

Approved by the Board of Trustees,
March 10, 2005

Board Meeting
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MEMORIAL RESOLUTION FOR EARL LANGDON NEAL

The Board of Trustees records with sorrow the death of Earl Langdon Neal on ~~January~~ February 13, 2005. A former member of this board, Mr. Neal was the first African American to serve as president of the board.

He was elected a trustee in 1970, during a period of student protest on campuses all over this nation, and took his seat as a board member in January 1971. Mr. Neal's calm and friendly demeanor fostered open communication and was an asset to the board and to the administration as both struggled to understand the unrest of so many.

He served as president of the board from 1975 to 1977, during the advent of affirmative action programs in universities. As one of his first acts as the board's leader, he called a special board meeting to afford the trustees an opportunity to learn what was expected of universities, to hear of efforts underway at the University of Illinois' campuses, and to articulate the University of Illinois' goals. He often lent his expertise and time to help in recruitment of minority students, faculty, and administrators. Through his intelligent and patient explanation of the importance to society of greater representation of all groups, Mr. Neal led the board to support approaches to bring greater participation of many groups that hitherto had been left out of opportunities offered by the University of Illinois.

As an undergraduate student at the Urbana campus, class of 1952, he knew first hand that as an African American his participation was circumscribed, and he worked tirelessly to end practices that limited other students' involvement in campus life and in academic programs.

Earl Neal's association with the University was long and active. In addition to serving on the Board of Trustees from 1971 to 1983, he served as chairperson of the Community Advisory Council of the Urban Health Program Advisory Committee at the Chicago campus from its inception in 1978 to 2000, and as a member of the Board of Directors of the University of Illinois Foundation. Mr. Neal's dedication to education was also reflected in his service as a board member of the Chicago Academy of Sciences, and as past chairman of the Teacher's Academy for Mathematics and Science.

Mr. Neal was honored many times by the University of Illinois. At commencement ceremonies at the Chicago campus in 1988 he received the University of Illinois Alumni Association's Distinguished Service Award. The Chicago campus also honored him with its Great Cities Corporate Leadership Award in 1999.

The University of Illinois Board of Trustees, the administrative officers, the faculty, and students pay tribute to Earl Langdon Neal for years of devoted nurture of our University. His contributions are part of the fiber of the institution's strength today.

The board directs that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for Isobel Neal and son, Langdon Neal.