

# Distinguished Alumni

## Distinguished Alumnus Award - 1991

### William Matson Roth '35

Throughout your life, your commitment to your community, to education, and to the people of California has been exemplary.

You were active in all aspects of Cate, participating in Gymkhana and the debate team, and serving as president of the drama club and editor of *El Batidor*. Following Cate, you attended Yale University, where you majored in English literature, were an editor of the Yale Daily News, and, with classmate Ambrose Cramer '35, compiled the first complete bibliography of William Butler Yeats. With Jane Grabhorn, you founded the Colt Press in San Francisco to publish distinguished authors in fine editions.

You served as a member of The Office of War Information in Alaska and Burma in World War II, and, upon returning, worked for Prentice Hall Publisher in New York and later for the Honolulu Oil Company in California and Texas. In the '50s, you became treasurer and then financial vice-president of the Matson Navigation Company, one of the world's largest shipping companies.

During your subsequent role as president of both properties, you took an active interest in San Francisco's urban planning, by turning the old Ghirardelli Chocolate Factory into a bustling commercial center. You helped to pioneer a national movement to renovate and re-use buildings of architectural and historical interest.

In 1963, President Kennedy appointed you deputy U.S. representative for trade negotiation with the rank of ambassador. Subsequently, under President Johnson, you became U.S. trade representative and successfully led the negotiations of the Kennedy Round, lowering world-wide tariffs. A decade later, you ran for governor of California in the democratic primary, and, although you lost to Jerry Brown, earned respect for your knowledge, experience, and commitment.

Long a champion of minority rights, you were one of Cate's earliest proponents of diversification and scholarship assistance. At commencement ceremonies in 1960, you exhorted the school to open its doors to students of color, and you have watched with interest as Cate has made great strides to that end in the intervening years.

Importantly, you have also made the financial commitment which has allowed many of those students to attend Cate. But your interest in education has not ended with Cate; you have served as a trustee of Mills College, the Institute for Advanced Study, and for 16 years as a member of the Board of Regents of the University of California.

In recognition of your outstanding life achievements, the Cate School Alumni Association honors you, William Matson Roth '35, as its Distinguished Alumnus for 1991.