



Dr. Robert Louis Jones

October 21, 1927 - September 10, 2015

A celebration of life ceremony for Dr. Robert Louis Jones will be held at 3:00 PM on Saturday, October 3, 2015, at Stewart Family Funeral Home, 7525 Old Jacksonville Hwy, Tyler, TX 75703.

Robert Louis Jones, age 87, of Tyler, Texas, formerly Russellville, AR, went to be with the Lord on Thursday, September 10, 2015 at Hospice of East Texas Home Place. He was married to the love of his life, Shirley M. Jones with whom he celebrated their 41st anniversary on June 15 of this year. Bob was born in Russellville, AR, second son of the late Ralph N. Jones and Jane Smith Jones, lifelong residents of Russellville, and grandson of the late Gertrude Munday Smith and Dr. Robert Louis Smith, founding owner and head surgeon of Saint Mary's Regional Medical Center.

Robert graduated from Arkansas Tech University in 1950 and then pursued a master's degree from the University of Arkansas. His first administrative job was as principal of Mountain Home Elementary in Mountain Home, AR. As an active National Guard member, Bob was called into active service during the Korean War, serving two winters in the Seventh Division Artillery. He was a recipient of the Bronze Star. After returning from Korea, Bob served as a school principal at Washington Elementary School in Fayetteville, AR. Later, he was employed by the University of Arkansas in a number of roles, including the Dean of Men. After his return to the University of Arkansas, he completed

his Ph.D in 1966. Jones then served as vice president for hospital administration at the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences (UAMS).

Jones began two decades of service at Mississippi State University in 1967, where he was hired as the first vice president for student affairs, with the charge to initiate and implement a modern, professional organization to meet the needs of a rapidly changing and growing student body.

Jones brought a level of professionalism and national networking to MSU, including mentoring of young staff, establishing trained residence hall head residents, a student counseling and career/placement center, collaboration with freshman academic departments, aggressive student recruitment programs, student leadership training programs, freshmen, parent orientation programs and intramural programs.

Jones was challenged immediately to defuse and redirect student activities in the midst of society's upheavals. Some of the volatile themes included the Civil Rights Movement, the Jackson State and Kent State tragedies, the John F. Kennedy and Martin Luther King assassinations, the Vietnam War protests, and the Women's Liberation activities, including Title IX implementation. The Student Affairs Division continues to reflect and benefit from the groundbreaking work performed by Jones and his administrative team. In April 2013, a New Hall of Honor pays tribute to Jones and his colleagues who provided sustained and distinguished service at MSU. Jones left behind a legacy of success and growth reflected in the university's current 20,000-plus student body enrollment, Mississippi's largest university.

After leaving MSU, Jones served at The University of Texas at Tyler as vice president for administration and as chief student affairs officer from 1984 - 1994, Bob resumed full-time graduate teaching in 1994, as professor in higher education leadership at UT-Tyler. He retired in 2000 as professor emeritus. He

has been honored by UT-Tyler as the namesake of the Robert L. Jones Student Leadership Award, an annual honor bestowed on an outstanding, peer-selected student leader.

Bob served as board member of numerous community organizations and as a professional advisor to other professional administrators in higher education. He was a charter member of the National Vice Presidents Group, a 22-member “think tank” in student affairs, initiated in 1967. Jones is the past president of the Southern Association of College Student Affairs over 15 states.

Jones worked with the Chamber of Commerce to take a team trip to establish Tyler as a Senior Certified City. He has been involved in helping to implement numerous healthcare and retirement centers including Rosewood and beginning the Boy Scouts of America Fundraiser as a Council Member at Large. He served as State Council President with Arkansas, Mississippi and the City of Tyler. Jones played a key role in developing a Junior Golf Scholarship for youth in Tyler, known as the First Tee of Greater Tyler.

On June 19, 2015, the East Texas Chapter of Mississippi State University Alumni Association announced the naming of the chapter’s scholarships in honor of Dr. Robert L. Jones.

