

Proposition: 37-16/17 - A Memorial in Honor of Joe Benson

Date Submitted: 3.28.17

Sponsor(s): Erickson (DoB) and Brown (A&S)

Proposed Committee: We request that this be heard as Emergency Legislation.

Proposition:

Dr. Joseph Benson, Ph.D., who served two terms as chair of the NMSU Faculty Senate, passed away Friday, January 15th, surrounded by family. He was survived by his loving wife of 62 years, Shirley Ann Johnson Benson, three children, four grandchildren, and nieces and nephews. He was predeceased by his oldest daughter, Cynthia Lynn Benson (1973). He was 85.

Joe was born on September 4, 1931 in Tulsa, Oklahoma. He graduated from Will Rogers High School in Tulsa, class of 1949. Joe began his military career in the Naval Reserves, followed by ROTC at Oklahoma A & M, graduating in 1954 as a distinguished military graduate. He then served 24 years in the U.S. Regular Army with tours in Germany, Korea, Vietnam, as well as numerous stateside assignments, retiring in 1977 as a Lt. Colonel. During his career he received numerous awards to include the Legion of Merit Award, two bronze stars and two purple hearts.

Joe began a second career in education, completing his PhD in 1981 at his Alma Mater, now Oklahoma State University. After graduating, Joe and his wife Shirley moved to Las Cruces, where he began his 21-year career at New Mexico State University.

Joe transformed from the stern and intimidating "Colonel" to a likable and approachable "Professor." NMSU brought out the best in Joe. He sported pastel shirts, and fun ties, grew a beard, and even graced the cover of the Business School brochure.

Academically Joe also wore many hats, serving as Director of the MBA Program, Board of Regents (ex-officio), and professor in the College of Business Administration & Economics. Joe was the recipient of numerous service excellence awards, to include being a recipient of the Roush Award for teaching excellence in 1989. He was also a Fulbright scholar.

By this memorial, the NMSU Faculty Senate honors and applauds Joe's many contributions to NMSU the College of Business, and also extends our deepest condolences and sympathies to Joe's loving family.