Robert Gerald Elias, for almost four decades you have been the model of an educational leader in northeastern Pennsylvania. Graduating from Wilkes in 1956 with a Bachelor of Science degree in Business Education through which you were certified for secondary education in twelve subjects including English, Social Studies, Commercial Law and Economics, you assumed your first teaching position in the Shickshinny School District where you demonstrated your extraordinary range of talent by teaching English Literature and Accounting. After teaching at Northwest Joint School District and Wilkes-Barre Area, you assumed the position of Supervisor of Data Processing Education and Administrative Service at Wilkes-Barre Area where you integrated computer technology into the administrative structure of our school systems even as you worked simultaneously to survey business and industry to determine newly proposed vocational technical school curriculum offerings. In 1978 you became Administrative Director of the Wilkes-Barre Area Vocational Technical School, perhaps a national model of what is possible educationally in providing the wherewithal for those students who at other times and in other places might have become dropout statistics to become fully prepared to meet the workforce needs of these times and many places.

As Director of Wilkes-Barre Voc Tech, you taught your educator colleagues in the public and private school sectors as well as the post-secondary level the importance of working with students to address their needs as learners while keeping in mind society's needs for an educated and skilled citizenry. Working with business and industry, colleges, community leaders and believers of all sorts, you never gave up on the vision of a partnership of the adult community to provide the structure and atmosphere that will support the coming generation.

You have modeled your belief in education by taking advanced training in Electronics Data Processing at the University of Pittsburgh before pursuing your Master of Science degree in Education at Temple University and accumulating an additional 25 graduate credits in supervisory and administrative programs beyond the master's degree. You continued as consultant to Temple University in its study for a competency-based teacher education program. Teacher, learner, administrator par excellence, community leader and citizen, you have demonstrated what students can achieve and what the community can become as it works together to meet the needs of the students and the community.

Proud and supportive husband and father, you have epitomized in your private life and public work a spirit of progressive change and civility. Now, as a representative of the University you have often returned to in your educational leadership capacity,

I happily declare that by the power vested in me by the Board of Trustees of Wilkes University and by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, I hereby confer upon you, Robert Gerald Elias, the Honorary Doctorate of Humane Letters, Honoris Causa, with all the rights and privileges appertaining thereto.