

In Memoriam ***Dr. Lee Vernon Stiff***

It is with great sadness that NCCTM mourns the passing of Dr. Lee Stiff, a well-known member of the North Carolina Mathematics Education community and tireless volunteer for NCCTM. Dr. Stiff died at home on March 19, 2021 after a nearly yearlong battle with cancer.

Dr. Stiff was born and raised in Murfreesboro, North Carolina where he graduated from C. S. Brown High School in 1967. He earned a Bachelor's Degree in Mathematics from UNC-CH, an MAT from Penn State, a Master's Degree in Mathematics from Duke, and a Ph. D in Mathematics Education from N. C. State. After earning his Ph. D., he joined the Mathematics and Computer Science faculty at UNC Charlotte where he particularly enjoyed working with excellent colleagues in Mathematics Education.



In 1983, he was recruited by and agreed to join the faculty in the Department of Mathematics and Science Education at N C State. At N C State he was an innovative teacher, researcher, and research director. Lee's colleagues always marveled at his work ethic. For many years he was a busy professor by day, always carrying a full load, and a writer at night. He could get two day's work out of one day. He developed one of the earliest undergraduate courses for prospective mathematics teachers dedicated entirely to teaching mathematics using technology.

From 1983, he moved through the ranks from Assistant Professor, Associate Professor, Full Professor and at the time of his retirement in May 2020, he was Associate Dean for Faculty and Academic Affairs in the College of Education. Perhaps his greatest legacy is the undergraduate, master's, and doctoral students he taught and mentored and who are now teaching and passing the torch.

Members of NCCTM will remember Lee as a very popular speaker at conferences, where he always drew big crowds, and for his service on committees, in particular, the W. W. Rankin Award Committee. Few people know that Dr. Stiff began his long career of lofty service to NCCTM and NCTM by accepting a very humble job. He got his start by chairing and manning the Sale of NCTM Materials Booth at a two-day NCCTM Annual Meeting in Charlotte in the last of the 1970s. This involved moving large numbers of boxed books and materials, unpacking them and displaying them, staying with the booth, packing them all up again, and sending them back by U.S. Mail.

As a very successful textbook author, a sought-after speaker, and as a holder of several offices in NCTM, including President from 2000-2002, Dr Stiff earned national fame and recognition that reflected back on North Carolina and NCCTM. In April 2020 at the Annual Meeting of NCTM, Dr. Stiff was awarded the 2019 NCTM Lifetime Achievement Award:

<https://www.nctm.org/Grants-and-Awards/Lifetime-Achievement-Award/Lee-Stiff/>