

## THE HONORABLE HOWELL T. HEFLIN '42



Retired three-term U.S. Sen. Howell T. Heflin, a 1942 graduate of Birmingham-Southern, died March 29 in a Sheffield hospital near his Tusculumbia home. He was 83.

Heflin served in the Senate from 1979 until his retirement in 1997, and prior to that was chief justice of the Alabama Supreme Court.

After graduating from BSC, Heflin was a decorated combat Marine in World War II before attending the University of Alabama Law School. As a young state bar association president in 1965, he initiated reform of the Alabama judiciary. He was elected chief justice in 1971 and led a state initiative to adopt a new Judicial Article to the Alabama Constitution, which served as a model for a unified state courts system and judicial administration. In 1976, he was named the nation's Most Outstanding Appellate Judge.

He was elected to the Senate in 1978 as a Democrat and was immediately appointed to serve on the Judiciary Committee. During his career, he championed the Legal Services Corporation and sponsored the creation of the 11th Circuit Court of Appeals, State Justice Institute, Civil Justice Reform Act, National Commission on Judicial Discipline, Justice Assistance Act and Permanent Federal Court Study of 1988, and Bankruptcy Reform Act of 1994. In 2003, he received the John Marshall Award from the American Bar Association Justice Center in recognition of individuals responsible for extraordinary improvement in the administration of justice.

Heflin was a current member of Birmingham-Southern's Board of Trustees. He was awarded the college's Distinguished Alumni Award in 1973 and an honorary Doctor of Humanities degree in 1980. He established the Howell T. Heflin Pre-Law Scholarship at BSC in 1989.

In 1987, BSC announced the endowment of the Howell T. Heflin Professorship of American Government and Politics. In 2000, the Howell T. Heflin Seminar Room was dedicated in the college's Charles Andrew Rush Learning Center/N. E. Miles Library and is home to some of Heflin's favorite photographs and other memorabilia.

He is survived by his wife, Elizabeth Ann Heflin; a son, Tom Heflin; and two grandchildren.

