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Muskingum College to Honor Donald Williams

HOLLAND – Donald H. Williams, professor emeritus of chemistry at Hope College, is receiving a Distinguished Service Award from his undergraduate alma mater, Muskingum College of New Concord, Ohio.

Williams, who retired from the Hope faculty in 2002 after 33 years at the college, is a 1960 Muskingum graduate. He will receive the award during Muskingum's Alumni Weekend, which will run Friday-Sunday, June 15-17.

Sponsored by the Muskingum College Alumni Council, the Distinguished Service Award recognizes and honors alumni who have distinguished themselves through their professional endeavors and exemplary service to mankind. Any living Muskingum graduate or former student is eligible to receive the award, which is Muskingum's highest alumni honor.

Williams joined the Hope faculty in 1969 after previously teaching chemistry at the University of Kentucky. After graduating from Muskingum College, he had completed his doctorate at The Ohio State University in 1964.

As Hope's Senior Seminar program was implemented in 1969-70, he pioneered development of the course "Science and Human Values." Courses he created also concerned the environmental consequences of electrical power generation, and the history of the atomic bomb.

Williams received numerous external grants in support of his research. He wrote several articles published in professional journals and presented many papers at professional meetings.

He spent 1988-89 as an expert educational consultant for the Office of Civilian Radioactive Waste Management in the U.S. Department of Energy, and he has subsequently toured the country and written articles discussing nuclear energy issues. In the five years since he retired from teaching, for example, he has made several presentations on energy issues at high schools across Michigan as well as to service organizations; has written op-eds published in several Michigan newspapers; and has made presentations concerning energy and history to the annual meeting of the Michigan Science Teachers Association. He has won state and national American Nuclear Society Communication Awards for his ability to communicate with the public.

Among other activities stemming from his interest in environmental issues, while at Hope he founded the Holland Environmental Action Council, consulted with the Holland Board of Public Works and was chairperson of the Board of Governors of the Michigan Low-Level Radioactive Waste Authority. He is currently on the board of the Michigan chapter of the American Nuclear Society, and in 2006 he traveled to Iceland on a Smithsonian tour focused on energy.

In retirement Williams has been active in the community in a variety of ways. He has tutored at Holland High School, volunteered with Tulip Time, coordinates the men's Bible study group at First Presbyterian Church, and co-founded and is on the board of the new Tulip City Camera Club. He also serves on the scholarship committees of the West Michigan Ohio State Alumni Club, of which he is a board member, and the Holland Rotary Club.

His wife, Susan, who is also a graduate of Muskingum College, also retired from Hope in 2002, as director of the college's FOCUS and SOAR programs. They have two sons, Brian and David.