



CONNECTICUT COLLEGE

Dirk t. D. Held Memorial

Friday, April 27, 2012

Reflections on Dirk t. D. Held

By Leo I. Higdon, Jr., Connecticut College President

I want to welcome you all here to this beautiful campus where today we can all reflect on the life and gifts of Professor Dirk Held. As president of this institution, I am humbled and honored to speak about Dirk and his 40-plus year commitment to his students, to his scholarship, to his colleagues and to this institution.

Dirk was a colleague we all liked and respected. And I learned why very quickly after meeting him. I first met Dirk during my first few weeks on campus, wandering the halls of Fanning. We introduced ourselves to each other and I ended up in his office on the fourth floor of Fanning – the first of many such visits. We talked that day about the College. I told him that I studied Latin and Greek, and that at Charleston’s graduation I conferred the degrees for the classics majors in Latin. I then proceeded to recite the language used in that ceremony for him. Ever the professor, he said to me, “Not bad. I’d give it a B.”

He said it with a smile. And that was my first experience with his wit AND his scholarship. He had a tremendous disposition and a long institutional memory. Every once in a while, I would go up to his office and seek his views – as so many of us did – benefiting time and again from his wise counsel.

His passing is a real loss to this community. At this point, we all can agree: we wish we had more time, and we’re incredibly grateful for the time we had.

You will hear a lot more about Professor Held’s legacy today, from his colleagues – one who was once his student – and from family who knew and loved him best. He was a vital and beloved part of the Connecticut College community. Today, by gathering together to share our gifts – of music, song and thoughtful comments – we honor him *and* this community.