

ITEM 143-1003-R0509

Professor Emeritus of Computer Science: Alden Wright; The University of Montana – Missoula

THAT:

Upon the occasion of the retirement of Professor Alden Wright from the faculty of UM-Missoula, the faculty wishes to express its appreciation for his years of dedicated and valued service to the University, the Department of Computer Science, and the State of Montana by recommending that the rank of Emeritus be conferred upon him by the Board of Regents of the Montana University System.

EXPLANATION:

Alden Wright was born in Missoula, Montana, the son of Philip and Margaret Wright and one of three children. His father was a long serving and influential UM-Missoula Zoology/Wildlife Biology Professor. Dr. Wright earned his baccalaureate degree in Mathematics from Dartmouth College in 1964 and his Doctorate in Mathematics from the University of Wisconsin, Madison in 1969.

His first tenure track position was at Western Michigan University, where he worked from 1970 to 1983. In 1983, Dr. Wright returned to Montana to accept a position in department of Computer Science. He was hired at the rank of Associate Professor in 1983, and promoted to Full Professor in 1986. In 2002 Dr. Wright became the chair of the Computer Science Department, and will retire from that post in the Spring of 2009. Throughout his career, Dr. Wright has been exceptionally productive as a researcher; completing over 52 peer reviewed papers and conference presentations in the areas of geometric topology, homotopy fixed points, and genetic algorithms. Dr. Wright has also taught a wide variety of Mathematics and Computer Science courses, lending both breadth and depth to his Department. His many students have received tremendous benefit from his being both a scholar and a talented instructor. During his tenure as Department chair, Dr. Wright led several important initiatives for building and retaining tenure track faculty, interdisciplinary research, and improving the quality of graduate education. These efforts have been handsomely rewarded as the Department's academic productivity and externally funded grant activity have increased significantly in the last seven years. Dr. Wright's dedication to the overall strength and stature of the Department has been rewarded in a number of other areas including alumni relations, cooperative efforts with organizations both internal and external to the University of Montana, and development of innovative ways of recruiting students to the Computer Science Department. The outpouring of heartfelt tributes attest to his impact on

students over a quarter century of service to the University of Montana and the Computer Science Department.