2009 Guy E. March Medal Citation

Kenneth G. May (CE61)

Hailing from Rapid City, South Dakota, Ken May has demonstrated his unselfish service and dedication to the South Dakota School of Mines and Technology and its Alumni Association for more than 40 years. Upon earning his civil engineering degree in 1961, May was drafted in October of 1961. Following Officer Candidate School, May was promoted through the ranks from lieutenant to captain in the U.S. Army Intelligence Corps, was an officer in charge of the Nuremberg Field Team in Germany, and served as chief of special operations. He also studied foreign cultures and hired, taught, and controlled the activities of civilian employees in Germany. His military service included positions as combat intelligence officer in Vietnam, area intelligence specialist in Germany. He studied Czechoslovakian at the Presidio of Monterey, in California, and studied German in Oberammergau, Germany. He also attended various schools in Kansas City, Missouri as a background investigator.

In the 1970s and 1980s, May’s professional career in Rapid City included positions with 1st Federal Savings & Loan, CMI Investment Corp., VEREX Corp, Prairie States Life Insurance Co., Dakota Steel & Supply, and Brink Electric Construction Co. It was during these years when his ongoing service and connection to the School of Mines and the SDSM&T Alumni Association began the exemplary record befitting the Guy E. March Medal.

As treasurer of the Alumni Association, May was instrumental in the transfer of $1 million in funds held by the Endowment Association to the newly-formed SDSM&T Foundation. May served two terms as president of the Alumni Association, was the co-chair of the 2000 All-School Reunion, a past member of the Alumni Relationship Committee, and is a current member of the Alumni Investment Committee. Additionally, in 1998, May was a strong supporter of the effort by the Alumni Association to create the Distinguished Alumni Award. He rarely misses attending a quarterly meeting of the Board of Directors, and he, wife Nancy, and their three children regularly attended numerous campus and alumni events and activities.

A notable example of his support to the university was his participation in a special committee requested by the School of Mines President in 2001 to evaluate the future status of the Department of Mining Engineering and its academic program. As a consequence of that committee’s recommendations, the department was re-configured into the Department of Mining Engineering and Management with financial support by the mining industry.

May’s activities have included presentations to students attending the Student-Alumni Connection meetings; active participation in and support of the annual Student-Alumni Golf Tournament; active participation in and support of the Triangle Fraternity Alumni and its ongoing involvement with the active chapter of School of Mines students; and alumni representative at the semi-annual School of Mines Career Fair. He has twice been a judge for the selection of M-Day King and Queen Candidates, and a judge for the local and regional American Society of Civil Engineers concrete canoe contest. Since his days as a student in the late 1950s and early 1960s, May has been a friend and admirer of Guy March (EE22) and a fitting recipient of his namesake award.