

9/19/07

Dear friends, former students, postdocs, and colleagues of Mike White,

This is a joint letter from Bill Rogers and Charlie Campbell.

As we expect you already know, on Aug. 31 we received the devastating news that our mutual friend, great mentor and colleague, Mike White, had suddenly passed away from an unexpected heart problem while mowing the grass at his son's home. We were both shocked, since one of us (Charlie) had spent several days just three weeks earlier working with him on a DOE report in Bethesda, and the other (Bill) had had Mike to his home in Idaho even more recently. We both had been pleased at that time to note how physically fit he looked. Of course, his mind was as brilliant as ever, and his great and sincere humanity was just as awe-inspiring as always. We are at a loss for words to express our pain at the passing of this wonderful man. We shall have no more chances to tell him how much we appreciate all he did for us on both human and professional levels.

The two of us had already started discussions a year ago with officials at the University of Texas to create an endowment in Mike's name, the announcement of which we had hoped to time to his retirement. After talking with family and others close to Mike in the days following his untimely death, we have found comfort in working to establish an endowment with a purpose that he would clearly have supported: an endowed graduate fellowship. This endowment will be used to directly support future generations of graduate students in his name, a fitting legacy considering the generations he supported and mentored during his lifetime.

We are joined with Alan Campion in a sincere commitment to honor Mike with this very meaningful tribute, and after talking with other friends and colleagues we know that we are not alone. With many of us coming together, we will create the *J. M. White Graduate Fellowship in Chemistry* that will forever be a testament to how he was a part of our lives while also providing support for future students in the Department in perpetuity.

To join us in creating this graduate fellowship in Mike's memory, checks and pledges can be sent directly to the University at the address below. Checks should be made out to UT Austin, with an important note in the memo field that the gift is "in memory of Mike White," and mailed to:

Attn: Tim Aronson  
College of Natural Sciences, Office of the Dean  
The University of Texas  
1 University Station G2500  
Austin, Texas 78712-0549

Gifts can also be made online at:

<https://utdirect.utexas.edu/nlogon/vip/ogp.WBX?menu=NSCM>.

Mike's family told us they were very pleased to hear we wished to create an endowment at UT in Mike's memory, and his son, Mark, has told us that he also wants to contribute to this UT endowment. In his obituary, his family requested that people make donations to The Austin Graduate School of Theology (1909 University Avenue, Austin, TX 78705). Mike was very dedicated to this school. He helped write the document and compile the data for its most recent

accreditation as a degree-granting institution and served as chair of the committee, which selected its current president (who spoke eloquently about Mike at his funeral). Our intent is very specifically not to deflect people from giving to that cause. We simply wish to also offer a second option to those of you, like us, who were more closely connected to another aspect of Mike's broad and intense service to humankind

Most importantly, we offer our deepest sympathies for our mutual loss. We also sincerely thank those many of you who already promised some donation to this, which helped motivate us to move forward on this. As Mike said so many times to us all, in his usual encouraging way: "Press on." At this stage, that is all we can do, though with very heavy hearts indeed.

Sincerely,

Charlie Campbell and Bill Rogers  
([campbell@chem.washington.edu](mailto:campbell@chem.washington.edu); [JW.Rogers@inl.gov](mailto:JW.Rogers@inl.gov))

P.S. Below are links to news stories about Mike's passing which may interest you. The first is the University's newsletter and the second is Austin's newspaper. The second link also provides access to an online Guest Book, if you'd like to write something for the family or upload photos that you had of Mike, which his family may not have.

UT Austin News: <http://www.cm.utexas.edu/news/view/191>

Austin Statesman:

<http://www.legacy.com/statesman/Obituaries.asp?Page=Lifestory&PersonId=93941339>