

# FOUNDATION

## 2002 OZARKS AMBASSADOR AWARD

# Arkansas Chancellor John A. White To Be Honored



*Dr. John A. White*

If you ask Dr. John A. White about his job as Chancellor of the University of Arkansas, Fayetteville, don't be surprised if he quotes Woody Allen.

"Woody Allen says 85 percent of life is showing up," White says. "To me, 85 percent of being chancellor is showing up and supporting our students."

When White talks about showing up, he's serious. Whether it's a women's volleyball game, a violin recital, a tennis match, or a drama production, if Arkansas students are involved, he's likely to be there.

"I want the kids to know I care," he explains. "After all, when I represent the University of Arkansas, I want people to show up."

Since taking over the reins of Arkansas' flagship campus, White has done much more than just show up. He has stepped up the university's efforts to raise academic standards, recruit the best and brightest students, improve retention, and increase private giving.

Under White's leadership, Arkansas announced this fall its Campaign for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, with a target of \$500 million to endow faculty positions, offer new scholarships, and enhance research

initiatives, among many other goals. And he has been tireless in communicating his vision of moving the University of Arkansas into the ranks of America's most respected research institutions.

In recognition of his success at the U of A and his distinguished career as a national leader in higher education, on Saturday, May 4<sup>th</sup> the North Arkansas College Foundation will honor White during its annual Evening on the Plaza Dinner as the 2002 recipient of the Ozarks Ambassador Award.

### *Harrison Is Home*

John Austin White, Jr., lived all over the state while growing up, but says he thinks of Harrison as home. "It's a beautiful area and the people were just wonderful," he explains. "I have nothing but positive memories of Harrison."

His family moved to Boone County from Crossett in the summer of 1953, just in time for John to start his freshman year of high school.

"My mom was a third grade teacher and dad was principal of Harrison High School," White says of Austin and Ella Mae White. "I was absolutely blessed to have the parents I have. If you lined

up all the parents in the world, I wouldn't have traded with anyone."

In fact, John says the fact that his parents are still living was probably the determining factor in his coming home to take the job at Arkansas. "Chancellor of the University of Arkansas is one thing," he says, "but Chancellor of the University of Arkansas, with my parents here to see it, made the difference."

As a young man, White says he was "short and chunky." Probably the low point in his short-lived athletic career was being "run over by Barry Switzer playing junior high football in Crossett." The high point was making five free throws at the end of "B" game in basketball to help Harrison beat Mountain Home.

White had an eclectic group of friends as a boy in Harrison. "I was probably the only person who ever refused to join the Prince Albert Club," he says,

(continued on page 2)

# John White to be Honored

“because I knew that a number of people I was friends with would never be able to join. I befriended a lot of people that not many other students paid attention to.”

When John was voted the most studious boy in the sophomore class, “Boy, that was an honor I didn’t want,” he admits. “I started working on my personality.”

One year later, White was selected most studious boy in the junior class. “I thought to myself, ‘This just isn’t working,’” he remembers with a shake of his head and a smile.

As a senior, however, John was voted most popular, best personality, best all-around, most likely to succeed, and most studious by his classmates. “They told me I could only have three awards,” he says, “so I gave up most likely to succeed, which I figured would take care of itself, and finally got rid of most studious.”

## *Serendipitous Career Choice*

An excellent student, White’s method of career selection was admittedly serendipitous.

“I was in Haskell Jones’ chemistry lab during my junior year and he assigned seats in alphabetical order,” White remembers. “So I sat next to W.J. Wheeler, who was a year older, in the back left corner of the room.”

One day Jones asked students in the class about their career plans. “I leaned over to Dub and said, ‘What are you going to study in college?’” White says. “He told me, ‘chemical engineering,’ so that’s what I said, too.”

That night John White went home and informed his parents that he was going to study chemical engineering. “They said, ‘What’s that?’” he recalls, “and I told them, ‘I’ll find out tomorrow.’”

