

*Memorial Service for Wesley C. Becker held at the Eugene Unitarian Church, 40th and Donald, Thursday, November 2, 2000*



Dr. Wes Becker died of circulation problems on Sunday, October 29th, in California, where he was undergoing medical observations. Wes was 73 years old. A resident of Eugene from 1970 through 1993, Wes was profes-

sor of School Psychology, Educational Psychology, and Special Education at the U of O. From 1978–1989, he was also Associate Dean in the Division of Counseling and Educational Psychology. Wes served on the Board of Directors for Oregon Research Institute during the years 1972–1986.

Wes was a prolific writer, best known for his four textbooks on Educational Psychology, and the milestone book for parents—*Parents are Teachers*. He wrote more than 100 professional articles, and was a co-author of what is cur-

rently the preferred series for teaching problem readers in grades 4 through 12 (SRA's Corrective Reading series).

Wes co-founded Engelmann-Becker Corporation, which is located at 8th and Lincoln, and was co-director of the University of Oregon's Follow Through intervention model, sponsored by the U.S. Office of Education as Project Follow Through, an intervention program for at-risk students in K through 3. The University of Oregon model had the highest student achievements of all models in reading, math, language, spelling, and science. The model also resulted in students with the most positive self images about themselves.

Wes Becker was born in 1928 in Rochester, New York. After serving in the armed forces, he attended Stanford University, where he received a BA in 1951. In 1955, he graduated from Stanford with a Ph.D. in Clinical Psychology and Statistics. Wes became a professor of Clinical Psychology at the University of Illinois in 1964. In 1968, he became director of the Bereiter-Engelmann program, which was an early intervention program for at-risk preschoolers. In 1969, Wes became director of the Engelmann-Becker Follow Through model, at the University of Illinois. The program was implemented in 20 communities and served more than 10,000 students. The Follow Through grant and most of the staff moved from Champaign-Urbana, Illinois to the University of Oregon in 1970. In 1980, Wes became the senior founder of the Association for Direct Instruction, which provides training and assistance for schools in implementing effective programs and behav-

ioral practices. Wes was editor of the ADI news until 1993. The ADI conference held annually in Eugene is the second-largest annual conference the city hosts. In July, 2000, more than 840 persons attended the conference.

After retiring in 1993, Wes went to Sun City, Arizona where he could be close to family members. He moved to Sedona, Arizona in 1999. Wes leaves behind seven children.

Wes was more than a scholar. He was a pioneer in the use of behavioral principles in the classroom. His battle cry was, "Catch kids in the act of being good." Those who worked with him were routinely amazed not only by his skill, but the speed with which he could do things. Everyone who worked with him learned a great deal. Perhaps his most impressive quality, however, was the strength of his

will. In the face of terrible setbacks and impossible deadlines, Wes prevailed. If he promised to get something by a particular time, it was not only done on schedule, but done very well. We will miss him greatly.

### *Award Fund Established*

The Association for Direct Instruction has established an award fund in the memory of Wesley C. Becker. Wes died in October of 2000. He was an early developer of Direct Instruction as well as the founder of the Association for Direct Instruction.

This award fund will be administered as an endowment fund with the increase in value being given in the form of two \$1,000 awards. One award will be given for outstanding published research related to DI and the other for best success story related to DI. These awards will be given starting June of 2002.

At this time donations have totaled \$11,000 and a promise by the Engelmann Foundation to fund \$1,000 per year. Friends, associates and any others that would like to contribute to the fund in memory of Wes should send their donations to:

Association for Direct Instruction  
Wesley Becker Memorial Fund  
PO Box 10252  
Eugene, OR 97440

ADI is a tax-exempt 501(c)3 organization and all donations are tax deductible to the full extent of the law.