Winston W. Benson Graduate Student Political Science Scholarship

Dr. Winston W. Benson (1922-1997)

Winston W. Benson was devoted to his family, his community, and to Minnesota State University, Mankato and its students. He grew up on a farm in north central Minnesota and was the first member of his family to attend college, earning an M.A. and a Ph.D. from the University of Iowa. He began his professional career in 1951 as the second member of the political science department at Mankato State College and in 1967 became dean of graduate studies, a position he held until his retirement in 1989.

Under Dr. Benson’s leadership more than 30 new graduate degrees and programs were approved including M.S. degrees in biology, business education, chemistry, counseling and guidance, English, German, history, mathematics, music, physics, political science, reading, special education and speech. He also helped bring M.A. degrees in art, economics, business, psychology and urban studies.

A voice for democracy and opportunity, Dr. Benson believed in students. A tireless educator and mentor, he believed that no student should be excluded from help or consideration. The pursuit of knowledge, participation in the political process, and commitment to public services were fundamental to his being and his hopes for his students. This endowment combines his commitment to the study of political science, the continuation of education through graduate studies and service to the community.

This endowment was established by Dr. Benson’s widow, Jean Benson, in honor of his memory. A scholarship will be awarded annually to a graduate student in political science whose ideals and commitment to public service and the political process reflect those of Winston Benson.

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