REMARKS AT DONALD HAYMAN’S MEMORIAL SERVICE

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by Mike Smith, Dean
UNC School of Government

During Don Hayman’s 39 years at the Institute of Government his work was directly responsible for improving the lives of North Carolinians. His influence continues, now, and into the future. Let me talk about three examples.

THE MPA PROGRAM
When Don Hayman was hired by Albert Coates as a political science graduate student in 1948, his faculty advisors encouraged him to take the job and “infiltrate” the Institute. They wanted him to persuade Mr. Coates to support the creation of a Master of Public Administration program in their department. Notwithstanding Don’s best efforts, Mr. Coates could not be persuaded.

However, in 1962, when John Sanders succeeded Albert Coates as Director of the Institute, Don found a sympathetic ally. In 1966 the MPA Program was created in the Department of Political Science at UNC. It would not have happened without the vision and persistence of Donald Hayman. He never gave up.

Don taught in the program for the rest of his career at the Institute, helping students learn about sound personnel administration. Generations of graduates vividly recall his insistence that their communication be “clear, concise, and free of ambiguity.” It became their mantra, and if you begin to chant it in the company of Don’s former students, they can quickly join in and repeat it together. Today’s students continue to learn that rule.

But Don did much more than teach. He was known affectionately as the Godfather of the program largely because of his role in finding internships and employment for MPA students. He helped countless students get their first job, he stayed in contact with them, and in many cases, he helped them find their second, third, and fourth jobs. Don had strong opinions about whether a job was a good fit for someone—he knew his students and he knew the hiring needs of local government. He was not bashful about occasionally telling a student that his or her preferred job was wrong for them and that they should take a different position, which he would arrange. He always had their best interests at heart.

COUNCIL-MANAGER FORM OF GOVERNMENT
Don became the leading authority in the world on this form of local government. It is the governance structure in which a trained professional manages city or county operations.

When he joined the Institute, only seven of the 100 counties in North Carolina had professional managers. By the time he retired, that number had increased to 93. Don actively promoted the value of professional managers and he persuaded local officials to adopt the council-manager structure. Behind his mild-mannered exterior, Don could be relentless in pursuing a worthy public service goal. He was absolutely right. The rise of the council-manager form of government—the overall rise of professionalism in local government—must be counted as one of his legacies.
STATE GOVERNMENT SUMMER INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

In the 1960s, Don helped to create a summer internship program that gave hundreds of North Carolina college students the opportunity to work for state agencies. He directed the program for many years. Don spent lots of time with the interns in Raleigh and he inspired many to pursue careers in public service. The impact of the intern program has been remarkable.

For me, one story from that time says a lot about Don and his approach to work. The program was a residential one that included men and women, which sometimes presented challenges in finding appropriate summer housing in Raleigh. They often ended up in a fraternity house at NC State University. Each year on the weekend before the students arrived, Don would buy lumber and nails and personally build a partition in the fraternity bathroom and shower to provide the required privacy for the interns.

It is possible to interpret this story as being about Don’s Midwestern values of thrift, modesty, and self-sufficiency. I choose to understand it as a story about a man who believed that his life was dedicated to serving others, and that meant doing whatever was needed to get the job done, period—even if you are “the father of sound public personnel administration” and a legend. In other words, grab a hammer and pound a nail.

CONCLUSION

Coming to the Institute of Government in 1948, when the culture was overwhelmingly about law and lawyers, was incredibly bold for a political scientist. When I arrived 30 years later, people still routinely referred to colleagues either as lawyers or non-lawyers, as if those were the only two professional categories in the world. Don was a trailblazer in joining the Institute, and he paved the way for future colleagues whose work in many different academic disciplines other than law has advanced our mission in North Carolina.

Don helped many people see the value of public service at different points in their lives—summer interns, MPA students, and public officials. The luckiest ones had all three experiences and were influenced and mentored by Don at each step along the way. His influence continues as the people he touched do their work, and as they influence others.

Perhaps most importantly, Don created structures and practices that continue to advance professionalism in North Carolina, and they have become a part of our local government DNA.