

GILBERT L. RUTMAN

We, the Members of the Illinois Board of Higher Education, honor and celebrate the life and public service of our colleague, Gilbert L. Rutman.

Gil Rutman served faithfully and with great distinction on the Illinois Board of Higher Education for the past six years. He brought to the Board his long and distinguished career as an economist and emeritus professor at Southern Illinois University Edwardsville, and a passionate but reasoned advocacy for faculty and students.

He began his educational service with the students of Illinois four decades ago, joining the SIUE business division faculty in 1969. He chaired the Department of Economics at SIUE from 1979 through 1986 when he became the director of the university's Center for Economic Education, a post he held until 1999.

Professor Rutman's family and career lives both serve as a tribute to the higher education community at the SIU Edwardsville campus where his late wife, Valerie Meyer, was an emeriti professor of curriculum and instruction, and one of his sons, the late Andrew Rutman, received both a bachelor's and master's degree in economics. Gil was a member of the SIUE Foundation Board and the 1998 recipient of the Great Teacher Award from the SIUE Alumni Association, a vote taken by former students.

With specialties in economic development, regional and urban economics, and manpower issues, Gil earned an associate's degree in liberal arts, a bachelor's degree in economics, and a master's in economics, all at Boston University. He earned a doctorate in economics at Duke University in 1965. He also was a visiting fellow at Rhodes University in South Africa in 1965.

From 1956 to 1959, after his baccalaureate graduation, Gil served in the U.S. Air Force where he became a first lieutenant and later a captain in the USAF Reserve.

Gil's tenure on the Illinois Board of Higher Education coincided with one of the most challenging eras for colleges and universities in a generation. Through the difficult economic times, he was a voice urging equitable funding for higher education, affordability for students, and accountability for the institutions that served them.

The Illinois Board of Higher Education valued Gil Rutman's tireless commitment to serving the college students of Illinois as a member of the Board, even while in his retirement years, and wishes to express gratitude to his family and colleagues at Southern Illinois University Edwardsville who supported Gil in his worthwhile endeavors to contribute to the mission of Illinois higher education.

*The Illinois Board of Higher Education
January 27, 2009*