White may not have clearly mapped out his future, but he was a hard worker as a young man, learning habits that would continue in his professional life. “I

started out working at the Dairy Queen,” he recalls, “and the summer before I left for college, I worked for Brown’s Dairy. I’d get up at 4 a.m. and deliver milk, then I hauled hay in the afternoons.”

Along the way, John learned some early marketing tricks. During a stint at the Dairy Hi-Top, he would bring milk shakes to Wheeler, who was a disc jockey for the radio station. “I would make Dub a milk shake that was so thick that you could turn it over and nothing would fall out,” White reports, “and he would talk about it on his show, giving us some free advertising.”

When Wheeler went to study chemical engineering at what is now the University of Missouri-Rolla, White followed a year later. But he didn’t stay long.

“They had about 2,500 boys and 25 girls,” White jokes. He decided to transfer to the University of Arkansas after an eye-opening visit to the Fayetteville campus during spring break.

## *An Arkansas Grad*

Although he points out that he was “a very good student in high school and an extraordinary student in graduate school,” White admits that he was “not a good student in undergraduate school at the University of Arkansas.”

In fact, he changed his major from chemical engineering to industrial engineering because “industrial engineering was the only engineering major that didn’t have a Friday afternoon lab,” he confesses. “Surely, there is such a thing as divine intervention, because I can’t imagine a more circuitous route of making a square peg fit perfectly in a square hole.”

A member of the Sigma Nu fraternity, John was one of two John A. Whites in his frat house. By that time, his parents had moved to Conway, so he was known as Conway John White and the other boy was Monett John White.

“Years later, when it was announced that John A. White was the new chancellor,” John reports with a laugh, “everyone thought, ‘It couldn’t be Conway John White; it must be Monett John White.’”

With better results than his self-deprecating humor allows him to acknowledge, White graduated from UA in 1961 with a bachelor’s degree in industrial engineering.

The Vietnam War was heating up and he attempted to join the Army reserves or ROTC, but was turned down by both due to a shoulder injury suffered when Arkansas quarterback Billy Moore pushed him into a Sigma Nu tug-of-war pit. “I have a chronically dislocating shoulder to this day,” White says. “It was bad enough to keep me from being accepted into ROTC or the reserves, but not to keep me from being drafted.”

## *Meeting Mary Lib*

Tennessee Eastman Company wanted to hire White and offered him a job that made him exempt from the draft due to the nature of the work. Later that fall, John met his future bride, Mary Elizabeth Quarles, at a lake party near Kingsport, Tenn.

“She had a date with some guy and I had a date with another girl,” White remembers. “That evening I called my mom and told her that I thought I’d met the girl I wanted to marry.”

There was only one problem: Mary Lib wouldn’t go out with John.

“I had dated her roommate,” White explains, “and in those days you didn’t go out with someone who had dated your roommate.”

White’s chance for a date with his future wife came after he arranged for her to go out with one of his visiting Sigma Nu fraternity brothers.

“I set him up with two dates, and he liked the girl he went out with Friday night so much that he wanted to take

her out Saturday night, too," White recalls. "I called Mary Lib, whose roommate was out of town, and asked her to go to the movie with me instead."

Less than six months later, April 13, 1963, they were married. Their daughter, Kim, was born on May 19, 1964. John A. White III was born Dec. 2, 1968. Today, they also have three granddaughters and a grandson.

### *A Lesson Remembered*

White earned a master's degree in industrial engineering at Virginia Tech in 1966 and a Ph.D. from The Ohio State University in 1969. While at Ohio State, he says, he realized he had inherited his parents' love for teaching. In fact, he still teaches at least one engineering class each year at Arkansas.

After completing his degree at Ohio State, White accepted a faculty appointment at Virginia Tech. Within a year, he had received a promotion and tenure. In 1975 he moved to Georgia Tech, where he would serve in various capacities until 1997, when the University of Arkansas came calling.

During his stay at Georgia Tech, he was offered the opportunity in 1991 to be dean of its college of engineering, one of the top engineering jobs in higher education. But White hesitated, remembering an early example of his father's love for him.

Austin White stopped being high school principal and took a job with the Department of Vocational Rehabilitation as a counselor during John's junior and senior years at Harrison High School.

