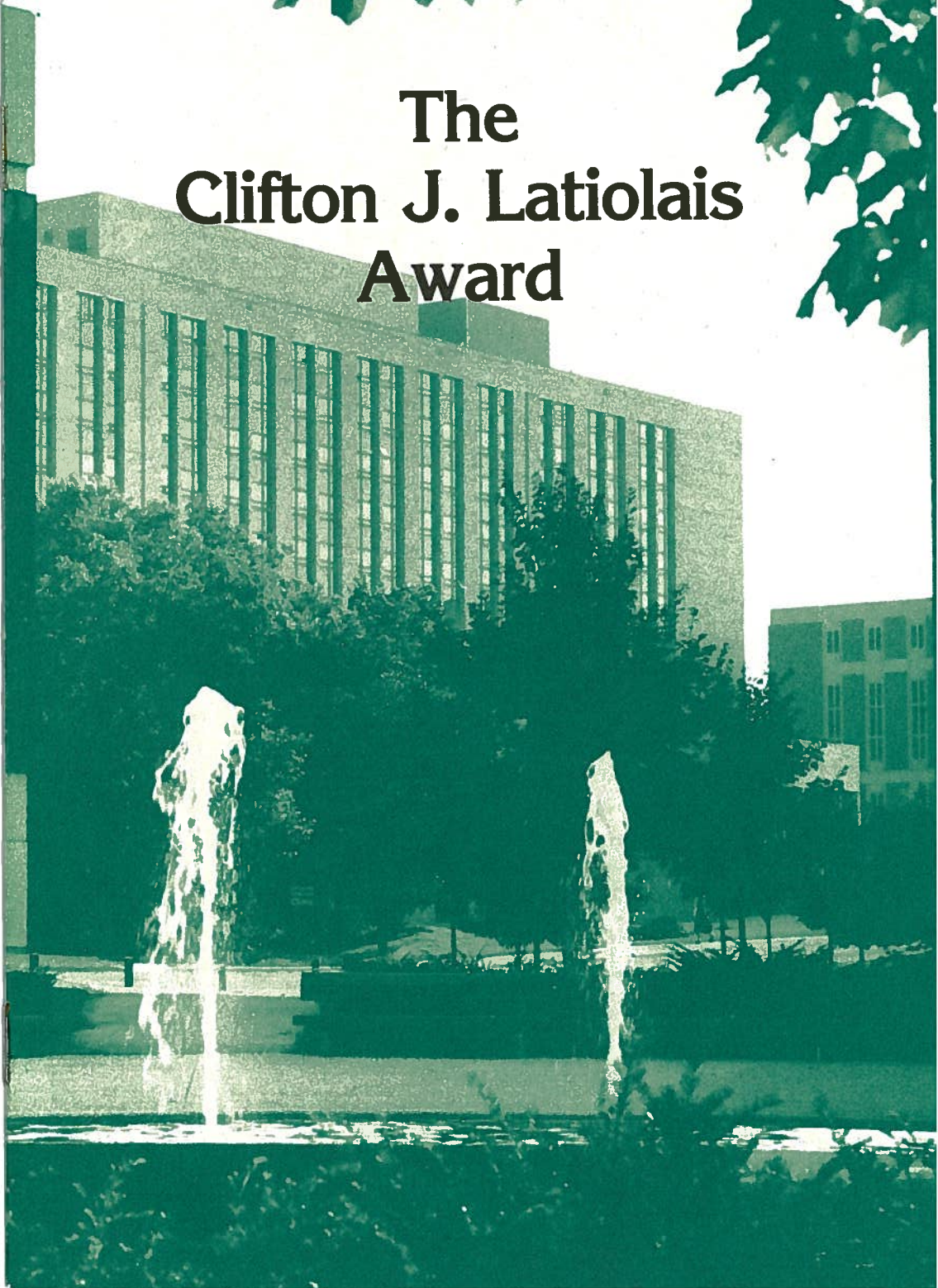


The Clifton J. Latiolais Award



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**Philosophical Perspectives,
Personal Commitment and
Enthusiasm For Excellence**

by

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Presented to the Ohio State University M.Sc.-Residency Graduates in Hospital Pharmacy at the ASHP Clinical Midyear Meeting in New Orleans, LA, December 10, 1985. (Dr. Latiolais is Professor Emeritus, The Ohio State University and Assistant to the Group Vice President, Baxter Travenol Laboratories, Inc.)



