

Citation for John Parkhill “Jack” Evans, Thomas Jefferson Award, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Faculty Council, October 8, 2010

Those of you who know Jack Evans, will surely agree that he is the last person who would want to talk about or even hear about his own extraordinary career. Having been in the spot where he now stands last year, I have to say it gives me unbounded pleasure to force him to stand here and listen. Few members of our University community have contributed more to their own academic unit (in his case, the Kenan-Flagler School of Business), to the larger University and to the town of Chapel Hill, and, even beyond and through his scholarly work, to the nation—than Jack Evans. The choice of Jack Evans for the Thomas Jefferson Award seems to me a necessary and even inevitable designation.

All of his degrees, Bachelor of Mechanical Engineering, Masters of Science in Industrial Engineering, and Doctor of Philosophy in Operations Research are from Cornell University. Jack has recently completed 40 years of service at our University. Let me begin with a very abbreviated account of his professional and scholarly contributions in the School of Business. Arriving as an associate professor, he became a full professor after three years. For the past decade he has been the Phillip Hettleman Professor of Business Administration. Nine years after coming here, he was named dean of the school and remained in that position for 8 years. He would later serve twice as interim dean for brief periods.

Jack has compiled a distinguished record as a scholar and agent of “quality management” related to business and industry. It is here that his influence extends nationally and internationally. In the goal of bringing together university research and

management-performance of businesses, he has focused his own scholarship upon relevant publications and presentations—researching carefully and reviewing at first-hand a given business’s management processes and procedures. He has spoken on “total quality management” throughout the U.S. for 40 years, and in England, Mexico and New Zealand. One of his colleagues writes, “He was one of the first researchers to fully appreciate the importance of the total quality management movement in organizations. Based on his expertise, he was asked to first serve and later lead teams of examiners who evaluated organizations throughout the country vying for the prestigious Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award.” He has been principal investigator for an NSF Research Grant to assess quality systems in various organizations, president of the American Assembly of Collegiate Schools of Business, and member of a task force to redesign the accreditation process for 650 member-schools of the American Assembly of Collegiate Schools of Business. Jack has mentored countless UNC graduate students and undergraduates in the School of Business here--as one who not only teaches but inspires, and whose respect and affection he has earned over and over again.

It was during his fourth year at UNC that then chancellor Ferebee Taylor asked Jack to serve as his special assistant for planning in the university. It was the beginning of his long commitment toward serving the larger University. I want to mention two of the most significant.

Jack has just completed a term that lasted 15 years as UNC’s faculty athletics representative to the Atlantic Coast Conference and National Collegiate Athletic Association. He represented the ACC on the NCAA Management Council for six years,

and twice served a term as president of the ACC. Director of Athletics, Dick Baddour, has said that “[Jack] has been called by the NCAA time and again to take on difficult assignments because of his thoughtful approach and leadership ability.” In light of the recent allegations by the NCAA, Jack has once again been asked by our present Chancellor to serve as a representative of the faculty on the internal investigative committee, and you will be hearing from him today in his capacity as Faculty Representative to the NCAA.

As I think you all know, Jack has been Executive Director of Carolina North since 2006, laying the groundwork for the future Carolina North campus—especially as it relates to the town of Chapel Hill. Here I want to quote from former chancellor James Moeser: “Several years ago, when we were essentially stuck in a quagmire of stalled negotiations with the Town of Chapel Hill over future development of the Horace Williams property, the Trustees and I decided that one of the problems was that there was no single individual whose primary responsibility was Carolina North. So, I set out to find the right person to head up this. It didn’t take me long to get to Jack Evans.” Under his leadership, the Board of Trustees has approved the master-plan, the airport issue was resolved with a new terminal for AHEC at the RDU Airport. Most significantly the development agreement was recently unanimously approved by the Town Council. Here is Chancellor Moeser again: “Four years ago, if someone had told me that the Town Council would unanimously approve a Carolina North development agreement, I would have thought they were crazy. Many people worked to bring about this result, but Jack Evans led the process.”

And I would just mention in passing here that Jack's work with the Town Council was facilitated and enhanced by the previous work of his wife Pat, who has served with distinction on the Chapel Hill Town Council and the Chapel Hill Planning Board.

Jack returned to South Building to serve again as Special Assistant to the Chancellor from 2000 to 2003. He is presently chair of the UNC Press Board of Governors.

In addition to the Jefferson Award today, Jack Evans has earned the C. Knox Massey Award, the General Alumni Association's Faculty Service Award, the Kenan-Flagler Business School's Roy W. Holsten Distinguished Service Award, and the Hugh and Jane McColl Faculty Development Award. He has been tapped by UNC's oldest honorary society, the Order of the Golden Fleece.

Thomas Jefferson once said, "Do you want to know who you are? Don't ask. Act! Action will delineate and define you." Those are the words by which John Parkhill Evans has lived his life during the more than 40 years of his presence among us. No task has seemed too daunting, no time commitment too extended. He is a man of genuine humility with a large heart and an always smiling and generous engagement with everyone he meets. The spirit of Mr. Jefferson smiles upon our choice to receive this year's Thomas Jefferson Award, and the whole of our University acknowledges our enduring debt to his lasting contributions.

George Lensing
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