

Elizabeth D. Capaldi Phillips
(1945-2017)

We had to call her Betty, in spite of her high powered academic credentials testified to by an endless sequence of publications, a litany of presentations, honors, and awards. She came to every task, whether research, academic administration, student success, publication, institutional organization, university budgets and finance, or institutional advocacy with focus and intensity leavened by charm, imagination, and humor. Betty worked harder than any of us. She wore us out with her enthusiasm and commitment to getting things right. And she inspired us with her unshakable belief that whatever needed doing could be done if we just worked harder, collected the data better, analyzed the information we had more thoroughly, and most importantly, did something useful and significant to move the university forward.

In looking back over an exemplary person's life we can never capture it fully whether we recall favorite anecdotes or critical accomplishments. Sometimes, though, it helps to divide up an extraordinary lifetime of achievement into categories, for Betty provided us with what it would have taken at least three ordinary academics to achieve. As we look at each one separately, we need always remember, that Betty pursued all of them simultaneously at the highest level of performance.

Her academic life rests on the foundation of innovative, deep, scientific research in cognitive psychology. We who encountered Betty along the way, quickly learned that this research involved complex experiments of such significance that the NSF and NIMH provided continuous support for over 35 years and the results of this work appeared in an endless series of scientific articles in specialized journals. The associations of her scientific peers found Betty's work of such importance and her commitment to the profession so significant that they elected her to leadership roles including the presidency of their various organizations such as the American Psychological Society. And her achievements in experimental psychology provided the context and substance of her collaboration on a long running multi-author textbook in the field, now in its fourth edition, and her forthcoming book based on her long career of research in the field on *The Psychology of Eating* (Routledge).

A second simultaneous career evolved from the respect she inspired in her university colleagues, whether first as Head of the Department of Psychological Sciences at Purdue University and then through her leadership of the Institutional Research Office and subsequently Provost at the University of Florida. But it didn't stop there. The remarkable achievements in university administration, the innovative programs for student success begun at Florida and further developed at Arizona State University, the exceptional commitment to the development of university research seen in the dramatic expansion of funded investigations and research institutes and centers at UF, at the University at Buffalo and the SUNY system, and then in the expansion of the Arizona State University research portfolio, all testify to her ability to create, identify, support, inspire, energize, and, yes, drive high performance initiatives in a wide range of academic disciplines. Her commitment to university research prompted her sustaining work on the annual *Top American Research Universities* report since its first edition in 2000. Students recognized her commitment to their academic success awarding her elected membership in the *Friends of Students Hall of Fame* and her selection by Student Government for the *C. Arthur Sandeen Improving the Quality of Life Award*, both at the University of Florida.

But as if these two were not enough, Betty's colleagues discovered early her third gift of explaining complicated things to different audiences. Group after group, organization after organization, inundated her with invitations from academic, scientific, and public groups to lecture, talk, and consult on topics ranging from the science of eating to the best systems for managing university budgets to the process of

enhancing productivity and quality in complex university settings. She could explain anything to anyone in a fashion that captured the essence of the subject and the importance of the issues with a style that held the audience's interest and inspired their understanding. Legislators, donors, faculty, administrators, students, trustees, and general audiences all fell under her magic explanatory spell.

When we try to capture this remarkable individual's life and work we can only hope to provoke the memories of her friends, colleagues, collaborators, and beneficiaries. But perhaps a fine token of her remarkable talents can be found in a recent initiative: *Eating Psychology with Betty*, a TV production sponsored on PBS by Arizona State University. In thirteen full episodes from March to October 2016, Betty took a lifetime of scientific research, writing, and teaching on nutrition, eating, and obesity, and applied it to how we should think about food, diet, and cooking. Here, in these thirteen episodes, we can see her expertise, her charm, and her skillful ability to capture both research-validated substance and human interest and engagement. As always, as she works with her colleagues on the show, we can see so clearly that she knows where of she speaks, and we recognize that we should do what, in her graceful engaging way, she tells us we should do.

All of us who had the opportunity to participate in one or another aspect of Betty's world know that we were provided a unique privilege, and for that she will remain always in our memories.

The Advisory Board and Staff of The Center for Measuring University Performance
Arizona State University and the University of Massachusetts Amherst
September 23, 2017