

Louis O. Brockmann
1905-1993
PROFESSOR OF EDUCATION, EMERITUS

B.A., M.A., PH.D. Education, Emphases in Guidance, Personnel, and
Administration, University of Wisconsin, August 1945
California State University, Fullerton From September 1, 1963 to June 30, 1972
Birth: May 3, 1905; Death: May 12, 1993

Louis O. Brockman was a Renaissance Man. His academic career embodied his deepest and richest sense of our humanity. He demonstrated consistently an inquiring mind, devotion to learning, intellectual integrity, and above all a dedication to serving humankind.

The symbol of the Renaissance Man embraces diversity and depth in interests, aptitudes, and skills that transcend the dilettante. In recounting the diversity in Lou's interests we recognize that his many achievements were witness to the high levels of his abilities and the depth of his devotion to the cause of service to his students, colleagues, and community.

This symbolism fits Lou Brockmann as a patron of the arts, fine and practical, the sciences, the humanities, and a writer and observer of the human scene. Furthermore Lou was dedicated to helping others achieve their human potential whatever their walk in life. He gave witness to goodness and kindness as he used his talents as a professor.

Lou's professional career began in 1930 as a teacher and director of the guidance program in the Fergus County High School in Lewistown, Montana after his graduation from the University of Wisconsin. In the mid '30s he created a work experience program in Lewistown that provided Great Depression-ridden students with jobs in stores, shops, offices and services at very nominal pay (25 cents per hour). In the late '60s he did a follow-up survey of these students. The rate of return was unusual and the results of his survey were most remarkable. The respondents to a person were profoundly grateful for the opportunity given them by this program and credited their success in life to Lou's knowledge, skill and management of their student work experience. Bernard Hyink called on Lou's expertise and experience in developing the Cooperative Education Program at CSUF.

Lou completed his doctoral studies at the University of Wisconsin in 1945. The title of his Ph.D. Dissertation was *The Inauguration and Development of Cooperative Work Experience Education*. Montana State College provided his first professorial experience in higher education. Upon his appointment as Chair of the Department of Education and Psychology he brought Kenneth Doane to his first position in higher education. Jim Cusick recalls living in the same neighborhood in his student days at MSC where Lou and Marion Brockmann were constructing a rammed earth house. They were able to find a special soil and began construction by tamping it by hand into the forms that made up the outside walls of the house. A passerby

rescued them from this manual work by supplying them with a railroad tie tamping machine. This house still stands in Bozeman, Montana.

As Director of the Summer Quarter at MSC Lou brought Richard Neutra, the world renowned architect to the campus for a series of lectures at the time they were building the rammed earth house. Neutra became interested in the house and made suggestions in its final design. The Brockmanns acquainted the Neutras with the grandeur of Yellowstone and Glacier National Parks. Some 25 years later he invited his friend, the famed architect, to make a presentation at CSUF. It was obvious to those attending this presentation that these two men were kindred spirits in their views in art and architecture.

In 1951 Lou was appointed President of Northern Montana College at Havre. Richard Neutra was the principal speaker at his inauguration. The new President's immediate impact on this northern Montana community was as a developer and builder with the ability to clearly define the mission of this college distinct from the other five units of the Greater University System in Montana. Perhaps following the lead of his early public schoolwork he made his mark on the college through the development of cohesive programs in the technologies.

On July 21, 1980, seventeen years after his departure, the Board of Regents of Higher Education in Montana authorized the naming of the Engineering Technology and Industrial Arts Building in his honor. The accompanying resolution of the Board ends with:

Always President Brockmann stressed the importance of the solid academic footing upon which the technical and vocational skills must be based. His foresight, his vision, and his emphasis on the whole person made him a pioneer in the new field of vocational-technical education in the early '50s. Whatever recognition Northern may have achieved in this state and nationally in this field is directly attributable to the early efforts of Louis O. Brockmann. In his honor it is requested that the building which now houses the Departments of Industrial Arts and Engineering Technology be named The Brockmann Center.

Northern Montana College is located in the vicinity of two large Indian reservations: the Blackfoot Reservation and the Rocky Boy Reservation for the Assiniboin. As President, Lou reached out to the tribes encouraging and supporting their involvement in the vocational and technical programs of the College. The Blackfeet made him an honorary member of the tribe giving him the name Stu-niks-o'sahk which translated means Two Suns.

While President at Northern, Lou developed a strong and lasting friendship with J. Hugo Aaronson, the governor of Montana known by the sobriquet of "The Galloping Swede." Lou and he spent many hours together between Lou's Glacier Park summer retreat and the Governor's Big Fork

home on Flathead Lake preparing for publication the story of the Swedish immigrant. Aaronson came to the Montana oil fields without speaking English. He traveled west from Minnesota by hopping freight trains. As governor of his adopted state he played host to the National Governor's Conference in Glacier Park in 1960. An unfulfilled dream of Lou's was to have the governor's story put on film as an example of the fulfillment of the American dream. There are others who are now willing to take up this cause and have his dream realized.

Lou's membership in the Kiwanis International covered over sixty years. His service included becoming lieutenant governor and governor of the Montana District. In 1982 the Carlsbad, California Club presented the Legion of Honor award to him in recognition of his fifty years of membership which included his perfect attendance. Kiwanis was central to his community involvements throughout his career. The people of Carlsbad who were his friends and neighbors expressed a genuine sense of loss and love for him at his memorial service.

In 1963 Lou came to Orange County State College for the challenge of helping to build a new and quality institution of higher education. He came particularly for the purpose of creating a program in school counselor education. His advice and counsel provided invaluable help to the then School of Education in the development of other programs for the preparation of professional educators needed in the service of the School to its constituent public school districts. During his tenure at CSUF he continued in his long time association with Phi Kappa Phi, the scholastic honorary society and Phi Delta Kappa, the honorary society in education and numerous other professional organizations representing the many honors given him. The CSUF chapter recognized his 50 years of membership in Phi Delta Kappa in 1992. Cal State Fullerton greatly profited by his service as did other institutions in his long career.

In paying tribute to Lou Brockmann we must recognize the vital part that his wife Marion played in his life as a helpmate and a source of inspiration to him for sixty-two years including working side by side with him ramming the earth in their house in Bozeman. Marion is an accomplished artist in her own right; a talented and creative weaver and also a teacher of weaving. Her art as a weaver has been widely acclaimed. After his retirement from Cal State they built a Buckminster Fuller geodesic dome house by the beach in Carlsbad to which she attached her studio and continued her work as a weaver and teacher of weaving.

Kindness and gentleness were embedded in Lou's character. Much of his character was built from his way of listening and learning from others. Yet he was capable in confrontation when principles were at stake. As a college president he stood up to the ravages of an arch conservative governor and saved his institution from decimating budget cuts. His forceful arguments for program integrity were always made without resorting to browbeating or the authority of his broad experience. He was an even tempered gentleman, a truly good and honorable man. His colleagues at

CSUF after nearly twenty-one years of his retirement remember him kindly
and well.

Submitted by
James W. Cusick
Professor of Education, Emeritus
July 15, 1993