

Max W. Burke
1909 - 1992
DIRECTOR OF PLACEMENT SERVICES AND
ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF EDUCATION, EMERITUS

B.A., University of Iowa, M.Div., Colgate-Rochester Divinity School, May 20,
1935
California State University, Fullerton From December 6, 1960 To May 11, 1971
Birth: January 10, 1909; Death: April 1, 1992

Max W. Burke, born in Blandinsville, Illinois, in 1909, joined the administrative faculty of Orange County State College in its earliest years. He was chosen to develop the placement function within Student Personnel Services, coming to Fullerton in 1960. His death in 1992 ended a long career of service to others, for a time with the National Conference of Christians and Jews, the American Friends Service Committee and the American Red Cross as well as several churches in the southern California area.

Mr. Burke was a history major at the University of Iowa, being graduated in 1932. He earned his Master of Divinity degree from Colgate-Rochester Divinity School in 1935. Following a pastorate in Nebraska, Mr. Burke became Director of the Grinnell College Institute of International Relations, serving at the same time as Regional Secretary for the American Friends Service Committee in student work camp recruitment. In the years 1945 and 1946, he was overseas with the American Red Cross, in Hawaii and Japan with the 98th Division of the United States Army. Beginning in 1946, Mr. Burke was Director for the Denver office of the National Conference of Christians and Jews, subsequently joining the faculty of the University of Denver where he was involved in student counseling, testing, housing and military credit evaluations. For 10 years, he served Congregational churches in Los Angeles, Pasadena and Pomona before coming to Fullerton in 1960.

Tributes to Mr. Burke's character and leadership have come from members of the Placement Office staff. "He was a very nurturing director," said one, "who took an interest in all his staff and was an excellent role model. I can remember the twinkle in his eyes which remained in spite of adversity. He would come out of his office in the late afternoon and give us an impromptu quiz on current events." This points up his lasting interest in world affairs. One long-time secretary has termed him "a great boss and a very sweet, sensitive and caring man." He would call her into his office, she recounted, to inquire about her family all of whom he knew by name.

Dr. Roger Nudd knew Mr. Burke well. He has written about him with insight. "Some people are called 'craftsmen' in the sense that they are skilled in executing a piece of work but lack the artistic ability to create it," states Dr. Nudd. "Both in his professional work and in his leisure time activities helping friends remodel houses and as a creator of wondrous glass mosaics, he was blessed with the ability both to create and to construct." "All who

knew him," Dr. Nudd continues, "marveled at his upbeat attitude, unfailing good humor and remarkable physical stamina in the face of years of poor health and greatly diminished eyesight. He was, for all of his friends and acquaintances, a model worker and a model person."

Mr. Burke retired in 1971. During the last two decades of his life he had continuing health problems. He was married in 1932 to Flora Smith who survives him. She retired from the University in 1970 after several years as secretary to the Executive Dean and in the office of facility planning. The Burkes have three sons and one grandchild.

Submitted by

Ernest A. Becker

Dean of Students and Professor of Philosophy, Emeritus

(est.) July 1, 1992