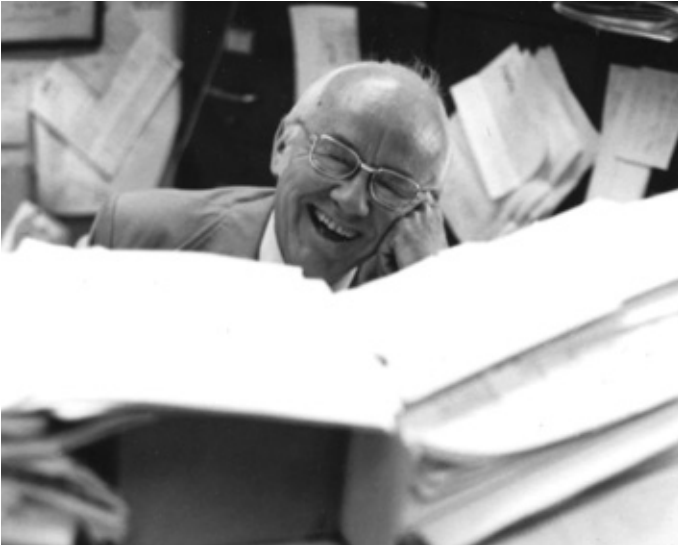


• **In Memoriam**

Thomas Mayo Magoon (1922-2005)



**Pioneer in the Development of University
Counseling Centers in the United States**

The simplest and shortest ethical precept is to be served as little as possible
and to serve others as much as possible.

Leo Tolstoy

Thomas Mayo Magoon was a provocative visionary, ardent supporter, and guiding light in counseling psychology for 40 years. Tom was one of the founding fathers of college-based counseling in the United States. His annual survey of counseling centers in the United States shaped how mental health services are delivered on nearly every college campus in America. Magoon was passionate about creating innovations that could help people help themselves. He lived close to the pulse of his profession and, like many great leaders, was preoccupied with standards of excellence in service delivery that improved people's lives. Magoon strongly believed that isolating key metrics of accountability was the hallmark of professional and public service. He was a cherished mentor to scores of students and professionals who he personally touched.

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His ability to cultivate an individual's full potential epitomizes the basic premises of counseling psychology. Tom became an exemplary role model for future generations of counseling psychologists. His keen intellect, boundless energy, and humor earned him a national network of colleagues, admirers, and friends.

Tom was born in Lancaster, New Hampshire, and spent his formative years in Framingham, Massachusetts. Magoon entered Dartmouth College in 1940. World War II, however, interrupted his education, as he served in the military. Tom was assigned to the U.S. Specialized Training Program in Personnel Psychology under the supervision of Berkeley psychologists Nevitt Sanford, Edwin Tolman, Max Levin, and Jane MacFarland. Magoon's unwavering commitment to psychology was shaped by these luminaries. Tom graduated from Dartmouth in 1947 with dual degrees in psychology and education, and subsequently became an instructor in psychology at Colgate University. His graduate training was at the University of Minnesota from 1948 to 1954 in the newly formed Counseling Psychology Program under the mentorship of Ralph Berdie. Tom also worked with some of the early pioneers in counseling and college student personnel (D. G. Patterson, E. G. Williamson, Gilbert Wrenn, and John Darley). These men left an indelible mark on Tom and shaped his commitment to student affairs and counseling psychology.

In 1955, Magoon moved to the University of Maryland, where he held joint appointments as director of the Counseling Center and professor of counseling psychology and college student personnel. When Tom retired in 1988 after 33 years of service at the University of Maryland, he was awarded emeritus status as a professor and counseling center director.

In 1962, in keeping with Magoon's philosophy that "an ounce of data was worth a pound of opinion," he founded the Maryland Databank for the Association of University and College Counseling Center Directors (AUC-CCD), which annually surveyed counseling centers' usage patterns, and emerging trends among student populations. The evolution of the Databank paralleled the rise of counseling centers on college campuses in the United States. Thus, Magoon's Databank represents a rare source of data chronicling the history of the emergence of counseling centers in higher education in our country.

Magoon saw the university as a community, with the counseling center as its heart. In Tom's view, the counseling center should be the moral compass of the campus. In terms of his own beloved counseling center at the University of Maryland, the then Vice President of Student Affairs, Dr. William L. Thomas, put it best: "Tom came to Maryland in those early days of Student Affairs when counseling centers were just beginning to emerge on college and university campuses across the country and simply hung the moon."

Tom insisted that service was the most important professional value. For Magoon, “being a professional means paying your dues through service to your profession, and given the opportunity to serve, you should do your damndest.” Tom also set the bar high as an agent of change. He was never concerned with conformity, often challenging the status quo. During debates, he was a formidable opponent using data-based analyses, humor, and wisdom to win you over to his point of view. Well known for his persistence, if it took years to bring you around to his way of thinking, then he would actually take years to bring you around to his way of thinking.

Magoon was active on state and national committees in both psychology and counseling. He chaired committees that lobbied for the state of Maryland’s first psychologist certification law. He was then appointed to the American Psychological Association’s (APA) Legislative Committee, a group that advocated for psychologist licensure nationwide. He served on both the APA and American Personnel and Guidance Association’s (APGA) Ethics Committees and compiled APGA’s first Ethical Standards Casebook. From 1957 to 1959, he formed the American Board of Professional Standards in Vocational Counseling, which later became the accreditation organization known as the International Association of Counseling Services (IACS). He was Division 17’s representative to the APA Council of Representatives, and was appointed to the first editorial board of *The Counseling Psychologist*.

Tom possessed great vision and an endless spirit of innovation. He believed that innovation provided professionals an opportunity for renewal and growth. He would devise ingenious ways to achieve his creative agenda. Changes that endured over time are what motivated Magoon to work so hard and enthusiastically. Magoon believed that “if you start with the premise that tomorrow ought to be better than today, then you work out some way to contribute to making it better.” Tom’s passion for innovation is best reflected in the annual American College Personnel Association (ACPA) convention program “Innovations in College Counseling” that he offered for 32 consecutive years (1966-1998).

A selective list of Magoon’s professional recognitions include University of Maryland Chancellor Medallion, Maryland Psychological Association’s Outstanding Psychologist Award, American College Student Personnel Association Lifetime Achievement Award, Association of University and College Counseling Center Directors’ Lifetime Achievement Award, and the Leona Tyler Award for significant professional achievement in Counseling Psychology (Magoon, 1989). The American Counseling Association also named Tom a pioneer in counseling and human development (O’Neil & McCann, 1986, 1991; O’Neil, McCann, & Magoon, 1984).

Tom’s commitment to change endures in the lives of the students and colleagues he touched. He was a charming and charismatic person and an

inspiration to many. He had a deep compassion for those in pain and those who have been historically marginalized in society. His mission was to instill in people hope and optimism. Where there was despair, he cared, and where there was narrowmindedness and injustice, he shed light.

We know that we speak for many of you who knew Tom in expressing our deep appreciation to him and his family for the many contributions he made to counseling psychology. Tom leaves behind a wonderful legacy in applied psychology and education. He is survived by his wife of 55 years, Mary Constance Magoon; five children; a sister; six grandchildren; and a great grandson. Dr. Thomas Mayo Magoon died on January 1, 2005, at the age of 82.

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