

Distinguished Achievement Citation

Judson S. Sayre

Class of 1920

It is with great pleasure that we award this Distinguished Achievement Citation to Judson Sayre, posthumously. Judson Sayre was an Ohio Wesleyan alumnus who influenced the lives of almost every person in America and most of the world, yet whose name may not be readily recognized by any of you.

Following his graduation from Ohio Wesleyan with a bachelor's degree in Economics, Judson continued his education and received his Master's degree from Columbia University. After leaving Columbia, Judson began his long and distinguished business career with Kelvinator in 1925. During the next twelve years, Judson Sayre used his lifelong philosophy "With God's help, I make good things happen every day," to continue up the corporate ladder and eventually became the president and general manager of the Bendix Home Appliance Co. It was during his years at Bendix that he carved his place in history.

In 1937, while Vice President of Sales at Bendix, Judson pioneered the introduction of the company's newest appliance, which was the prototype of the automatic washer. At first, skeptics called this new contraption a "whirling dervish" and "Sayre's folly." Because of early technical imperfections, the product's first stage was a hectic one. During initial demonstrations, executives became drenched, but before long, people were lining up to purchase this forerunner to the modern day washing machine. Judson Sayre oversaw the development, production and distribution of the first automatic washer - something most of us wouldn't know how to live without!

With the automatic washer boosting Judson's career to new heights, he became the president of Norge Sales Corporation, a subsidiary of Borg-Warner, in 1954. During the first few years with Norge, he consistently doubled the annual sales from the year before. In 1962, he made history again with his introduction of the concept of thermoelectricity in a commercial cooling device, the forerunner to the portable refrigerator. Judson Sayre established and maintained an outstanding reputation for making money for people who did business with him.

Despite his frenzied business schedule, Judson always found time for his alma mater. He served as a member of the Board of Trustees for over thirteen years, was a member of the Ohio Wesleyan Associates and was always a staunch financial supporter of the university. Judson was blessed with two daughters one of whom, along with a nephew, graduated from Ohio Wesleyan.

With conferral of the Distinguished Achievement Citation, we express admiration for Judson S. Sayre for his contribution toward the development of the automatic washing machine, recognizing the freedoms that this single invention has given mankind. We are proud to call him a son of Ohio Wesleyan!

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