

ROBERT B. HONEA (2011 WINNER)



The Anderson Medal is the highest honor, which the Applied Geography Specialty Group (AGSG), Association of American Geographers (AAG), can bestow. It is awarded by the AGSG Board of Directors, upon recommendation by the Anderson Medal Committee, in recognition of the most distinguished service to the profession of geography.

The AGSG may bestow a Medal for achievement in geography on individuals or organizations for notable contributions to the advancement of the profession by recognizing outstanding accomplishments in one or more areas of industry, government, literature, education, research, service to the profession, or public service. A Medal is so distinctive an honor that it is bestowed only if the accomplishments are truly outstanding.

As the 2011 Anderson Medalist, Robert B. Honea is recognized for exceptional accomplishments in applied geography research, public service, and education.

Dr. Honea has the distinction of having obtained his Ph. D. under Jim Anderson at the University of Florida, for whom the Anderson Medal is named. Prior to his doctorate, he started his career teaching at East Tennessee State University when its Geography Department played a major role in the start-up of NASA's satellite imagery programs including Landsat. Honea moved freely back and forth between the university and Marshall Space Flight Center, sometimes spending months at a time at each institution. In 1975, upon completing his Ph. D., he assumed a position at Oak Ridge National Laboratory (ORNL), where he would remain for 27 years. At ORNL, he continued teaching through job training of many graduate students.

Through it all, Dr. Honea has been a vocal advocate for geography in the realm of what Alvin Weinberg called "big science" at national laboratories, government agencies, private companies, and other research institutions. He founded the National Transportation Research Center, a facility jointly run by ORNL and the University of Tennessee. Recently, he has led the Kansas Transportation Research Institute, where he has constantly played the role most befitting a geographer, integrating across all sciences and engineering disciplines engaged in transportation research. Throughout his career, Honea has worked closely with diverse engineers and scientists, always congenially chiding them for their disciplines' shortcomings compared to geography.

His main achievements have been in government and research. At ORNL, for instance, he advanced the profession by supporting the hiring of a significant portion of the 36 geographers who worked there from the late 1970s to the present. He led programs that advanced the science

of, for instance, GIS transportation modeling. And, most truly applied, he led the research program that transformed the U. S. Military Airlift Command's (later the U. S. Transportation Command) routing and queuing of all military shipments of men and material from manual to fully automated digital operations. Honea has supervised research organizations of over 100 people, and developed a cumulative funding base of nearly \$300 million. As Director of National Transportation Research Center, he was responsible for the safety, security and well-being of nearly 200 people and for coordinating over \$130 million from a variety of sponsors. Finally, Dr. Honea has written over 100 reports, presentations, and papers concerning transportation studies, remote sensing applications, regional modeling, energy policy and security, and military transportation systems.

The Anderson Medal Committee and the Applied Geography Specialty Group extend their sincerest congratulations to Dr. Robert Honea on being awarded the 2011 Anderson Medal of Honor in Applied Geography.