

## In Memory of Dr. Sam J. Bruno

Dr. Sam Bruno, who served as Executive Director of the Federation of Business Disciplines until 2009, passed away on Tuesday, August 23, after a three-year battle with leukemia.

Sam played a seminal role during the early years of the Southwestern Federation of Administrative Disciplines (the original name of the organization now known as FBD) as part of a group who in 1973 organized a regional group of academicians promoting research in business. Sam continued in leadership roles during the remainder of the 1970's and was named the organization's first Executive Director in 1981. He served in that capacity until 2009, thus contributing 36 years of continuous leadership to ensure FBD remained a viable organization. He guided the Board's decision making to ensure the organization provides valuable faculty development and research dissemination opportunities for academics at all stages of their careers. SWFAD and later FBD evolved into a premier multidisciplinary platform for advancing business knowledge and practices, developing new standards of educational excellence and encouraging intellectual and social interchange among academicians and university administrators. It was through his never-failing leadership and stability that the organization remained vibrant and strong. At the time Sam stepped down as Executive Director, another long-time member of SWFAD/FBD noted, "There was a young man who lived in Houston. He had so many associations he didn't know what to do! So he gave them some leadership, Texas style, and he whipped them all soundly into the Federation." For over 35 years Sam provided the glue to hold the organization together; he provided the vision to keep it moving forward; he kept a "diverse ship" from going off course or sinking.

Sam was a dear friend, mentor, and source of counsel for many individuals who have served in various capacities of FBD offices throughout the decades. Lou Pelton, FBD president in 2002-2003, shares the following observations, "barely five feet tall, Sam was a giant among men; he was bestowed a gift of goodness, integrity, and unwavering passion to humankind. His infectious enthusiasm, warm smile and gentle demeanor are characteristics that I will always cherish and remember."

Sam's contributions to the continued success of FBD are truly immeasurable. Through great personal sacrifice over 30+ years, Sam guided an organization that has touched tens of thousands of academicians across the region, the nation, and the world. The role of Executive Director of an all-volunteer organization composed of numerous smaller organizations is challenging 365 days a year. Add to this challenge the reality of a constant rotation of officers in each of the organizations and a Board of Directors with a 50% turnover each year, and the challenges increase exponentially.

When meeting to turn over Executive Director files to me, Sam looked me in the eye and said, "the job is truly a labor of love," and further described how his immediate family had also provided support for his labor of love over the decades. Sam set the bar high, and we have the challenge of carrying forward his work to ensure FBD remains strong and viable far into the future. While others can take on the executive director title, no one will ever truly fill his shoes or replace him. We will truly miss our dear friend and mentor. Our hearts are filled with sorrow, and our deepest sympathy goes out to his wife of 45 years, Joan, their children Chad, Felicia, and Scott, and the extended Bruno family.



Posted by Betty Kleen  
FBD Executive Director