

Comments about Gregg Jackson at the Retirement Reception, May 4, 2006

How can we sum up Gregg Jackson's contributions to GWU and to GSEHD in two or three minutes? We are all familiar with Gregg's service to the university, his impact on school policies, his academic contributions, his teaching, and his integrity. I would like to focus my comments on Gregg's character, and on his enormous commitment to each of his students.

In describing Gregg, I will paraphrase a recent commentary: "How others treat those perceived to be above them in the hierarchy says nothing. But how others treat those perceived to have less status is like a magical window into the soul." Gregg epitomizes the definition of a person whose responses to others are totally independent of their role in the institution. He treats all with respect, courtesy, and honesty—indeed, at times, more honesty than we're prepared to hear!

Our students know how fortunate they are to have had the opportunity to work with him, how much they have benefited from his intellectual rigor, his sense of caring for their well being and future professional success, and how generously he has given his time and energy to help them progress. Gregg's commitment to his students comes first, and I have watched him over the years give up even the small amount of free time he allows himself to ensure that he has done everything possible to enable them to succeed.

Some have asked why Gregg is retiring. The real reason is that he has tried for 10 years to help me become computer literate beyond e-mail and word processing. That is the only endeavor in which he has not succeeded. He has now decided to give it up!

On a personal note, Gregg has been a wonderful colleague, and we will all miss him very much.