

Lola Kiser: generosity through instruction

Dr. Lola Kiser, professor of math from 1955 to 1996, was chair of the Math Department at Birmingham-Southern from 1971-78. She accepted this position following in the footsteps of Dr. John Franklin Locke, whom she considers her mentor. She credits Locke for pushing her to earn a Ph.D. in mathematics at the University of Alabama in 1971.

Kiser says she enjoyed teaching very much, but now enjoys retirement as well. What she found most pleasurable was the interaction with her students.

"I remember most of my students," says Kiser. "I stay in touch with some of them by writing back and forth. Primarily they initiate the correspondence. I like to keep in touch with them."

She says there wasn't anything in particular she didn't like about teaching, but if she had to choose one thing, it would be grading papers.

Well respected by her students, she is known for being a quiet, modest straight shooter. "You were always on your best behavior around her," says Alice Copeland Brown '59 of Canton, Mass., "because she expected you to act grown up. She was just an excellent teacher."

Kiser earned an undergraduate degree from Memphis State College in 1952 and an M.A. in mathematics from the University of Georgia in 1954. She joined the BSC faculty in 1955. During her 41-year tenure at the college, she received the Omicron Delta Kappa Excellence in Teaching Award in 1983, and the United Methodist Church Exemplary Teacher Award in 1995.

James Archer '82 of Birmingham says he remembers Kiser well and thought she was great. "She had a knack for talking one-on-one with her students and explaining things completely," he says. "She had a genuine interest in her students."

Besides her dedication and service to teaching, Kiser has a longstanding commitment to her church. She is a member of Valley Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) where she currently serves as an elder. She is active in a project called Building Valley Macedonia, which is a joint project between her predominantly Caucasian church and the predominantly African-American Macedonia Christian Church to promote better understanding between the races.



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1988

One of the college's oldest and loveliest buildings, Science Hall, built in 1916 and named for Erskine Ramsay in 1925, was destroyed to make way for the Harbert Building.

1990 & 1995

The basketball team wins the NAIA national championship.