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Distinguished alumni of the Ohio State University M.Sc. — residency program, honored guests, faculty, staff and friends.

I was simply stunned, a couple of months ago, when Tim Moore informed me that you had decided to establish the Latiolais Award.

How can I thank you appropriately for such a recognition, especially when I required you to follow such an ungodly schedule from early morning meetings to late evening adjournments for two long years of training? The thought occurred to me that perhaps it just might be that you had to do it for only 24 months, but I had to do it for 25 years!

Seriously, let me express my personal and professional debt of gratitude and thanks to all of you for this signal honor. You have made this a great day for me.

In a lighter vein, I'm reminded of a remark made by Jack Benny upon accepting a distinguished award, "I really don't deserve this. But, I have arthritis, and I don't deserve that, either."

When he informed me of the establishment of the Latiolais award, Tim Moore told me to present some remarks appropriate to the occasion. Since I had no choice, I decided to give it my best shot! Therefore, I should like to discuss with you why philosophical perspectives, personal commitment and enthusiasm for excellence are the guiding stars for the practice of our profession.

Ancient Greeks selected the Pleiades as their guiding stars to set the course of their ships at sea. The Pleiades, referred to in the Bible (Book of Job) are seven stars in the Constellation Taurus, six of which are clear and bright while the seventh is barely visible except to those with keen eyesight.

Indeed, the Pleiades are a symbol of the myths, traditions and guides of the historical past. But in a way, so also are they symbolic of the challenging guide to one's future.

Metaphorically speaking, the six visible stars reflect the important, day to day, personal guides to our own future. These are 1) our family, 2) our religion, 3) our life style, 4) our fellow man, 5) our country and 6) our profession.

Of course, our profession must support our family. It should be practiced in concert with our religious tenets. It should support our societal responsibilities as we enjoy our life style. It should support our religious commitment to our fellow man. It should support our commitment to the democratic ideals of our country. It should support and fulfill the legal basis for society's expectations of our profession.

How can we possibly meet such difficult challenges as we practice our profession? Well, let's look at our seventh metaphorical star for help. It is that hidden, elusive, only partially visible, priceless ingredient — our professional motivation. It is the driving force which compels us to identify our philosophical perspectives, our personal commitment, and, our enthusiasm for excellence, throughout our professional career.

These three motivational characteristics, in concert with our religious tenets, guide our professional practices in order to benefit our fellow man. So, let's examine briefly these three characteristics.

Philosophical Perspectives

From a philosophical perspective, how does one perceive his/her job? How do you

view *your* job? Have *you* placed into perspective what it is that you do?

Let me cite a few examples to illustrate how divergent perspectives affect individuals' views of their jobs and *what a difference* it makes.

I'm sure you've met many colleagues and people in all walks of life with widely disparate perspectives of their jobs. For example, you may have heard someone at a restaurant ask a waiter, "What time is it,, please?" and the waiter replies, "Sorry sir, this isn't my table".

Or you ask a uniformed attendant at the hotel about the availability of taxis and his reply is "I'm not on duty, man".

Or, you meet a pharmacist at the ASHP Midyear meeting and ask him what he does and he replies somewhat dejectedly, "I'm a retail pharmacist".

On the other hand, another pharmacist replying to your same question, says rather enthusiastically, "I'm a clinical pharmacist in an outpatient clinic".

What's the difference? Are they really in the same profession? Is one trying to hurt and the other trying to help his fellow man? It is difficult to understand the dichotomy, isn't it?

You know, the first pharmacy law in the U.S. was enacted in the Commonwealth of Virginia in 1736. This law appointed pharmacists as the guardians for the control of drugs, the control of their sale and the control of their availability. Thus, society gave pharmacists, in addition to physicians, exclusionary legal rights and responsibilities to help patients use drugs safely and to protect the public from injuring themselves from the improper use of drugs. From a professional perspective, this is what clinical pharmacists are doing today, isn't it? Yet,

we had this legal support back in 1736.

