fraternity.

In addition to his Ohio Wesleyan service, Jack is also an elder, an usher, and member of various committees at Bay Presbyterian Church in Bay Village.

Jack always goes above and beyond for his alma mater, whether it's coming down to cheer on our students at an athletic event, attending candidate interviews to assure we find the right fit, calling on classmates for financial support, or just greeting new staff members with that patented smile and welcoming attitude. He is truly an OWU treasure. Today, we are pleased and proud to honor, salute, thank, and applaud Jack McKinnie for his service to Ohio Wesleyan and as an irreplaceable member of the OWU family.

May 19, 2012