Bob was born an avid golfer and enjoyed traveling, working in his yard and going to the farmer’s market each morning for fruits and vegetables. People who knew him would often say he was so full of life and found humor in conversation with friends. Bob was a great listener and mentored so many students throughout their careers, helping finance scholarships for student tuition. One thing many might not know is he loved little children and was often found bouncing a great-grandchild on his knee or just plain being silly

with them in play. Bob was a known strong leader, a giving friend, a great companion and cared for others unconditionally.

Survivors include his wife, Dr. Shirley M. Jones; four children, Sarah Jones Peterson and husband Brian of Joplin, MO, Robert Bradford Jones and wife Roni of Farmersville, LA, Melinda Maxwell Connolly and husband Doug of Irving, TX, and Randall E. Maxwell of Nashville, TN; one brother, Ralph N. Jones and wife Hazel of Atlanta, GA; a first cousin, Dot Davidson of Poplar Bluff, MO; grandchildren, Elliott Kersh of Joplin, Emily Trejo and husband Roberto of Joplin, Dillon Buchcanan, Alex Jones of Farmerville, LA, Olivia Ward and husband Eddie of West Monroe, LA, Kati Zachary of Los Angeles, CA, and Annabelle Swink of Fayetteville, AR, Megan Connolly Swanson and husband Mark of Carrollton, Trey Connolly and wife Michelle of Carrollton, and Caitlin Connolly Price and husband Jory of Grapevine; great-grandchildren, Aundrea and Roselyn Trejo, Cooper Connolly and Olivia Price; and many nieces and nephews.

Bob was the father of the late Suzan Jones Zachary Swink of Joplin, MO, and the brother of the late Shirley Jones Townsend of Omaha, NE.

Charitable contributions to memorialize Dr. Robert L. Jones may be given in lieu of flowers to the following organizations:

- * Hospice of East Texas Foundation, 4111 University Blvd., Tyler TX., 75701
- * Alzheimer's Association of North East Texas, 3613 S. Broadway, Tyler, TX, 75701
- * Mississippi State University Foundation

Checks payable to: MSU Foundation designated for the Dr. Robert L. Jones East Texas Alumni Chapter Scholarship

Mailing Address:

MSU Foundation

P.O. Box 6149

Mississippi State, MS 39762

Ph: 662-325-7000

On line: <http://www.msufoundation.com> and click on "Give Now" to complete form

Psalms 16:11 Thou will show me the path of life: in thy presence is fullness of joy: at the right hand there are pleasures for evermore.

Previous Events

Mem. Service

OCT 3. 3:00 PM (CT)

Stewart Family Funeral Home
7525 Old Jacksonville Hwy
Tyler, TX 75703
(903) 581-2008

Tribute Wall

AB

“ We were notified by Dr. Ann Bailey of the death of Dr. Robert Louis Jones, the first vice president for student affairs at Mississippi State University and former SACSA past president. Our thoughts and prayers are with Shirley and the family. We are grateful for Bob's service to SACSA and to the student affairs profession as a whole. He inspired us and was faithful to return to SACSA events, even after his retirement.



SACSA Past Presidents
(Southern Association for College Student Affairs)

Ann Bailey - October 01, 2015 at 01:24 PM

JR

“ I met Dr. Jones in July 1973. He had a opening for a secretary and I needed a job! I was a young single mother and I had never been a secretary so I definitely was not qualified for the position. I suppose he felt sorry for me because he hired me anyway. Thank goodness, as that was the turning point for my career. While working for him, with his patience and encouragement, I completed a degree in accounting and became a CPA. We had eight years together and after I left MSU and moved to Tulsa, OK., we maintained a close friendship. Until he became quite ill, he never failed to send me a birthday card. He always called me John and he was affectionately my Dr. J. I know he is now at peace but I will miss my friend. My thoughts and prayers are with you Shirley.

