

Distinguished Achievement Citation

Virginia Pearsall Kirkwood

Class of 1964

It is an honor and a privilege to acknowledge the many accomplishments of Virginia Pearsall Kirkwood and to present her with Ohio Wesleyan University's Distinguished Achievement Citation.

In a career spanning more than 35 years, Virginia has led a life of service that has had a profound impact on the education and welfare of people throughout the world. Her energetic work as volunteer, consultant, director, elder and administrator in the United States as well as China, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Nepal, Turkey and Pakistan, has inspired generations of people, young and old, to invest themselves and their resources toward the benefit of others, both locally and abroad.

Ginny learned the meaning of the phrase, "charity begins at home" early in her life from the example her mother set as a Peace Corps volunteer in Malaysia. While she started her formal education at Mexico City College, she completed her studies at Ohio Wesleyan when in 1964 she earned her Sociology/Anthropology degree. She was a member of the Delta Delta Delta Sorority and TWIN-W, now known as the Alumni "W" Association.

In 1964 she followed in her mother's footsteps and began a lifelong international humanitarian career as a Peace Corps volunteer in Turkey. For the next 33 years, she pursued her passion serving the Peace Corps and the Special Olympics. Her reach extended to Pakistan and Thailand where she established Special Olympic organizations including forming boards of directors, setting up training programs, handling public relations and arranging for the Special Olympic games themselves. Currently she is working as a consultant to the International Special Olympics Committees in China, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Nepal and Pakistan.

Stateside she found time to serve as the Chair of the Pennsylvania Special Olympics Board, Country Director of the Thailand-US Peace Corps, Director of the National Peace Monument Foundation in Washington, D.C., and Director of Wordsworth Academy in Philadelphia. Her other current assignments include serving as a Director of World Education, Inc., in Boston, a Director of Mountain Laurel Center for the Arts in Bushkill, Pennsylvania, a Director of Kenyan Institute-Asia and as a Director of the National Peace Corps Association Advisory Board. Ginny is currently the CEO of the Shawnee Academy, a residential treatment facility for troubled youth, and presumably for entertainment, she is also Producer of the Shawnee Playhouse – a year round theater.

Recognizing her generosity of spirit in contributing to the needs of the world's children and people, as well as her legacy of dignity and grace, Ohio Wesleyan University is honored to bestow upon Virginia Pearsall Kirkwood the Distinguished Achievement Citation.

We join her classmates in saluting Virginia Pearsall Kirkwood and recognizing her outstanding achievements through the presentation of this Distinguished Achievement Award.

May 15, 2004

