



Robert W. Storandt

April 12, 1918 – April 27, 2013

Robert William Storandt '40 died April 27, 2013 at age 95 at his home in Ithaca, New York. At the time of his death, Bob was Director of Admissions Emeritus, having retired from the University in July 1983 following a career of thirty-six years in undergraduate admissions. He had been named at a Faculty Senate meeting an honorary member of the Cornell faculty.

A Rochester, New York native, Storandt enrolled in the College of Arts and Sciences in 1936, beginning what would become a passionate lifelong devotion to the university. As an undergraduate, he joined Kappa Sigma fraternity, WVBR and also was a member of Quill and Dagger senior honor society. In addition, he was active in the Lutheran Church Student Council and several other student groups. As editor-in-chief of *The Cornell Daily Sun*, he was a strong advocate for Touchdown IV, Cornell's live bear mascot. He urged Cornell administrators officially to recognize the bear cub as the university's mascot, but to no avail, especially after a group of alumni celebrating Cornell's football victory over Ohio State in 1939 took the bear to a Cleveland nightspot where Touchdown perhaps overdid things a bit by climbing a potted palm tree. Shortly thereafter, Touchdown IV was 'retired' to an animal preserve. In his 2008 book, *Touchdown: The Story of the Cornell Bear*, author John Foote '74 acknowledged Storandt's oral histories of Touchdown IV and said: "I hope that this book is a fitting tribute to Bob's enthusiasm, love and respect for Cornell."

Storandt began his career at the fledgling American Airlines immediately after graduation from Cornell, though he was soon called to serve in the Army, 1st Infantry Division, in World War II. He served mainly in Germany, reaching the rank of technical sergeant. After the war, he returned briefly to American Airlines, but soon received an invitation to join the Cornell admissions office as the Assistant Director from then Director of Admissions, Herb Williams. Storandt explained that prior to World War II, getting into college was not very competitive. The GI bill changed all of that and suddenly Cornell had 15,000 applicants and needed an admissions office and staff. He remained in undergraduate admissions for the rest of his working life, serving

nineteen years as director of undergraduate admissions. He retired as Associate Dean of Admissions.

During his tenure as Director, Storandt was involved in enrolling almost 100,000 Cornellians chosen from nearly one-half million applicants. At the time of his retirement, fully one-third of Cornell's living alumni received their acceptances for admission with Storandt's signature.

Storandt was proud that, during his tenure, Cornell was in the vanguard of minority outreach and need-blind financial aid policies. During his career, he was involved in all aspects of Admissions: selection, interviewing, school visits, advising alumni through the Alumni Secondary School Committee program, writing publications, streamlining processing and creating policy. He also administered the freshman financial aid program for many years, and served as a member of the Cornell National Scholarship Committee for more than 15 years. He was a member of the College Scholarship Service Committee of the College Board and completed a term on the Trustee Committee on Membership of the College Board. He also did a three-year term as a member of the National Merit Scholarship Selection Committee. While working in admissions, Storandt also contributed to the campus in many ways, through Cornell United Religious Work, serving on the Board of Managers and Board of Governors of Willard Straight Hall, and serving on and chairing the Board of Directors for the *Cornell Daily Sun*. He retired in 1983, at which time the employee newsletter ran an article paying tribute to Bob. It captured his character in a very special way.

“...Have you ever wondered what it would be like to work for someone who treated everyone fairly and with respect? Wouldn't it be great to work for someone who cracked a joke or told a funny quip upon noticing that you were feeling down or when the work load is hectic and everyone else seems to be at each others throats? The staff members in University Admission Office have had...the(se) luxuries because they've worked with and for Robert W. Storandt.” The article went on to describe Bob's omnipresent smile, his deep appreciation of the staff, especially during the holidays when the rest of the University was on vacation but admissions staff were busy preparing files to be read. “I don't know of another boss who at holiday time comes trudging into the office with boxes of 40+ corsages...!”

To honor his retirement, the first named Cornell Tradition Fellowship was created in Bob's honor. The kindness Bob showed his staff and his colleagues also impacted the students who received the honor of being named the Robert W. Storandt '40 Cornell Tradition Fellow. “I found him to be extremely kind, thoughtful and caring – wonderful and memorable traits to an impressionable 18- year-old freshman,” wrote Douglas Rutzen '87, the first Storandt named fellow. (Rutzen now is President and CEO of the International Center for Not-forProfit Law.) In 1987, Storandt was named director of undergraduate admissions emeritus.

Bob and his wife, Jean Cummings Storandt Cornell '42, had a love of travel, especially aboard ships and across waters of all sizes, from the Atlantic Ocean to the canals of Canada. For decades, their favorite retreat was their camp on Wolfe Island in the Thousand Islands. Their retirement home, however, remained their first house in Ithaca because Storandt wished to be ‘within the sounds of the Chimes,’ even in retirement.

Besides his wife, two sons, three grandchildren and one great- grandson survive Storandt.

Susan H. Murphy with the assistance of Mary F. Berens