

In Memory of Dwight Baumann



After 33 years of service to Carnegie Mellon University, we are sad to announce that MechE Professor Dwight Baumann passed away on September 30, 2003.

Baumann's teaching interests were in the areas of design, transportation and, especially, entrepreneurship. Baumann was the executive director of the Center for Entrepreneurial Development, Inc., a nonprofit, teaching laboratory and

industrial experiment station that he founded in 1971. In 2000, he was inducted into the North Dakota Entrepreneur Hall of Fame in recognition of his efforts to promote student entrepreneurs.

Baumann will be remembered for his professional accomplishments, and perhaps the greatest of which was his ability to inspire those he taught, as this letter from a former student attests.

Professor Dwight M. Baumann influenced my career and outlook on life more than any other educator from K through graduate school, and I will miss him.

I was fortunate to be a student in Professor Baumann's Design & Entrepreneurship class in 1971, where he bridged the gap between the excellent theoretical courses at Carnegie Mellon and the "real world." The class included his homespun wisdom regarding the value of the old Sears, Roebuck & Co. catalog and visits by attorneys, accountants and former students who became entrepreneurs. He described his grading as follows, "If you get an 'A,' I would hire you for my company; if you get a 'B,' I would recommend you to a noncompeting company, and if you get a 'C' or a 'D,' I would strongly recommend you to my competitors."

When I was accepted in the master's program at CIT, Professor Baumann offered me a fellowship to enroll in his two-year work-study program centered around the Dual Mode transportation project. The invaluable lessons about the business world, including dealing with the media and late-night, pizza-fueled grant proposal writing sessions, continued. The

lessons also included an admonition to critically analyze reports in the media as well as humorous suggestions (accompanied by the classic twinkle in his eye) such as having librarians operate out of confessional booths. Who else would take his students to Washington, D.C., in a camper to meet the government sponsor of their research projects?

From Professor Baumann's viewpoint, the ultimate professional was the entrepreneur, and the entrepreneur's ultimate goal was to change the world for the better in spite of bureaucratic and institutional obstacles. Professor Baumann was colorful and his education process often was unconventional. His spirit as a beneficent rebel, which exemplified his projects and his teachings, was one of many intangibles available to his students. He encouraged his students to be leaders.

In the past 25 years, my travels to Pittsburgh included several visits with Professor Baumann and his extraordinary wife, Mayvis. Like Professor Baumann's classes, these visits were always memorable. One included Professor Baumann's highest honor, speaking to his senior class about

my experiences as an entrepreneur in the same Scaife Hall auditorium where I gave my senior project presentation nearly 30 years earlier. Other visits included dessert at Gullifty's and coffee at the Skibo Coffeehouse to seek his mentorship and hear his latest ideas ranging from speech technology in taxicabs to alternative jet fuel depots on farms. Sharing many of these experiences with my wife increased their significance and deepened her understanding of my "driving forces."

Each day presents at least one opportunity to tap into a "Baumannism" to resolve a business issue with my healthcare venture, Adherence Technologies. As often as possible, I try to pass on some of his wisdom to my management team and student interns and hope they take these "DMB lessons" to heart. I am confident that many of his former students, or should I say disciples, do likewise—thus eternalizing Professor Baumann's teachings, creativity and entrepreneurial spirit.

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