



Joan Ruth Giesecke

December 11, 1921 - October 9, 2017

Joan was born in Aberdeen, South Dakota. She retired to and died in Sarasota, Florida after a 13-year battle with cancer.

Dr. Joan Giesecke spent 25 years at University of Nebraska at Lincoln (UNL) libraries, 16 as Dean of Libraries. During her tenure, her accomplishments were many. She tripled the library's endowment, oversaw renovations to improve the libraries in size and service, developed relationships to help the colleges advance their teaching and research and enhanced the diversity of the libraries' faculty. Enhancing diversity in the library field was critically important to her. Under Dean Giesecke's leadership, the Libraries developed a long-term commitment to promoting and supporting diversity. Joan's work in this area was recognized nationally by the American Library Association in 2011 when she was honored with their prestigious Equality award.

Joan joined UNL in 1987 as an associate dean and became Dean of Libraries in 1996. In 2009-2010 she was interim director of University of Nebraska Press and in 2010 was interim associate vice chancellor for Extended Education and Outreach. From 2012 until her retirement in 2014, she served as special assistant to the chancellor and coordinated campus-wide accreditation efforts. Upon her retirement, Joan was recognized as Dean and Professor Emerita.

During a very active career, she taught numerous graduate and undergraduate classes and workshops at Simmons College in Boston and Emporia State University in Emporia, KS. Joan wrote seven management books. Her professional involvement, in addition to the American Research Libraries, included the American Library Association, the Greater Western Library Alliance, the Nebraska Library Association and the Virginia Library Association. In 2016, the University of Maryland College of Information Studies recognized her as their Distinguished Alumnus.

Joan earned a bachelor's in economics from the State University of New York at Buffalo, a master's of library science from the University of Maryland, a master's in management from Central Michigan University and a doctorate in public administration from George Mason University. She was associated with George Mason's libraries for 10 years prior to coming to UNL.

Among her civic leadership activities were membership in Lincoln Rotary Club 14, and helping establish and later chair the Women in Philanthropy section of the United Way of Lincoln/Lancaster County. She also chaired UNL's Combined Campaign and was a strong supporter of the Food Bank of Lincoln's Backpack Program.

Survived by her sister Anne Grace Giesecke.

In Joan's honor, donations may be made to United Way/Women in Philanthropy or the Lincoln Food Bank Backpack Program.

Services will be private.