

A Great Dean and a Great Man

By Joel Seligman

IN MID-SEPTEMBER, DOUG LOWRY MET with me and explained that because of his health, he would have to step down as the Joan and Martin Messinger Dean of the Eastman School of Music. For six years, he had been a remarkable leader of the Eastman School. On October 2, 2013, Doug died of multiple myeloma, a form of cancer that had been diagnosed in 2011.

The Board of Trustees of the University, at a special meeting on Friday, September 20, 2013, voted unanimously to award an honorary doctor of music degree to Doug and named him Joan and Martin Messinger Dean Emeritus. On September 30, the board voted to name Eastman's Main Hall in Doug's honor. It is now Lowry Hall.

In Doug's honor, the board adopted a resolution which said in part:

"Doug became Eastman's dean in 2007, the sixth since the school's founding in 1921. Doug's tenure decisively upheld the school's well-earned reputation for greatness. Significantly, his artistry as a composer, conductor, and teacher, and his farsightedness in mapping pathways for music education in the 21st century further burnished the school's reputation as an international leader.

"Doug Lowry's lifetime professional career has been distinguished. Decanal and professorial appointments at Eastman, the University of Cincinnati's College-Conservatory of Music, and the University of Southern California's Thornton School of Music establish Doug as one of the premier musical leaders of the 20th and 21st centuries.

"Doug has always demonstrated absolute integrity and creativity in advancing the best interests of the musical arts. He has been a colleague of great wisdom, sensitivity, and exceptional collegiality. The University's Board of Trustees, its faculty, staff, and students convey their deepest respect and gratitude to Douglas Lowry and commend him for his many valuable contributions to the University."

When Doug was installed as dean on October 27, 2007, I forecast: "In Doug Lowry, we have found the maestro to lead us to a



new age of musical education. Doug does not arrive with all the answers—but with the ability to pose the right questions. A great conductor values each member of his orchestra. As a great dean, Doug has already exhibited a passionate enthusiasm to cherish each faculty member, each student, each staff member, each alumnus, and each special friend who comprises the Eastman community . . . The symphony he will lead, I predict, will resonate for decades to come."

▲ IN MEMORIAM: "When Doug was installed as dean on October 27, 2007, I forecast: 'In Doug Lowry, we have found the maestro to lead us to a new age of musical education. . . . The symphony he will lead, I predict, will resonate for decades to come.'"

Rarely has an academic leader more completely achieved his aspirations. Doug left Eastman a far stronger school than when he began.

Doug led the Eastman School in its efforts to renovate and expand Eastman Theatre, the greatest architectural achievement of the Eastman School in over 80 years.

Doug unified the Eastman community. I marveled at his ability to meet with faculty, alumni, and friends of the school, sometimes of the most intense and conflicting views, and always keep his equanimity. In a world marked by great passions, Doug was a peacemaker and a builder.

I loved Doug's smile. I loved his charm. He was the rarest of academic administrators: a great dean (Continued on page 4)

(Continued from page 3) who also was a great man.

Doug hired outstanding faculty. He initiated a strategic plan that will lead Eastman into the 21st century.

Doug also was a man of literary gifts. He read widely, wrote poetry, and delivered some of the most memorable convocation addresses in our University's history. He was a warm, decent human being who appreciated music as only a gifted musician could, while also dazzling you with talents as variegated as his ability to create designer pizza to his enthusiasm for his favorite composer, Richard Strauss.


Universities are human institutions. What matters most are our faculty, students, alumni, friends, staff, and administrators. Doug was beloved by all.

I want to particularly recognize one of Doug's greatest achievements. He assembled an outstanding leadership team.

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For the past several years, Jamal Rossi was Doug's closest associate. Jamal served as interim dean in the interval that led to Doug's appointment and unofficially has served more recently in that role when Doug could not be present.

With board concurrence, I appointed Jamal to be dean of the Eastman School until the conclusion of a national search.

The use of the title "Dean," rather than "Interim Dean," is a consequential one. I have informed Dean Rossi that he has all of the powers and responsibilities that Doug had, and I expect Jamal to be a decisive and bold leader. Music education does not stand still. There are challenges that the Eastman School must address this year and Jamal is the right person to lead the efforts that Doug began. Completing the strategic plan that Doug began will ensure Eastman's further progress and be a fitting way to honor Doug, his leadership, and our appreciation for his time with us. 

Letters



BIRTHDAY: This fall marked the 75th anniversary of the invention of electrophotography by Chester Carlson (above), a process that Joseph Wilson '31 developed into the Xerox Corp.

Xerox and Us

REGARDING THE STORY ON ROCHESTER'S connection to Xerox ("Electrophotography, Xerography, and Us," September–October), xerography inventor Chester Carlson almost had another connection with the University.

Through his wife, Dorothy, he developed an interest in Buddhism as well as in the paranormal. John Romano, the first chairman of the Department of Psychiatry, told me that Carlson approached him about endowing a professorship to explore the paranormal. Romano, as is probably true for most physicians, did not think it was a field worthy of serious academic study and declined the million dollars.

Carlson found the University of Virginia receptive, and it established the Carlson Chair which was held by Ian Stevenson until his death in 2007. He published over 300 articles and 14 books as the director of Virginia's Division of Perceptual Studies, researching the paranormal. It is worth noting that this is an area that holds the interests of many physicists, which was Carlson's academic training. Perhaps the nonlinear world of quantum mechanics allows them to look more broadly at the study of consciousness and extrasensory phenomena. (See the work of William Tiller and David Bohm.)

Carlson also funded the Rochester Zen

Center, which is one of the most highly regarded centers in America.

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The writer was a member of the faculty of the Department of Psychiatry from 1965 to 1979.

THE ARTICLE ON THE BIRTH OF XEROX CORPORATION was informative but incomplete.

The ties between the University and Joseph C. Wilson's Xerox were bilateral and perhaps even symbiotic. I don't know how much money the University invested in Haloid, or whether the stock was simply given by Wilson, but it's part of the story.

I remember one day in late 1961 or 1962 when I saw my faculty advisor, Professor George Suhr of the fine arts department, skipping down the steps of the quad. He had a palsy of some sort, and I found it astounding that he was skipping like a school child. I asked him what that was about, and he said that a large chunk of the University's retirement fund was invested in something called Haloid, which had just "gone public" as Xerox.

I have since learned from the Xerox website that, in fact, Haloid went public in 1936, but perhaps there was a large secondary offering after the Xerox shares were listed on the NYSE in 1961, or in connection with that listing. In any event, the University had