

In Memorium

Robert C. Witt



On February 7, 1995, at the age of 53, Robert Charles Witt died doing what he loved best—playing basketball. Professor Witt was a beloved teacher and mentor as well as a respected colleague and internationally recognized scholar.

At the time of his death, Professor Witt was in his twenty-fifth year of teaching in the Department of Finance at the University of Texas at Austin, where he held the prestigious Gus S. Wortham Memorial Chair in Risk Management and Insurance. He previously held the Joseph H. Blades Memorial Professorship in Risk Management and Insurance and the CBA Foundation Professorship in Finance at the University of Texas at Austin as well. Born in Tyndall, South Dakota, on August 24, 1941, he earned two

bachelor's degrees from the University of South Dakota (mathematics and business) and two master's degrees (one from the University of Wisconsin in actuarial science, the other from the University of Pennsylvania in managerial science and applied economics). He obtained a Ph.D. in managerial science and applied economics from the University of Pennsylvania.

Professor Witt was energetic, enthusiastic, and goal-focused about his research and publications, and he had a true thirst for knowledge and understanding. His probing and insightful comments, as well as his open and accepting interactions with people at all levels of academic stature, made him well known and well liked among his colleagues.

These attributes, in conjunction with his important research contributions, resulted in numerous awards, recognitions, and honors. In 1987, he received the University of Texas at Austin College of Business Administration Award for Outstanding Long-Term Research Contributions. Then, in 1990, a ten-year survey of leading contributors to risk management and insurance research in the *Journal of Risk and Insurance* ranked him as the second-most prolific writer in insurance research. His dedication and effort in the area of risk management and insurance spearheaded the University of Texas at Austin's national and international academic reputation in the subject.

He published numerous feature articles and communications in the *Journal of Risk and Insurance* and received several JRI awards for his contributions. In 1984 and 1992, he received the Alpha Kappa Psi Award for the most outstanding article published ten years earlier which had withstood the test of time. He received the inaugural award for the outstanding feature article in the 1992 issues of the *Journal of Insurance Regulation*. Professor Witt served as president of ARIA from 1985 to 1986. He served as Associate Editor of the *Journal of Risk and Insurance*, most recently from 1990 until his death.

Professor Witt is survived by his wife, Laura Gutierrez-Witt, and his daughter, Kristina. As a loving husband and father and an ethical person who put substance ahead of form and group welfare ahead of personal gain, Professor Witt's leaving has created an unfillable void in our discipline and an emptiness in the hearts of his many friends and colleagues.

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