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Progress Newsletter

In Memoriam: Dr. Paul Bush

Paul L. Busch, Ph.D., P.E., DEE, Chairman Emeritus of WERF, and president and CEO of international environmental consultants Malcolm Pirnie, Inc., recognized worldwide in environmental engineering, died on July 27, 1999, in Boston of complications from non-Hodgkins lymphoma. He was 61. WERF has lost a valuable professional and personal friend.



As chairman of the WERF board of directors, 1994-95, Dr. Busch nurtured the Foundation's vision and sought ways to advance water and wastewater treatment research. After his service as chair, Dr. Busch continued his relationship with WERF. Most significantly, he helped establish a perpetual WERF endowment fund for research in 1998 by encouraging an inaugural contribution by the Dibner Fund, an organization that supports scientific research. When establishing the endowment, Dr. Busch stated, "WERF's goal of developing the scientific understanding and the technology which will improve the environment in a sustainable manner is a goal which everyone in our profession can share," (*Progress*, spring 1998). Contributions to the WERF endowment will now serve to honor Dr. Busch's memory and commitment to advancing research.

Dr. Busch was also past president of the American Academy of Engineers, served on the National Research Council's Water Science and Technology Board, and was a member of U.S. EPA's National Advisory Council for Environmental Policy and Technology. A leading authority on management and treatment of industrial and toxic wastes and consultant to governments around the world, Dr. Busch was personally involved in developing environmental cleanup solutions and providing clean drinking water and wastewater treatment for some of the nation's major cities and locations overseas — San Francisco, Boston, New York City, Detroit, Cleveland, Cincinnati, the Kingdom of Jordan, and Egypt.

Dr. Busch spent his entire 38-year consulting engineering career at Malcolm Pirnie, after earning undergraduate and master's degrees from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and a doctorate from Harvard University. He helped guide the firm to be one of the world's largest environmental consulting firms with a staff of more than 1,100, headquartered in White Plains, N.Y., with 40 offices worldwide. He was named a vice president in 1970, elected president in 1988 and CEO in 1990. Dr. Busch was involved in research and design projects in municipal and industrial wastewater treatment processes, drinking water and toxic waste technologies. His extensive work helped establish Pirnie's leadership in these fields.

A lifelong visionary and dreamer who viewed the future with excitement and endless curiosity, Dr. Busch stressed a holistic, sustainable view of the planet, and challenged engineers to seek “quantum jumps” to meet future environmental needs. Passionate about the education of tomorrow’s engineers, he served as visiting professor, advisor and mentor at over two dozen universities. To increase the participation of African Americans in the environmental profession, he was instrumental in creating the Malcolm Pirnie/United Negro College Fund Scholars Program, now in its third year.

Dr. Busch resided in Wilton, Conn., and is survived by his wife, Iris, his three children and their families and his sister. The family asks that any contributions be sent in Dr. Busch's name to the Nature Conservancy, Conn. Chapter, at 55 High St., Middleton, CT 06457; or the AmeriCares Free Clinic, 161 Cherry Street, New Canaan, CT 06840.

Contact WERF for more information about contributing to the WERF endowment.

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