

DAVID L. BOREN

***Thirteenth President* The University of Oklahoma**

David L. Boren, who has served Oklahoma as governor and U.S. senator, became the thirteenth president of the University of Oklahoma in November 1994. He is the first person in state history to have served in all three positions.

Boren is widely respected for his academic credentials, his longtime support of education, and for his distinguished political career as a reformer of the American political system. A graduate of Yale University in 1963, Boren majored in American history, graduated in the top one percent of his class and was elected Phi Beta Kappa. He was selected as a Rhodes Scholar and earned a master's degree in politics, philosophy and economics from Oxford University, England, in 1965.

In 1968, he received a law degree from the University of Oklahoma College of Law, where he was on the Law Review, elected to the Order of the Coif, and won the Bledsoe Prize as the outstanding graduate by a vote of the faculty.

As Oklahoma's governor from 1974 through 1978, Boren promoted key educational initiatives that have had an enduring impact on Oklahoma. Established during his tenure were the Oklahoma Arts Institute, the Scholar-Leadership Enrichment Program, and the Oklahoma Physicians Manpower Training Program, which provides scholarships for medical students and medical personnel who commit to practice in underserved rural areas. Also, the first state funding for Gifted and Talented classes was provided in 1976 and, from 1976 through 1978, Oklahoma ranked first among all states in the percentage increases of funding for higher education.

One of Boren's most far-reaching projects in promoting quality education at all levels is the Oklahoma Foundation for Excellence, which he founded in 1985. The foundation recognizes outstanding public school students and teachers and helps establish private local foundations to help give academic endowment grants to local public schools. As a senator, he was the author of the National Security Education Act in 1992, which provides scholarships for study abroad and for learning additional languages, as well as legislation to restore the tax deductibility of gifts of appreciated property to universities in 1993.

Boren, also a former state legislator, spent nearly three decades in elective politics before becoming the president of the University of Oklahoma. Boren was the youngest governor in the nation when he served from 1974 to 1978. Known as a reformer, Boren campaigned with a broom as his symbol. During his term, he instituted many progressive programs, including conflict-of-interest rules, campaign-financing disclosure, stronger open meeting laws for public bodies, more competitive bidding on state government contracts, and reform of the state's prison system, including expanded education programs for first-time offenders and the largest expansion of the work-release program in state history.

During his time in the U.S. Senate from 1979 to 1994, Boren served on the Senate Finance and Agriculture Committees and was the longest-serving chairman of the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence. From his days as a state legislator and governor of Oklahoma to Washington, Boren carried a commitment to reform, leading numerous efforts to make government work better for American citizens. As chairman of the Senate Intelligence Committee, he strengthened oversight of secret government programs and reformed the procedures for Presidential notice of such programs to Congress.

For more than 10 years, he led the fight for congressional campaign finance reform and for legislation discouraging administration and congressional staff from cashing in on government experience and contacts by becoming lobbyists. In addition, he introduced legislation seeking to limit gifts and travel subsidies that government workers, including members of Congress, can receive from lobbyists. Boren also chaired the special 1992-93 Joint Committee on the Organization of Congress, which produced proposals to make Congress more efficient and responsive by streamlining congressional bureaucracy, reducing staff sizes and reforming procedures to end legislative gridlock.

Boren left the U.S. Senate in 1994 with an approval rating of 91 percent after being reelected with 83 percent of the vote in 1990, the highest percentage in the nation in a U.S. Senate contest in that election year.

Boren served from 1988 to 1997 as a member of the Yale University Board of Trustees. His university experience also includes four years on the faculty of Oklahoma Baptist University, where he was chairman of the Department of Political Science and chairman of the Division of Social Sciences. In 1993, the American Association of University Professors presented Boren with the Henry Yost Award as Education Advocate of the Year.

In April 2004, Boren received the Mory's Cup from the Mory's Association at Yale University. In making the presentation to Boren it was noted that he was the first Yale graduate in the university's history extending over three centuries to have served as a Governor, U.S. Senator and President of a major university.

Under Boren's leadership, the University of Oklahoma has developed and emerged as a "pacesetter university in American public higher education," with 20 major new programs initiated since his inauguration. They include establishment of the Honors College, the Charles M. Russell Center for the Study of Art of the American West, a new expository writing program for freshmen modeled on the program at Harvard, an interdisciplinary religious studies program, the Artist-in-Residence Program, the International Programs Center, and the Faculty-in-Residence Program putting faculty family apartments in student residence halls. The Retired Professors Program has been started, bringing 50 retired full professors back to the University to teach freshmen.

The number of new facilities started or completed on the campus during the Boren years has matched the explosion in new programs. Since 1994, almost \$1 billion in construction projects have been completed or are under way on OU's three campuses. Among the largest of the recent projects are the \$18.7 million renovation and expansion of historic Holmberg Hall, home of music and dance programs; the \$67 million National Weather Center; the \$19 million addition to the Michael F. Price College of Business; the \$17 million Gaylord Hall for journalism and mass communication; the \$27 million Stephenson Research and Technology Center; and the \$83.5 million stadium project. The Health Sciences Center has a new Student Union, and the new \$24 million Stanton L. Young Biomedical Research Center.

Presidential Travel Scholarships, students from 111 countries on campus, more reciprocal international exchange agreements than any other university and the new International Programs Center are all making OU more international. The new Honors College helps to assure that no students need to leave Oklahoma to find an educational experience to match their potential.

In 1995, Boren launched the "Reach for Excellence" fundraising campaign with a five-year goal of \$200 million, which was twice as large as any fundraising drive in Oklahoma history. The drive exceeded \$500 million, raising OU into the top 15 public universities in the United States in private endowment per capita. Since 1994, endowed professorships have more than quadrupled and the OU donor base has grown from 18,000 to more than 107,000 friends and alumni. During the first 10 years of Boren's tenure over \$1 billion in private gifts were donated to the university.

Above all, the Boren years have been marked by an emphasis on putting students first. There is not a university president in the country that is more committed to students as his number one priority. He teaches a freshman-level course in political science each semester and is one of the few presidents of major universities to teach.

Boren is married to Molly Shi Boren, a former judge and English teacher. Mrs. Boren is President Emeritus of the Oklahoma Arts Institute, which provides education programs in nine arts disciplines for high school students from across the state who are gifted in the arts. Molly Boren has two degrees from the University of Oklahoma, a master's degree in English and a Juris Doctorate from the OU College of Law. A native of Seminole, Boren has two children, Carrie Christine Boren, an Episcopal minister, and David Daniel Boren, a member of the United States Congress from Oklahoma. Devoting much of his life to public service, Boren drew from the example of his parents, the late Congressman Lyle H. Boren and Christine Boren.