DOCUMENTS OF THE GENERAL FACULTY

REPORT OF THE MEMORIAL RESOLUTION COMMITTEE FOR
JOE OVERTON LEDBETTER

The special committee of the General Faculty to prepare a memorial resolution for Joe Overton Ledbetter, professor emeritus, civil engineering, has filed with the Secretary of the General Faculty the following report.

John R. Durbin, Secretary
The General Faculty

IN MEMORIAM
JOE OVERTON LEDBETTER

Joe Overton Ledbetter, professor emeritus of civil engineering, died on November 13, 2002. He was 76.

Professor Ledbetter was born on February 1, 1927, in New Hope, Alabama, the son of Maxie Overton and Oscar Smith Ledbetter. He served in the Navy in World War II, primarily stationed at Camp Dietrich, Maryland, doing research in biological warfare. After the war, he earned his B.S. in civil engineering in 1950 from the University of Alabama at Tuscaloosa, and worked as a civil engineer for the Alabama Highway Department before joining the Texas Highway Department in 1951. He also served as an officer in the United States Public Health Service as a Senior Sanitary Engineer related to the above ground nuclear testing program in Nevada, a professional relationship that lasted into retirement.

In 1956, Joe entered graduate school at The University of Texas at Austin and was appointed as an instructor of civil engineering. He earned his M.S. in sanitary engineering and became an assistant professor in 1956, completed his Ph.D. in civil engineering in 1963, became an associate professor in 1965, and was promoted to professor in 1971. He was a registered professional engineer in the state of Texas and a member of the numerous honor societies, including Tau Beta Pi (engineering), Chi Epsilon (civil engineering), Sigma Xi (scientific research), Phi Eta Sigma, Pi Mu Epsilon, and Phi Kappa Phi.

A recipient of the Civil Engineering Excellence in Teaching Award, Dr. Ledbetter was a versatile educator, teaching six different undergraduate classes in civil engineering and eleven different graduate classes in environmental engineering over his tenure at The University of Texas. At one time, Joe's former students headed each of the major state of Texas agencies in charge of the various aspects of environmental regulation, and students he educated have taught air pollution engineering around the world. He published texts in air pollution and radiological health and also served on the editorial boards or as editor of journals in health physics, industrial hygiene, air pollution control, and environmental engineering.

Professor Ledbetter officially retired from the University in 1993, in a magnanimous move to allow the hiring of an assistant professor with air pollution engineering interests. During his career, he served as assistant chairman of civil engineering, graduate advisor of environmental health engineering, and undergraduate advisor of civil engineering for numerous years. He was well known for his philosophy of considering the students’ interests to be paramount. He was a four-time recipient of the College of Engineering Student Engineer Council's Distinguished Advisor Award and a recipient of the Erwin S. Perry Civil Engineering Students' Appreciation Award. After his retirement, his dedication to the students continued as he served as undergraduate advisor and taught part-time. During one budgetary crisis, he even taught without pay.

Dr. Ledbetter was preceded in death by his parents, his wife of 43 years, Nan Thompson Ledbetter, Ph.D. (1966), and two sisters and two brothers. He was survived by his loving and beloved wife of 10 years, Ann Hagood Ledbetter.
This memorial resolution was prepared by a special committee consisting of Professors Howard M. Liljestrand, Joseph F. Malina, Jr., and Earnest F. Gloyda.

Distributed to the dean of the College of Liberal Arts, the executive vice president and provost, and the president on November 27, 2002. Copies are available on request from the Office of the General Faculty, FAC 22, F9500. This resolution is posted under "Memorials" at: http://www.utexas.edu/faculty/council/.