

New endowment assists future political leaders

Two political leaders who have influenced hundreds of former Central Michigan University political science students will continue to assist future students through an endowment in their names.

The **William S. Ballenger III and Dr. William P. Browne Capitol Internship Program Endowment** will benefit political science students interested in seeking internships within all branches of the state and federal government. The endowment will provide students with a stipend for transportation and other expenses related to the internship activities.

"Many students in the seminars that I taught showed interest in internship opportunities in Lansing, but did not know how to go about applying for and securing one," Ballenger said. "It was hit-or-miss as to whether they would even be able to obtain a position, and I realized that there was nothing established at CMU to encourage and offer guidance and financial support to these students. It is my hope that this endowment will be an organized process of applying for and gaining opportunities to work in Michigan government."

Ballenger, editor of "Inside Michigan Politics," served as the Robert and Marjorie Griffin Endowed Chair in American Government at CMU from 2003-07. He is a former state representative and senator, director of the State Department of Licensing and Regulation, and a former state racing commissioner. He also served as deputy assistant secretary of the U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare in President Gerald R. Ford's administration.

Browne taught political science at CMU for more than 30 years until he passed away in 2005 after a 12-year battle with chronic myelogenous leukemia. He was instrumental in establishing the master of public administration program and in placing political science students in internships throughout the country.

The Ballenger-Browne endowment was designed to support and enhance the internship placement efforts that Browne helped to establish.

Known as "Bill" by their students, Ballenger and Browne each had their own unique teaching styles, but focused on influencing and inspiring students.

CMU senior **Andrew Leavitt** said he left Ballenger's political science seminar with a deep admiration for state government and a passion to work in politics.

"Bill was very relaxed and approachable," said Leavitt, a political science major and Swartz Creek native. "He is so close to the state government scene and kept us well informed. I now want to stay in Michigan and make an impact in my state's government."

Jon Smalley, a 1985 CMU graduate, said Browne guided students toward a career path and spent as much time as was needed to work with them on their goals.

"I was fortunate to have Bill Browne show me what was possible," said Smalley, owner of Lansing lobbying firm Muchmore Harrington Smalley & Associates. "It is my belief that without his influence, I would never have ended up in the position I now hold."

The endowment was established through private gifts from family and friends, including Ballenger and Bill Browne's wife, Linda. The endowment will continue to increase its support for internship stipends as future gifts are received through ongoing fundraising efforts by the college.

To request information about making a tax-deductible gift to support the William S. Ballenger III and Dr. William P. Browne Capitol Internship, please contact **Lesia Smith**, the college's director of development, at lesa.smith@cmich.edu or 989.774.3354.