

IN MEMORIAM

A Tribute to Linda Thompson



It is with great sadness but with many fond memories that we share that Dr. Linda Thompson passed away on February 2, 2022, at MD Anderson Cancer Center in Houston. Linda has been a colleague and dear friend to many of us throughout her career. She was Professor Emeritus at Harding University, Searcy, Arkansas, where she worked for 32 years and retired in 2017. At Harding, Linda served as professor of Psychology, director and creator of the Program for Academic Success, director and creator of the Learning Center (under a Title III grant), director of TRIO Student Support Services, and director and co-grant writer for the TRIO McNair Scholars Program. Her work with students at all levels of preparation clearly demonstrated her belief in the National Association of Developmental Education (NADE) motto: “Helping underprepared students prepare, prepared students advance, and advanced students excel!”

In addition to her work at Harding, Linda contributed to our profession in several significant ways. She was president of the Arkansas Association for Developmental Education (ArkADE). Her certification as a developmental education specialist at the 1986 Kellogg Institute at Appalachian State University led directly to her founding of academic success services at Harding. Linda returned to Kellogg several times to continue to grow as a professional and to share her educational insights as an informal mentor. She was president of the NADE in 2000–2001 and served on the NADE Certification Council/Accreditation Commission since 2003—as chair since 2008. In addition, she served on several editorial review boards for professional journals, presented numerous workshops, and consulted on program assessment and evaluation. Linda also served as NADE’s representative to the Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education (CAS) and co-wrote the revised chapter, “Factors Influencing the Teaching/Learning Process Guide,” in the 2009 *NADE Self-Evaluation Guides*, 2nd Edition: Best Practice in Academic Support Programs. In recognition of her contributions to the field, she was inducted as a Fellow of the Council of Learning Assistance and Developmental Education Associations (CLADEA), and in 2015 she received the Henry Young Award for Outstanding Individual Contribution to NADE. Linda had a special affinity for Texas and CASP. When Linda was NADE president and I was on the NADE Board with her, Texas was engaging in program assessment at the state and institution level; Linda and our certification colleague from Texas, Gladys Shaw, were significant in shaping NADE’s assessment support for the Texas initiative.

Linda will surely be remembered for her accomplishments and accolades, but she will also be remembered in our hearts as a wonderful, loving person who was a dear friend to many of us. Linda was a collegial leader who sought consensus on decisions; our meetings may have gone on longer as we often spend time on brainstorming, but creative ideas flowed, and our collaborative decisions were richer due to her leadership style. She was a tireless worker with great attention to detail! Linda and I had regular phone sessions that lasted for hours as we worked through accreditation reviews, presentations, and assorted other projects. She had kind words for everyone and was a thoughtful mentor to students and colleagues. She was a great listener who could pull ideas together from different perspectives in a constructive manner. While she was thinking, she might even break into humming a song in her beautiful soprano voice.

Linda was a gracious woman with an infectious chuckle, a delightful smile, a mischievous twinkle in her eye, and a good heart. Linda lived life to the fullest surrounded by the love and admiration of family, friends, colleagues, and others whose lives she touched along the way. Thank you for enriching our lives. Rest in peace, dear Linda.

Karen Patty-Graham, EdD
NADE Past President, CLADEA Fellow, CAS Representative,
Certification Council/Accreditation Commission Colleague