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Office of University
Communications

May 22, 2015

Dr. Charles Tichenor Remembered for Helping Students with Professional Experience

BOILING SPRINGS, N.C.—Dr. Charles Tichenor brought a world of experience to Gardner-Webb University, and as a professor of business and distinguished corporation chief executive in the Godbold School of Business he offered a world of opportunities to his students. Tichenor, a U.S. Navy veteran and former international business executive, passed away May 19. He was 89.

Tichenor came to Gardner-Webb in 1997, and several years later he founded the business school's Graduates in Executive Management (GEM) program, which offers exceptional students courses taught by elite business professionals and a study-abroad experience.

“Charles was a gem of a professor and a gem of a person,” offered Dr. Anthony Negbenbor, dean of the GWU Godbold School of Business. “He loved our students, he loved the business school, and he was loved by all of his students. He was someone who brought the business experience to the classroom, and he helped us tremendously by regularly connecting our students with CEOs and jobs. In my opinion, he was one of the all-time best professors in the business school.”

Prior to coming to Gardner-Webb, Tichenor built a résumé of global experiences with service in the military, in the business world and in other institutions of higher education. He completed his bachelor's degree in Naval Science and Tactics and mathematics at Duke University (Durham, N.C.) in 1945. In the following year, he served as a U.S. Navy officer in combat areas in the Pacific Theater and China. After his military service, he worked for Kraft Inc. for 20 years, including time as vice president of marketing.

During his career, Tichenor graduated from the Harvard University Graduate School of Business Advanced Management Program (Cambridge, Mass.) and the Doctor of Business Administration program at Berne University (Switzerland). Among his many achievements, Tichenor was also a member of the board of directors of multiple U.S. and foreign corporations, and he earned two gold medals and one silver medal in U.S. tennis and racquetball championship competition.

After several years as senior operating vice president in the management of several subsidiary corporations, Tichenor became chairman, president and chief executive officer of Champale Inc. Sparkling Beverages in the 1970s and 1980s. He directed highly

successful sales efforts and several U.S. plants and branches, with international offices in London, Toronto, Chicago, San Juan in Puerto Rico, and Port of Spain in Trinidad.

Tichenor then worked at several higher education institutions in the 1980s and 1990s, including stints at Mississippi State University (Starkville, Miss.), Elizabeth City State University (Elizabeth City, N.C.), and Indiana University of Pennsylvania (Indiana, Pa.).

Following the 2012-13 academic year, Tichenor was honored upon his retirement from Gardner-Webb. His wife, Helen, serves as GWU's director of international programs.

Negbenebor said Tichenor's work continues to impact Gardner-Webb in many ways, including the ongoing development of a Doctor of Business Administration (DBA) program that Tichenor first suggested and supported financially. "Charles was always looking for ways to help us improve in the school of business," Negbenebor shared. "I love him and what he's done. He is one of my best friends, and he will surely be missed."

A service is scheduled for Friday, June 19 at 4:30 p.m. at the Episcopal Church of the Redeemer in Shelby, N.C. The family will receive friends at a reception immediately following the service. Cecil Burton Funeral Home in Shelby, N.C., is handling arrangements.

Located in Boiling Springs, N.C., Gardner-Webb University's purpose is to advance the Kingdom of God through Christian higher education by preparing graduates for professional and personal success, instilling in them a deep commitment to service and leadership, and equipping them for well-rounded lives of lasting impact, Pro Deo et Humanitate (For God and Humanity).