

was an accountability that I hadn't seen in other institutions," says Master. "You had to be able to teach, because this was real tuition money being spent by real people, and Norm planted the stakes firmly in the ground that this will be a place of teaching excellence. The school was this laboratory of innovation and new ideas. It was a phenomenally creative place. We could do things and try things that we wouldn't be able to do in most places."

In honor of Scotch's dedication to teaching, SPH presents the annual Norman A. Scotch Award for Excellence in Teaching to an individual who has made outstanding and sustained contributions to the school's education program.

Scotch's role in the creation of today's SPH, and in the successful model of part-time education for working professionals, was little known to those outside the school.

"It's very characteristic of the way he lived his life," Glantz says. "If someone came to him with a good idea, he would do what he could to see it happen. He didn't really care about credit, he cared about doing good."

## An Inspiration to Generations

### *Jack Aber taught finance at BU for 40 years*

By Tom Vellner



KALMAN ZABARSKY

During his 40-year teaching career at Boston University, Jack Aber became known as a devoted leader and an esteemed mentor among his colleagues. To his students, he was an enthusiastic, caring professor whose lessons had a major influence.

Aber, a Questrom School of Business professor emeritus and longtime chair of the finance department, died on January 12, 2015. He was 77.

As a testament to his impact, one of his former students, Douglas Chamberlain (MET'74, Questrom'76), established the Jack W. Aber Scholarship Fund in 2013. "Jack's ability to interest and engage the classroom is legendary," says Chamberlain, president of Appleton Partners, Inc., in

**Jack Aber (left) was among the retiring faculty and staff to be honored by President Robert A. Brown in 2013. Throughout his time at BU, Aber was recognized for his teaching, including several "Professor of the Year" awards.**

Boston. "His enthusiasm is electric and he undoubtedly influenced thousands of undergraduate and graduate Boston University students over the years. Our friendship began in the classroom in 1975, and we remained closely linked for nearly four decades."

Chamberlain says Aber was invited to join the advisory board at Appleton Partners in 2001, "where he was a brilliant and dynamic contributor to our firm's growth and success. Jack truly inspired his fellow board and business colleagues, in addition to generations of BU grads. So very approachable, likable, and committed, his radiance as a teacher, colleague, and friend will carry on for all of us so privileged to have crossed his path."

In November 2014, Questrom hosted a luncheon to announce the scholarship, and Aber was able to meet the first recipient, Michael Lohnes (Questrom'15).

Another of Aber's former students, Robert A. Knox (CAS'74, Questrom'75), chair of BU's Board of Trustees, had a deep admiration for Aber and sent remarks to be read at the celebration.

"When I was an undergraduate economics major at CAS, I took Jack Aber's investment course in the B-school," Knox began. "I was all of a sudden not bored in class for the first time in my academic life, as Jack revealed a whole world that I soon realized would become the passion of my professional life."

Knox described his former professor as smart, practical, and inspirational, and said Aber communicated his lessons with clarity and enthusiasm. "Jack is a great teacher—a rare professor that encouraged critical thinking and inspired his students to be relentlessly curious and to question conventional wisdom."

Aber earned a BS in chemistry from Pennsylvania State University, an MBA in finance from Columbia University, and a DBA in finance from Harvard University. He was commissioned as an ensign in the US Navy, and after five years of active duty, he spent 20 in the Naval Reserve, retiring as lieutenant commander.

In 1972, Aber began his BU career as an assistant professor of finance. Throughout his time at the

University, he was recognized for his teaching, receiving several "Professor of the Year" awards. He led the finance department for more than 12 years, and, according to his fellow faculty members, did so with a contagious drive.

"He was constantly interested in student feedback on how he could improve, which was infectious and helped him and others around him become better teachers," says Mark Williams (Questrom'93), Questrom executive-in-residence and a master lecturer of finance, who was one of Aber's students. "He was a natural in the classroom and captivated his audience."

Williams recalls that when he joined the faculty in 2002, Aber took him under his wing, and the two cotaught a finance course, which Williams describes as "a humbling experience." Aber was determined to make it a dynamic, sought-after course and, through countless hours of interviewing students, revising course materials, and reviewing possible replacement texts, he accomplished his goal.

"The easy route would have been to just accept that a course on banking was boring," Williams says. "Instead, it's now one of the highest-rated finance courses at BU. Since 2002, thanks to Professor Aber, there have been over 6,500 students who have learned about finance, how the financial markets work, and how they can be improved to better run our global economy."

He adds, "Jack loved to teach and he loved his students, and it showed."

## An Activist and a Trailblazer

*Political science prof Betty Zisk challenged convention*

*By Mara Sassoon*

In 1965, at a time when men dominated her field, Betty Zisk joined Boston University's political science department, a pioneering move characteristic of the strong-willed professor who would go on to help found the Massachusetts Green Party.

A champion of social justice, she was also deeply committed to her students, seizing opportunities to serve on the reading committees for their theses. Zisk "combined scholarship and activism with a willingness to meet with and help students," says Christine Rossell, a College of Arts & Sciences professor of political science.

Zisk, a CAS professor emerita of political science who taught at BU for 46 years until her retirement in 2011, died on October 19, 2014. She was 83.

Zisk attended Swarthmore College, whose Quaker (Religious Society of Friends) roots inspired her to join that faith.

"First and foremost she was a Quaker and an activist," her friend Charmarie Blaisdell told the *Boston Globe*. "She was devoted to issues of social justice."

Zisk earned a master's degree in political science at Haverford College, another school in the Quaker Consortium, and a PhD at Stanford University. Following in her professor father's footsteps, she joined BU's political science faculty a year later.

In his memorial resolution to the CAS faculty, Graham Wilson, professor and chair of political science, recalled that Zisk would talk for hours with her students outside of class and was known to visit students in the hospital. She stood by her beliefs and her students with the same determination; even colleagues who disagreed with her political opinions considered her "a worthy adversary," according to Rossell.

She was a pacifist who had a passion for the environment, and she supported Ralph Nader's presidential bid as a Green Party candidate in