

Macalester Mourns the Death of Former President John B. Davis, Jr.

Dr. John B. Davis, Jr., who served as Macalester's 13th president from 1975-1984 and led the college out of debt and into financial stability, died July 5. He was 89.

"John B. Davis is among a small handful of individuals who have made the greatest difference in the life of Macalester College," said Macalester President Brian Rosenberg. "He will be sorely missed but never forgotten."

Born in Haverhill, Mass., Davis received his undergraduate degree in history from the University of New Hampshire and went on to receive both his masters and doctorate from Harvard University's Graduate School of Education.

He came to Minnesota from Massachusetts in 1967 to be superintendent of Minneapolis schools and received praise for his leadership in desegregation, community education and alternative programming.

He served as president of the Minnesota Private College Council from 1979 to 1981 and was acting president of Minnesota State University, Mankato in 1992. He was also chairman of the board for the Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis and served on several other boards, including Cowles Media Co., Walker Art Center and Northwestern National Life Company.

Macalester was \$2 million in debt when Davis took office in 1975. By the time he left, Macalester had regained its financial health, improved its ability to recruit excellent faculty and students and increased the number of academic majors, strengthening its academic standards and reputation in the community.

He once told student protesters occupying his outer office, "The U.S. Constitution protects the rights of its people to assemble. I applaud your exercise of that right....Please have a good day."

Davis is remembered for his spirit of inclusion and optimism, insightfulness and compassion. He left an enduring legacy on this campus and will be greatly missed.

More information will be forthcoming about a Macalester tribute to Dr. Davis. His obituary can be found in the *Star Tribune* (<http://www.startribune.com/local/minneapolis/125041334.html?page=1&c=y>) or *Pioneer Press* (http://www.twincities.com/ci_18415495?IADID=Search-www.twincities.com-www.twincities.com). A memorial service is scheduled for Saturday, July 9, at 11 a.m. at House of Hope Presbyterian Church, 797 Summit Av., St. Paul, followed by a reception.

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John B. Davis, Jr.

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