Johnnie Rast - September 30, 2015 at 07:06 PM

DD

“ *Dot Davidspn purchased the Peaceful White Lilies Basket for the family of Dr. Robert Louis Jones.*



Dot Davidspn - September 30, 2015 at 04:30 PM

IM

“ *I worked with Bob At UT Tyler from 1993 until his retirement. I have wonderful memories of time spent visiting with him. He was very dedicated to his work and to mentoring others. He has a great deal of wisdom and I was very blessed to call him my friend. I will miss him dearly. Ida R. MacDonald*

Ida MacDonald - September 28, 2015 at 10:03 AM

DL

“ *Dr. Paula Lundberg-Love purchased the Garden of Serenity Bouquet for the family of Dr. Robert Louis Jones.*



Dr. Paula Lundberg-Love - September 23, 2015 at 04:48 PM

PL

“ Shirley,
I send my sincere condolences to you and your family regarding the loss of Bob. He was a wonderful individual, always full of life. I enjoyed the time that I got to spend with you and him, both as colleagues and as friends. He was a man of many great accomplishments who will be missed. However, his legacy of education and leadership will live on forever.
Love to you Shirley.

Paula Lundberg-Love -September 23, 2015

Paula Lundberg-Love - September 23, 2015 at 03:37 PM

MY

“ Shirley

My thoughts are with you. I've always enjoyed seeing and talking with Bob, sharing memories of Arkansas and other things I will miss seeing him.

Marilyn Young - September 20, 2015 at 11:05 PM

PH

“ *Dear Aunt Shirley, what a beautiful tribute to a wonderful man! I'm proud to have known him, even though not as much as I would have liked. I know you will miss him terribly, and our thoughts and prayers are with you! Love you! Peggy Jones Huckeba*

Peggy Huckeba - September 17, 2015 at 02:44 PM

V(

“ My sincere condolences to the family. Bob and Shirley have been friends and colleagues of mine for many years. Bob was the Dean of Students at The University of Arkansas when I was a student there. Then, Bob, Shirley, and I were colleagues at The University of Texas at Tyler. Bob hired my husband, David Beidelman, to be Chief of Police at UT Tyler. He and David were colleagues, friends and golf buddies. I am saddened by his passing as a light has gone from this world.

Virginia Rosemond (Beidelman) - September 16, 2015 at 09:40 AM

BK

“ I first met Bob Jones when I was a very young Student Affairs professional at the SACSA Conference in the early 1980s in Jackson, MS. Bob was the host and demonstrated his warmth and hospitality to all. I continued to respect Bob as one of the "giants" in our field in the years to follow. When I was selected as only the third Vice President for Student Affairs at Mississippi State University in 2004, Bob called me the morning of my first day on the job. Always the mentor, Bob provided me with valuable history, perspective and advice for success at MSU. Several years later when I felt it appropriate to create a Student Affairs Hall of Honor at Mississippi State, as a way to acknowledge the important contributions that student affairs had made at MSU, there was no doubt who the namesake of that Hall of Honor should be - Dr. Robert L. Jones. He was a pioneer, a mentor, a friend and an inspiration to so many. I consider myself very fortunate indeed to have known and been influenced by Dr. Bob Jones. May God's richest blessings and comfort be with Shirley and all of Bob's family.

Bill Kibler

Bill Kibler - September 16, 2015 at 08:31 AM

LM

“ Thanks Bob for the legend you left behind. I will always remember the mark you made on SACSA. I am sorry I did not get to work with you but I send my best wishes to all who did work with you, your family and friends that will miss you terribly.

Lisa Bardill Moscaritolo - September 15, 2015 at 02:11 PM

DG

“ Shirley, I send you hugs and fond memories of Bob and you and our time in SACSA. He was my mentor in SACSA and I will always be grateful for his guidance.

I pray for you both --comfort for you and God's blessing on Bob. May He bless him and keep him and make His face to shine upon him and give him peace. In Jesus' name. Amen
Don Gehring

Don Gehring - September 15, 2015 at 01:58 PM

MT

Bob was a wonderful man. I am glad we had so many opportunities to be with you two. I remember that first delicious steak dinner in your home almost 20 years ago and the many other times we visited in both of our homes. What A chef Bob was. The memories of having Christmas dinner together this past year are indelibly stamped in my mind., thanks to Robert and Amanda. Watching Bob and our grandchildren interact is a memory I shall always cherish. Our paths crossed in so many ways. The MSU and LMC connections really bonded us. I shall miss the meals we shared and his wit and intellect. Of course, our friendship with you will continue. What a great legacy he leaves for you and his family.

Mary Ellen and Frank Thornton

Mary Ellen Thornton - September 30, 2015 at 06:37 PM