

### **Glenn A. Gillespie-2010**

With a background in economics, he first became known to the Parks and Recreation profession in 1969 as a professor in the Department of Recreation and Park Administration at the University of Missouri-Columbia. Dr. Glenn Alton Gillespie went on to serve many years as Chairman of the Department, and later as Assistant Dean of the College of Public and Community Services. Glenn was a pioneer in higher education in Missouri and a leader in the movement for curriculum accreditation within the profession, offering the MU curriculum as a pilot test for accreditation years before the requirement would gain national approval. Glenn was primarily responsible for the creation of the full-time position of MPRA Executive Director. This vision and willingness to act boldly was manifested in his commitment to house the position in offices on the MU campus from 1977 until 1985 when the association offices were moved to Jefferson City. Adept at political strategy, Glenn often saw two and three steps ahead as he set the stage in anticipation of future opportunities. One of his successors, Dr. Randy Vessell, credits Glenn as the person who built the MU Department to its highest impact level, emphasizing balance of applied and theoretical foundations. An astute country politician who could determine the motivations of both supporters and detractors, he was an absolute master of vote-counting as a means of guiding proposals through boards and committees. Dr. Gillespie was careful who he collaborated with to accomplish projects and goals, a grand cohort of Ford Hughes as they crystallized the idea of the National Symposium for Parks and Recreation. Glenn served the University and profession for many years as a member of the State InterAgency Council for Outdoor Recreation, the body responsible for distributing Federal Land and Water Conservation Fund grants for outdoor recreation facilities throughout Missouri. He also served as a member and chairperson of the Columbia Parks and Recreation Commission during a time of significant growth. Few know of Glenn's skills as a researcher and economic consultant. His studies and economic forecasts of river recreation opportunities and foresight into the future computer world were ahead of their time. In addition to being known as a well-grounded academician, manager and administrator, he was also a mentor to many present and past directors. Glenn's wisdom, guidance and counsel extended not only throughout Missouri and the nation Glenn died in September of 2007 at the age of 82. Without his pioneering efforts, the Parks and Recreation movement in Missouri would not be where it is today. His legacy lives on in the foundation that he helped to build for the Missouri Park and Recreation Association.