Which inclines me to suggest that had pharmacists developed a sound philosophical perspective on exercising their legal responsibilities since 1736, they could have practiced clinical pharmacy in such a way as to do what Cicero once said, "No one can come much closer to the work of the gods, then when he does something to help his fellow man".

You may have heard the old story many times about a brief encounter of the man walking by a construction site where he saw several workers. He walked up to the first worker — a bricklayer — and asked him what he was doing. The bricklayer said, "I'm laying bricks, mister, can't you see that"? To the second worker — a carpenter — he asked the same question. And the reply was, "I am framing this entire building". To the third worker — a helper — the same question. Unhesitatingly, he said proudly, "I'm helping to build a church". How about that for differing philosophical perspectives toward one's job. What a difference does a perspective make!

During the 25 years when all of you went to OSU, you and the pharmacy staff carried out the many and varied routine functions with such a steady stream of volume that you may have wondered whether it was all worth it. Well let me try, in a couple of sentences or so, to put into perspective what you and the staff did for society and your fellow man during this quarter century.

You helped to provide essential, life saving critical pharmaceutical services for 660,000 hospitalized patients and over 3,125,000 ambulatory patient visits. In the aggregate, your personal professional services touched the lives of over 1,000,000 people. During your

lifetime each of you have the same opportunity to touch the lives of your fellow man in a similar way.

Such data demonstrate the awesome responsibility pharmacists have in fulfilling their contemporary, legal role in protecting patients from drug therapy problems while at the same time helping them to get well through the safe use of drugs. And just think, it all started with that 1736 law in Virginia.

Lest not we forget, however, that most of the progress we made since 1736 goes back just a few decades ago when some of our former colleagues made use of that partially visible star to guide them along the way.

Personal Commitment

Yes, along the way, these former colleagues adopted a personal commitment to their profession. They rose to the same challenge which, decades later, John Kennedy so eloquently made in his inaugural presidential address about duty to country, which I will paraphrase: "Ask not what your profession can do for you; ask what you can do for your profession and your fellow man".

Personal commitment is a prime essential for that elusive quality of leadership. Leadership is not something one just does as a job.

Hugh Sidey in a Time editorial (12/11/78) entitled "The Crux of Leadership" said: "Leadership is a march down a long road, not always in a straight line, but always directed toward the same distant landmark. Leadership involves total belief and commitment".

Enthusiasm for Excellence

This brings me to the third component of that nearly invisible ingredient of our

seventh Pleiad — Enthusiasm for Excellence.

I read a recent report citing that only 15-20% of the people do things right all the time. The other 80-85% take short cuts, take the easy way out, don't care, don't know better or knowingly cheat themselves. That reminds me of a quote by Ben Franklin who said, "It's easy to get ahead by working hard — there's so little competition".

I'm sure you all remember "what it takes to be No. 1". "Winning is not a sometime thing; it is an all-the-time thing. You don't win once in a while. You don't do things right once in a while. You do them right *all* the time."

Vince Lombardi was often misunderstood about "winning is an all-the-time thing". What he meant was that winning is a frame of mind; that is, when you give it your best shot, even if you lose, you still win. Think about that. Further, think about the reverse corollary.

Enthusiasm is the big "E" — as Larry Shoup coined it back in the days of "Christopher Robin & Pooh". Well, he never lost it — he made it a contagious virtue! So if you haven't heard

it recently, the Big E stands for Enthusiasm for Excellence.

And so, your ability to put things into proper philosophical perspective, your willingness to assume a personal commitment to your profession to contribute to your fellow man, and your persevering enthusiasm for excellence have been the driving forces which have illuminated your seventh partially visible pleiad — your professional talent.

That is why, as a group, you have made significant contributions to your profession in a very few short years.

Just one example of such contributions is reflected at this 1985 ASHP Midyear Clinical Meeting wherein 48 of the 613 accepted presentations are from this OSU group; that is 7.8% or 1 out of every 12 presentations. From only one University, *that* is a significant contribution!

In conclusion, may I thank you for establishing the Latiolais Award because, in great measure, it is the collective contributions all of you have made which has enhanced my reputation. And for that, I shall be forever grateful and I salute you.



The Ohio State University