"He was very conscious of the pressure it might put on me for him to be my principal," White recalls. "After I graduated, he went back to being the principal."

Almost forty years later, John White offered to make the same kind of sacrifice for his own son, John A. White III, at Georgia Tech. White, who was on loan

to the federal government at the time, asked his son, who had just transferred to Tech, about taking the job.

"He said, 'I think it would be great,'" White remembers. "Why do you ask?"

White told his son about the sacrifice his father had made for him and said, "That's the only way I know to repay PaPa."

Fortunately for Georgia Tech, John III convinced his dad to take the job as dean—with one caveat: "I won't have to take any classes from you, will I?"

As it turned out, John III was in the first class his dad taught as dean, but few other students knew. "I had co-authored the textbook we used," Chancellor White recalls, "and a boy sitting next to John said, 'Look, you have the same name as the guy who wrote the book.' John replied, 'Yeah, how about that!'"

### *A Remarkable Career*

By anyone's standards, John White has enjoyed extraordinary success as an educator, in the private sector, and in government service (see **John White's Remarkable Career**). During his six years as dean at Georgia Tech, its engineering program rose from 11<sup>th</sup> to fifth in the nation and doubled its research funding and doctoral degrees awarded.

Although it was a battle at first, the results of White's nearly five years at UA have been even more impressive.

"I'm so fortunate to be here during this time," he says, pointing proudly to the exceptional achievements of U of A students and faculty. "It has just been phenomenal!"

And it's the last job John White says he will hold. "I've been contacted by other universities over the past two or

(continued on page 6)



**CHANCELLOR JOHN WHITE** is shown with some of the Northark students who received the first John A. White Scholarships in 2000. The scholarship program is funded each year by proceeds from the North Arkansas College Foundation 3-Person Scramble Golf Tournament.



Donor Clubs To Change For 2002-2003

## Legacy Society Created In Memory of Lena Allbright Moore

*Lena Allbright Moore*

At their March meeting, members of the North Arkansas College Foundation Board of Directors voted to create a legacy society named in memory of Lena Allbright Moore. Changes were also approved in donor club levels recognized by the Foundation.

The Lena Allbright Moore Legacy Society, named for the late Lena A. Moore whose gifts established Northark's Allbright-Moore Scholar Awards and helped pay for the college's Library and Classroom Addition that was completed in 1992, will honor living benefactors who have included the Foundation in their estate planning.

"Our purpose is to recognize supporters who have included our Foundation in their trusts, wills, and other estate plans," said Dr. Jim Stockton, Northark's vice president for

institutional advancement and executive director of the North Arkansas College Foundation. "Starting with L.E. 'Gene' Durand's announcement a few years ago that our Foundation was included in his trust, an increasing number of friends of North Arkansas College have made similar decisions. This is a way for us to recognize them and keep them informed about

Northark."

Stockton pointed to the trust distribution left to the Foundation by the late Woodrow Magness as another very generous planned gift. The recent announcement by Ed Warabow that his estate would go to the Foundation is the most recent example of this type of life-changing benevolence.

Members of the Lena Allbright Moore Legacy Society will be invited to an annual information-sharing luncheon with North Arkansas College President Dr. Jeff Olson and will receive other special mailings, according to Stockton. "We want to recognize anyone who has included the Foundation in estate planning," Stockton said, "but we'll have to rely on donors to inform us of their plans."

The Northark Pioneer distinction, which previously honored donors who have included the North Arkansas

College Foundation in their estate planning, will now be reserved for benefactors with total gifts of \$100,000 or more to the Foundation. "This change allows us to honor our largest contributors," Stockton commented. "When donors reach this level, they will be Northark Pioneers as long as our Foundation exists."

New donor club levels for the Foundation's Annual Fund Drive have also been formed. Starting with the 2002-2003 Annual Fund Drive (which includes gifts received between July 1, 2002 and June 30, 2003), the Governor's Club will honor donors making gifts of \$10,000 and above, the President's Club will recognize gifts of \$5,000 to \$9,999, the Colonist Club will include \$1,000 to \$4,999 contributors, the Trailblazer Club will be comprised of \$500 to \$999 donors, and the Explorer Club will be made up of donors giving \$250 to \$499. Two new donor clubs will be added. Donors making total gifts of \$100 to \$250 will be members of the Settler Club and the Pathfinder Club will include donors of \$10 to \$99.

