

# Distinguished Achievement Citation

Bruce T. Alton

Class of 1961

With this presentation of Ohio Wesleyan's Distinguished Achievement Citation, the Ohio Wesleyan University Alumni Association Board of Directors is honored and privileged to recognize Bruce T. Alton for his innovative work and service in higher education.

An Ohio Wesleyan legacy and member of Delta Tau Delta, Bruce graduated with a major in speech and a minor in psychology. He was commissioned a Second Lieutenant in the United States Air Force through Ohio Wesleyan's ROTC program, but was granted an educational delay to complete his master's degree. He earned that degree in guidance and personnel from Michigan State University before marrying his OWU sweetheart, Christie Lichliter, and reporting for active duty in 1962.

After finishing his military service, Bruce became Ohio Wesleyan's assistant dean of men from 1965 to 1969. While he and Christie served as Head Residents in Bashford Hall, he completed his Ph.D. at The Ohio State University; he then accepted the position of dean of students and assistant professor of psychology at Rocky Mountain College in Billings, Montana. While also serving as director of admissions, he developed the then-somewhat-revolutionary concept of telemarketing to prospective students and enrolled the largest first-year class in the history of the college.

When Rocky Mountain College's president went on sabbatical, the Board of Trustees invited Bruce to step into the role of interim president. When the president chose not to return, the college undertook a national search and ended up where they began, selecting Bruce as president—and he wasn't even 40 yet. He remained as president for 12 years, completing the largest capital campaign in the college's history. During those years, he also served the Billings community as president of Rotary and on the boards of Deaconess Medical Center, Wells Fargo Bank, and the Billings Symphony. He served his profession as president of both the Western Independent College Foundation and the Montana Independent College Association.

In 1986 Bruce was invited by his former OWU dean, Ron Stead, to join Presidential Search Consultation Service in Washington, D.C.; one of the organization's founders was former Ohio Wesleyan President Elden Smith. In 1988 Ron Stead, Bruce and another associate left Presidential Search to establish Academic Search, an executive search firm assisting American higher education in searches for presidents and senior officers. He has served as counsel to over 100 college and university presidential searches, including Ohio Wesleyan's in the search which selected President Tom Courtice.

Bruce has been an invited presenter at countless national meetings, including those of the Eli Lilly Foundation and the Harvard Graduate School of Education.

Currently Bruce is of counsel to Academic Search and is a recent or current volunteer for Samaritan [homeless support] Ministries in Washington, D. C., and the Board of Trustees of Alma College. And he's also a blacksmith in the historic district of the Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore in Michigan.

For his contributions to American higher education and his continuing loyalty to Ohio Wesleyan, we join his classmates and his wife Christie Lichliter Alton '62 and applaud Bruce T. Alton through the presentation of this Distinguished Achievement Citation.

May 14, 2011

