

OKUN REMEMBERED FOR PIONEERING WORK IN WATER ENGINEERING

DR. DANIEL A. OKUN, UNC KENAN DISTINGUISHED UNIVERSITY PROFESSOR EMERITUS OF ENVIRONMENTAL ENGINEERING, DIED DEC.10, 2007, IN CHAPEL HILL, N.C. HE WAS 90.

Okun was hailed worldwide for his groundbreaking work in identifying pristine water sources, water management, water supply, pollution control, water reclamation and reuse, and watershed protection issues.

In 2006, he received lifetime achievement awards from Orange Water and Sewer Authority (OWASA) in Orange County, N.C., the national Environmental and Water Resources Institute and the International Water Association.

During his career, Okun worked in 89 countries and consulted with municipal and legislative planning committees throughout the United States. Among Okun's many contributions, he helped design a water treatment plant in Bangkok, Thailand; establish a graduate program in sanitary engineering in Lima, Peru; and studied water supply and pollution control in China for the World Bank. At home in Chapel Hill, he led the campaign to build Cane Creek Dam and

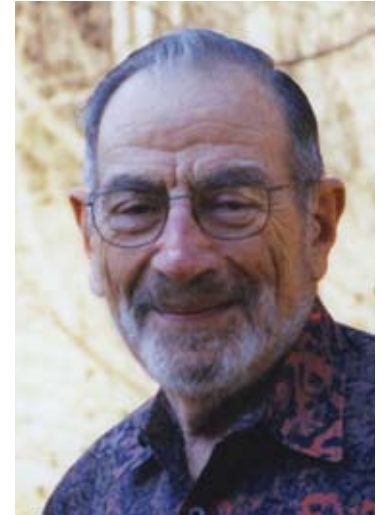
Reservoir in the 1980s to ensure the most pristine water source possible for Chapel Hill and UNC campus.

Okun began his career at UNC in 1952 and served as chair of the Department of Environmental Sciences and Engineering from 1955 to 1973. During his time as chair, the department grew from three to 25 faculty members. Although Okun retired from teaching in 1982, he remained actively involved in the profession through writing, lecturing and consulting, until his death.

"Dan Okun cared deeply about his school, his community, his state and his world," says Dean Barbara K. Rimer. "And he turned that commitment into action, through water projects and social action. Few professors have influenced more students, more professionals, or more policy decisions around the world than Dr. Okun. His work has influenced international policy-making for organizations like the World Bank, United Nations and the World Health Organization. There is nowhere I go that people don't talk about Dan with awe."

Okun was also a generous donor to the UNC School of Public Health. Over the course of his career, he gave generously to the School's Department of Environmental Sciences and Engineering, including funds to create the

Dr. Daniel Okun, in a photo taken circa 1960s



Dr. Daniel Okun

Dan Okun Scholarship Fund. This endowed scholarship is used to recruit and support promising master's level environmental engineering students. In 2004, he also made donations to augment the Daniel A. Okun Distinguished Professorship in environmental sciences and engineering — an endowed professorship held by Dr. Philip C. Singer and established in 1999 by School faculty, students and alumni to honor Okun. Finally, in 2007, Okun made a gift to name the chair's suite in the School's Department of Environmental Sciences and Engineering.

Okun's gifts to UNC were not limited to the School of Public Health. He also made significant gifts for the renovation of Memorial Hall and to the Sonja Haynes Stone Center for Black Culture and History.

Donations may be made in Okun's memory to the Dan Okun Scholarship Fund. Please make checks out to "UNC-CH School of Public Health Foundation, Inc." and write "Dan Okun Scholarship Fund" in the memo field. Mail gifts to UNC School of Public Health, P.O. Box 309, Chapel Hill, N.C. 27514-0309. You may give online at www.sph.unc.edu/giving. For more information, contact Lyne Gamble at (919) 966-8368 or lyne_gamble@unc.edu. ■

