

In Memory of William B. Wood, 1956-2005

2001 Anderson Medal Recipient

The James R. Anderson Distinguished Medal in Applied Geography was created by the Applied Geography Specialty Group, Association of American Geographers. The award honors James Anderson, an internationally acclaimed geographer, public servant and researcher who made an extraordinary contribution to the field of applied geography.

Since its inception in 1983, the Anderson Medal has been awarded to a select group of individuals whose contributions to applied geography through teaching, research, public service, and/or private enterprise are recognized by the Anderson Medal Committee as representing the standards of excellence set by Dr. Anderson.

In 2001, the Anderson Medal Committee had the pleasure and privilege of naming Dr. William Wood an Anderson Medal recipient.

As even a cursory examination of his dossier reveals, Bill Wood enjoyed an outstanding career. Most importantly for the Anderson Medal Committee, however, and for the entire field of geography, Bill was an active, visible, published, credible, innovative and enthusiastic applied geographer, whose professional interests and responsibilities covered a range of subject matters, including political geography, regional development, urban geography, military geography and cultural geography.

Perhaps even more notable from the Anderson Medal perspective, however, Bill brought a strong methodological bent to his work, and was a leading, informed advocate for the application of geographic information systems in public administration. In that respect, Bill Wood carried on a tradition that Jim Anderson helped set in motion four decades ago.

As a closing observation about a remarkable career, Bill Wood's exceptional combination of training and work experience enabled him to share two key traits of James Anderson. First, Bill also understood why and how to make the case for applied geography in the policy, program, planning and operations domains, which is no easy task under the best of circumstances.

Second, as shown in his publications and presentations, Bill also undertook his professional missions and tasks with the purposefulness and competency of a first-rate scholar and applied researcher, employing words, numbers, and graphics with compelling conviction before a wide range of audiences.

Bill Wood served his country with distinction, and he brought insight, recognition and respect to the field of applied geography. His passing is mourned by the recipients of the Anderson Medal, and the applied geography community.

It is appropriate to close this memorial with words of highest praise: James Anderson would be pleased to count William B. Wood among the recipients of the James Anderson Distinguished Medal in Applied Geography.

Dr. Barry Wellar, Chair, Anderson Medal Committee

Association of American Geographers

July 25, 2005

Ottawa, Ontario