"As our Foundation has grown and matured, the level of giving has increased," Stockton pointed out. "These changes enable the Foundation to recognize new levels of giving without excluding gifts that have previously been included in our donor clubs."

# John White's Remarkable Career

**A** native Arkansan, Dr. White is in his fifth year as Chancellor of the University of Arkansas. His background includes extensive experience in academe, business, and government. Prior to his current position, he served as Dean of Engineering at Georgia Tech and was a member of the Georgia Tech faculty for twenty-two years. From 1988 to 1991, he served as Assistant Director for Engineering at the National Science Foundation in Washington, D.C.

White received his BSIE degree from the University of Arkansas. His graduate work was performed at Virginia Tech (MSIE) and The Ohio State University (PhD). He also has received honorary doctorates from the Katholieke Universiteit of Leuven in Belgium and George Washington University.

Currently serving a second six-year term on the National Science Board, White is a member of the National Academy of Engineering; past-president of the Institute of Industrial Engineers (IIE); past-chairman of the American Association of Engineering Societies (AAES); past-president of the National Consortium for Graduate Degrees for Minorities in Engineering and Science, Inc. (GEM); member of several professional societies—ASEE, IIE, MHMS, NSPE, INFORMS, and WERC; and member of the following honor societies—Alpha Pi Mu, Golden Key, Omega Rho, Omicron Delta Kappa, Phi Kappa Phi, Sigma Xi, and Tau Beta Pi.

Among White's many awards are: NSF's Distinguished Service Award; ASEE's Donald E. Marlowe Distinguished Education Administration Award; the Rodney D. Chipp Memorial Award from the Society of Women Engineers; AAES's

Kenneth Andrew Roe Award; IIE's highest award, the Frank and Lillian Gilbreth Industrial Engineering Award; IIE's David F. Baker Distinguished Research Award; IIE's Albert G. Holzman Distinguished Educator Award; IIE's Outstanding Publication Award; IIE's Book of the Year Award (twice); and the Material Handling Education Foundation's Reed-Apple Award. He has been named the Society of Manufacturing Engineers' Educator of the Year, the International Material Management Society's Material Manager of the Year, and Georgia Tech's Teacher of the Year.

His industrial and consulting experience includes employment as an engineer with Eastman Chemical Company, Ethyl Corporation, and Rockwell, Inc. He

has served as a consultant to such organizations as AT&T, Briggs & Stratton, Burlington, Coca-Cola, Corning, Digital Equipment, duPont, Federal Reserve Bank, Ford, IBM, L. L. Bean, Tektronix, Texas Instruments, U.S. Navy, Westinghouse, and Xerox. He founded a logistics consulting firm, SysteCon, Inc., and served as its chairman until its merger with Coopers & Lybrand. White currently serves as a member of the Board of Directors for Eastman Chemical Company, J. B. Hunt Transport Systems, Inc., Logility, Inc., Motorola, Inc., and Russell Corporation.

He is married to Mary Elizabeth Quarles White; they have a daughter, a son, three granddaughters, and a grandson.

## OZARKS AMBASSADOR AWARD

The Ozarks Ambassador Award will be presented to John A. White during the Foundation's annual Evening on the Plaza Dinner Saturday, May 4. The dinner will be held in the conference center of the John Paul Hammerschmidt Business and Conference Center on Northark's South Campus at 6:30 p.m. It will be preceded by a reception on the JPH Plaza at the college from 6 to 6:30 p.m.

