

# Amend & Cleveland

## Remembering Two Quiet Giants

by Barry Daneman, Director of Community and Alumni Relations



Don Amend



Bill Cleveland

The UMKC School of Dentistry lost two distinguished and very dear friends this past spring: Don Amend (DDS '51) and Bill Cleveland (DDS '59). Both lived extraordinary lives of service: dedicated to their country, their profession, their school and their communities.

Don grew up in Atchison County, Kan., and attended KU. He enlisted in the U.S. Army Air Corps in 1942 after his sophomore year and saw action ferrying planes and fuel to battle zones in both the

European and Asian Theaters of WWII. After the war, Don came to the University of Kansas City (now UMKC) to complete a bachelor's degree in economics and accounting and then his DDS degree in 1951. After a year-long internship in New Orleans, Don and his wife, Evelyn, settled in Salina, Kan., where he built a very successful private practice.

Don quickly rose through the ranks of organized dentistry, serving as president of the Kansas Chapter of the American Society of Dentistry for Children, the Salina Dental Society, the Golden Belt District Dental Society, and the Kansas Dental Association. At UMKC he became president of the Dental Alumni Association and served as a long-time member of the board of the Rinehart Foundation.

Along the way, he also was elected a Fellow in the American College of Dentists and served on the Council of the American Dental Association. He was named Kansas Dental Association Man of the Year in 1991 and UMKC Dental Alumnus of the Year in 1999.

At home, he held volunteer leadership positions at the Salina Area Technical School, Asbury Regional Medical Center, St. John's Regional Health Center, Lions Club, Chamber of Commerce, Red Cross, Meals on Wheels, First

Christian Church, First United Methodist Church, the Masons and the Shriners. When it came to serving others, there was no job too big or too small for Don Amend. He rejoiced in everything he did, whether it was hosting the hospitality suite of the Alumni Meeting or presiding over the board of the Kansas Dental Association. He was the consummate professional.

Bill Cleveland's story is a lot like Don's. He grew up in a small town in Missouri, graduated from Westminster College, and served in the U.S. Army during the Korean War. After the war, he entered the UMKC School of Dentistry, got his degree, established a practice in Brookfield, Mo., and got married.

He and his wife, Connie, moved to Leawood, Kan., shortly thereafter. Bill maintained a very successful practice for 35 years in Prairie Village. During that time, he was active in community and professional affairs: he coached soccer, served as a Scout Master, officiated at swim meets, and continued to serve in the Army Reserve, retiring after 28 years with the rank of Lt. Colonel.

About eight years ago, after concluding that retirement was not for him, Bill joined the faculty of the UMKC School of Dentistry in an outreach program called Partnership for Smiles. He worked tirelessly, five days per week, treating indigent patients at two safety-net dental clinics, and supervising and mentoring dental students, right up until the month before he died. He was an outstanding teacher (warm, funny, caring and knowledgeable) and a wonderful dentist. More than anything else, he was a wonderful role model. In a world where many folks are concerned about wealth and position, or praise and adulation, Bill was a man who just wanted to do an honest day's work helping others. And he did, every day of his life.

One of the great joys of my life has been to get to know alumni like Don and Bill. At UMKC, thankfully, there are many other stories like theirs we can tell. We can be proud of a very long-standing tradition of service to others. ■

