



March 27, 2006 Wyandotte Distinguished Graduate Inductee



Stephen R. Arnest Class of 1954

Steve Arnest distinguished himself as an educator and Peace Corps volunteer. Steve was a member of the January, 1954 Roosevelt High School graduation class where he served as a class officer, athlete and a member of the band. He continued his schooling at Michigan State University where he was captain of the Fencing Team; held memberships in three honorary societies; earned a BA in Social Science and an MA in American History. He was employed as a teacher in East Lansing, an Assistant Professor at the State University of New York, and taught at Henry Ford Community College. Steve also held several supervisory positions at Ford Motor Company.

His civic activities include duties as a trustee for the Southgate Board of Education, a consultant for the Grosse Ile School District, and a member of the Lions Club International. He plays clarinet in the Downriver Community Band.

After retiring from Ford Motor Company, Steve and his wife Barbara Vincenty Arnest, joined the Peace Corps and served two years in Papua New Guinea. During that time they lived and worked in an impoverished community of over 5,000 inhabitants. With assistance from Barbara and a team of local residents, Steve taught classes and developed programs designed to increase awareness regarding HIV/AIDS. They wrote comprehensive manuals in English, and Steve coordinated the completion of these materials in Melanesian Pidgin, the universal language of Papua New Guinea. The manuals that Steve and Barbara produced with their own funds were adopted by the Salvation Army and the Save the Children organizations for use in Papua New Guinea outreach programs.

Steve's commitment continues to make a difference in the world. Although he was nearing his 70th birthday, this past October Steve rejoined the Peace Corps. He spent a month in New Orleans aiding the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the Red Cross, among others, with Hurricane Katrina relief efforts.

We are proud to acknowledge and honored to recognize Steve Arnest for his achievements.