

Distinguished Alumni

Distinguished Alumnus Award - 2005

Richard D. Baum '64

The natural beauty of Cate captured you from the day you first stepped on the Mesa. Once there, you threw yourself into the intellectual life of the place, developing close relationships with faculty and fellow students. It was these relationships that inspired your life-long love of learning and belief in the value of intimate residential education.

At Cate you began to develop a deep social conscience, as you watched the Civil Rights movement unfold and resisted the pressure to conform to a prep-school culture that had not yet begun to celebrate differences. Still, you learned to adapt to school life, and became a leader of the student body as a monitor and then prefect in your senior year. Your strong commitment to diversity within the Cate community inspired you to work with your classmates to give the School its first African American Student Scholarship as the class gift of 1964. This gift was ultimately embraced by the board and funded in perpetuity.

Having distinguished yourself at Cate through top grades and leadership, you attended Stanford where you majored in history. There you continued your devotion to causes you believed in, participating actively in the anti-war movement as a conscientious objector. After college, you worked as a social worker in New York City and San Francisco. You then joined the National Teacher Corps where you taught middle school in upstate New York while earning a Master in Education.

To enable yourself to better effect social change you earned a law degree in 1976 from George Washington University, graduating *Magna Cum Laude*. You then became a field attorney for the National Labor Relations Board, and, several years later, director of Labor Relations for Amfac, Inc., a Hawaii based corporation with businesses ranging from agriculture to electronics. You excelled at Amfac and you rose to the position of senior vice president of administration, where you learned the truth of a college friend's observation, "If you want to be challenged, go into commerce." You saw that even though you were not directly involved in social action, you could positively impact your co-workers and the community at large by keeping the organization focused on good governance.

In 1991, you returned to public service when John Garamendi, California's first elected insurance commissioner, appointed you chief deputy insurance commissioner for the State. In that post, you served as chief operating officer of the California Department of Insurance, overseeing and directing all regulatory, enforcement, consumer protection, legal and administrative operations. You left the department in 1995 after a change in administration and, a year later, became CEO of Care West Insurance Company, a workers compensation carrier. Nine years later, in 2003, following his re-election as insurance commissioner, Mr. Garamendi re-appointed you as chief deputy. You continue to serve in this role today.

Throughout your career, you have remained close to Cate. You were elected Alumni Council president in 1981, and represented the alumni on the Board of Trustees during your two year term. You were then asked to stay on the board, and have continued as a member to this day. In 1999, after having served as chair of the Search Committee that brought Ben Williams to Cate, you were elected president of the board, and served a five-year term through 2004. As president, you successfully led the board in its efforts to improve and broaden the School's faculty housing options and to develop a faculty housing policy that reflects the values of the Cate community. In recognition of your service to the School, the board elected you a life trustee at the end of your tenure as president.

Outside of Cate, you have remained actively involved in the San Francisco Bay Area community by serving as president of the board of the Scott Street Senior Housing Complex and vice president of board of directors of the Mount Zion Health Fund.

In recognition of your embodiment of the spirit of *Servons* - the duty and joy of serving others – in your career, family life, and devotion to Cate, the Cate School Alumni Association is proud to honor you, Richard D. Baum '64, with the Distinguished Alumnus Award for 2005.