

Distinguished Achievement Citation

William J. Sager

Class of 1955

Enthralled with the stories of a missionary doctor from the Belgian Congo during a junior high church summer camp, William Sager was encouraged by the doctor's gentle wisdom and faith to become a doctor and serve in mission himself. This endeavor was indeed a calling, one that he and his wife Sue have pursued with quiet dignity and humility.

Bill received his B.A. from Ohio Wesleyan University in Delaware, Ohio, in 1955, after which he married his college sweetheart, Sue Swink. He then earned his doctorate in medicine from Northwestern Medical School in Chicago, Illinois, did his internship at Cook County Hospital in Chicago and his residency in internal medicine at the Evanston Hospital Association. After completing his residency, Bill spent ten years as a medical missionary at the United Christian Hospital in Lahore, Pakistan. During these years he was Director of Medical Education, responsible for both students and residents. In 1965, he became Chief of Internal Medicine, and in 1969 took a furlough to return to the University of Michigan for a fellowship in gastroenterology. During this year he also spent a great deal of time educating congregations about the importance of the medical missions and raising money for them.

On returning to Lahore in 1970 he established the Department of Community Medicine, and started twelve clinics in indigent villages around Lahore that previously had no medical care. In 1974, he returned to Ashland, Oregon, where he had a successful practice of medicine and remained active in church and community affairs.

Always dedicated to the improvement of medical care in the global community, in 1999 Bill accepted the position as Director of Medical Education at the Good Shepherd Hospital in Tshikagi, Democratic Republic of the Congo. In this position he was responsible for the medical education of medical students, residents in internal medicine, nurses and lab technicians. He was also responsible for the hospital outpatient clinics and thirty rural health centers in the province. After his return from the Congo, he and his wife Sue spent six months at their church headquarters in Louisville and three months at Nknoma Hospital in Malawi. He has since returned to Ashland, where he works part-time as a Hospitalist at Three Rivers Community Hospital, is again an elder in the church and is chair of the mission committee.

A quote taken from an e-mail Bill wrote to a fraternity brother from OWU, while preparing to go to mission work in the Congo, sums up his life philosophy. *"Life is meant to be good," he said. "We are meant to be happy, joyful, hopeful, trusting, sharing, peaceful and loving. When we recognize that others are not realizing these good things, we need to respond in some way to change things. We learned this at OWU in our pledge class and in the classroom. So... like Don Quixote, we're off to Africa chasing the proverbial demon. It feels like the right thing to do."*

For unrelenting attention to the needs of humankind, Ohio Wesleyan is proud to bestow upon William Sager the Distinguished Achievement Citation.

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