

Distinguished Achievement Citation

John E. Bassett, Ph.D.

Class of 1963

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 John E. Bassett, Ph.D., as leader and educator.

A member of Delta Tau Delta, a baseball player, *Le Bijou* sports editor, and writer for *The Transcript*, John graduated from Ohio Wesleyan as a history major and returned to OWU to earn a master's degree in English in 1966. He received his doctorate in literature from the University of Rochester in 1970.

John began his teaching career as an instructor at the University of Rochester, moving on to become assistant professor and later associate professor of English at Wayne State University. In 1984, he was named professor and department head at North Carolina State University, remaining there until 1993, when he was tapped to become dean of the College of Arts and Sciences and professor of English at Case Western Reserve. In 2000, he became president of Clark University in Worcester, Massachusetts. Following an exemplary decade-long tenure there, he was called to the presidency of Heritage University in 2010.

At Clark, a research institution founded in 1887, John was noted for the improvements he made to academic quality, fundraising, and strategic planning, including significant enhancement of both information technology and alumni programs. He recruited 83 new faculty members, surpassed a \$100 million capital campaign goal by \$6 million, and built or renovated a number of campus facilities. He oversaw the university's partnership with a small, urban public high school nationally recognized as one of the country's top 100.

Coming to Heritage University was a different kind of challenge, but one John has met with characteristic energy. Founded in 1982, Heritage is a private, four-year liberal arts *university* with undergraduate and graduate programs, as well as online and non-degree and certificate programs. The school's population is largely first-generation Native American and Hispanic students who are attending college, working, and handling family responsibilities.

In the few years since his installation as president, John has made transformational changes, acquiring land for expansion, raising admission standards, overhauling financial aid programs, increasing the size of the faculty by a record number, and opening two new research centers: the Center for Native Health and Culture, and the Center for a New Washington. He also took part in the school's 10-year expansion plan.

John is a nationally recognized leader in education. He has served as chair of the National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities and is currently on the boards of the Council on Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA) and Phi Beta Kappa Fellows. He will become Chair of the CHEA Board on July 1, 2013. He has been awarded two honorary degrees. In addition, he has held editorial positions and is the author of 11 books and scores of scholarly articles and reviews.

For his professional achievements and his dedication to the ideals of higher education in all its forms, we applaud and recognize John Bassett with this Distinguished Achievement Citation.

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