Established in 1990, the Ozarks Ambassador Award is presented to someone from northern Arkansas who has represented the area with distinction nationwide in one or more of the following fields: agriculture, finance, medicine, education, politics, law, business, social services, the ministry, or industry. Robert M. Eagle of Dallas, TX., was the 1990 recipient; James H. Jones of San Francisco, CA, was honored in 1991; David R. Banks, now of Fort Smith, received the award in 1992; William P. Stiritz of St. Louis, MO, was the 1993 honoree; James F. Keenan of Palm Beach, FL, received the honor in 1994; Dr. Ronald C. Jones of Dallas, TX, was the 1995 recipient; Tom and Don Salmon of North Little Rock were honored in 1996; John Paul Hammerschmidt of Harrison was recognized in 1997; C.D. Wright of Barriington, RI, was the 1998 honoree; Sheridan Garrison of Harrison was presented with the award in 1999; and David Perry of Mountain View, Calif., was the 2000 recipient. The award was not presented in 2001. Instead, the Foundation honored retiring North Arkansas College President Dr. Bill Baker at the BBB Bar-B-Que and Blow-Out.

# White to Receive Ozarks Ambassador Award May 4

three years," he admits, "but I tell them that if their board of trustees had already voted unanimously to hire me and they offered me a blank check, I would still say no.

"At this stage of my life," he continues, "my decisions aren't about money; they're about finishing the job that I came here to do."

## *The Northark Connection*

One of White's goals is to position the University of Arkansas to have 22,500 students by the year 2010. To achieve that goal, he says, Arkansas needs even more quality transfer students from two-year colleges like North Arkansas College.

"It's obvious that we have to do much more with Northark," says White, who was honored three years ago when his hometown's college named a transfer scholarship program after him. "It's the

nicest thing anyone has ever done for me," he says of the scholarship program. "It has touched me even more than I thought it would."

Proceeds from the North Arkansas College Foundation 3-Person Scramble Golf Tournament go to the John A. White Scholarship Fund, which assists Northark students who transfer to the University of Arkansas, Fayetteville. White plays in the tourney each fall, bringing two or three teams from Fayetteville. He and Mary Lib are also donors to the scholarship fund.

At last September's golf tourney, White won a color television in the putting contest. "No one could believe it," he says. "I was almost speechless. It was the only putt I made all day. All of my friends at the University thought it was rigged."

Golf is one thing White plans to spend more time doing when he decides to retire from his job at the U of A. "I'm going to play golf and spend time with my grandchildren," he promises.

In the meantime, as students across the Fayetteville campus will attest, he's looking after them. Whether he is lecturing the prospective boyfriend of one of the Lady 'Back volleyball players, sitting in the dugout chewing sunflower seeds with Razorback baseball players, or getting warnings from the officials for cheering too loudly at tennis matches, White says students "stand up a little taller and step a little quicker" knowing their chancellor is there to cheer them on.

Like thousands of other Arkansans, they're glad that Harrison John White showed up.

**PLEASE REMEMBER THE NORTH ARKANSAS COLLEGE FOUNDATION IN YOUR WILL. YOUR GIFTS AFFECT THE LIVES OF OUR STUDENTS.**

The Internal Revenue Service has classified the North Arkansas College Foundation, Inc., as tax exempt under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Service Code.

# FOUNDATION

 North Arkansas College Foundation, Inc.

1515 Pioneer Drive • Harrison, Arkansas 72601  
Phone: (870) 391-3229 • Fax: (870) 391-3250

NonProfit  
Organization  
U.S. Postage  
**PAID**  
Harrison, AR  
Permit No. 99

**NORTHARK**  
Board of Trustees

Joe Bennett, M.D. Melanie Savells	Robert Bodson, Ed.D. Jim Sprott	Norma Ellis Scott Tennyson	Louis Melton Hank Thompson	Laretta Moore
--------------------------------------	------------------------------------	-------------------------------	-------------------------------	---------------

**NORTHARK FOUNDATION**  
Board of Directors

Dan Bowers Robert Langston, M.D.	Cathy Brandt Marcille Lawrence	J. D. Erwin Marcie Magness	Jim Gresham Kay Maris	Richard Hudson Jim Sprott	Clyde Johnson Steve Stafford
-------------------------------------	-----------------------------------	-------------------------------	--------------------------	------------------------------	---------------------------------