

GLADYS EDDY

Throughout her career, Gladys Eddy advocated for women and girls, particularly as to their roles in the business world. She advanced the status of women on the college campus, developed a student governance model that has served as a model on other campuses, and created a women's honor society, among other initiatives. She received many accolades and awards for her work.

EARLY LIFE

Gladys was born on Christmas Day, 1915, in Castle Rock, Colorado, to William and Jessie Shellabarger. She was valedictorian of her graduating class at Littleton High School and earned a Bachelor of Science degree from the University of Denver in 1937. She was hired as an assistant instructor at the Colorado State College of Agriculture and Mechanic Arts in Fort Collins, Colorado, and met her future husband, Willard Eddy, at a reception for new faculty there. They were married in 1938.

EARLY COLLEGE CAREER

Hired to teach vocational education part-time, she also served as secretary to the college president, Roy Green. At her urging, the college began offering courses in administrative management; eventually additional classes in business led to creation of the College of Business. During World War II, she taught typing and stenography to women students. Under her leadership the college expanded offerings for women, who had previously been able only to major in home economics or chemistry.

INNOVATIONS

Gladys created the Association of Women Students as well as the honor society for women students. Thanks to her advocacy a chapter of Mortar Board, a national honor society, was formed at the college. She worked with the Business College Council, a student governance board, and was assistant to the dean of the College of Business for a number of years until her retirement in May, 2007. Throughout her tenure at CSU, she oversaw annual Business Days, during which she brought in well known, highly regarded guest speakers who shared their experiences and expertise.

HONORS AND AWARDS

In 1984, she was appointed by President Ronald Reagan to serve on the national advisory council on vocational education. She received the Charles A. Lory public service award from Colorado State University (CSU) in 1994, the community builder award from Fort Collins service clubs in 1984, the outstanding women of Colorado award from the Colorado Federation of Business and Professional Women in 1975, and outstanding woman teacher award from CSU in 1973.

HER LEGACY

Through her work and her actions, Gladys Eddy promoted the status of women and girls, beginning well before the women's rights movement gained attention and achieved progress in the United States. As a professional woman in what was primarily a man's field, she demonstrated skill, initiative and the ability to do her job well, thereby helping to forge a place for women in the world of business. She was an excellent teacher for whom her students had great respect.

QUESTIONS

1. How could women and girls promote their rights in the 1930s? What rights might they not have had?
2. When a woman works in a male-dominated field, what difficulties might she encounter? How can she overcome them?
3. What qualities make a person a good teacher?
4. Why would it have been helpful for women to know typing and stenography during World War II?

GLOSSARY

Accolades—honors, compliment

Advisory—offering guidance rather than having authority

Advocacy—speaking on behalf of someone or something

Forge—create, form

Stenography—a way of taking dictation

Vocational—having to do with work, particularly in trades such as carpentry

TIMELINE

December 25, 1915—birth in Castle Rock, Colorado

May, 1933—graduation from high school as valedictorian

May, 1937—graduation from Colorado A & M College with a degree in business

Fall, 1937—hired as a part-time instructor at the Fort Collins college

1938—marriage to Willard Eddy. They had two children, Sandra and Bill. 1937-

May, 2007—instructor, secretary and assistant to the dean of the College of Business until retirement

2010—death at age 94.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

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