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William R Johnson: MCEER Business Manager

It is with great sadness that we report the death of our colleague, friend, and long-time Business Manager William (Bill) Johnson. Bill passed away on Saturday, June 17, 2000 at age 62 after suffering a heart attack earlier in the week. All of us at MCEER will miss Bill's enthusiasm for the Center and its goals, his knowledge of the university and its history, and perhaps most of all, his irrepressible spirit and cheerful good will.

Bill was a key member of MCEER's management team from its inception in 1986. He was recruited by our first director, Dr. Robert Ketter, to develop the physical facilities used by MCEER. These facilities consist of over 9,200 square feet of office/library space in Red Jacket Quad and Capen Hall, and over 12,000 square feet of laboratory space in Ketter Hall. His responsibilities included developing and managing the Center's budget, establishing subcontracts with participating research institutions, handling of personnel matters, purchasing materials and supplies, and maintaining equipment inventories and the facilities.

Bill had a long and prosperous career with the University at Buffalo. He joined



*William R Johnson
1938-2000*

the university in 1961 as an assistant purchasing agent, and quickly worked his way up the ladder. He was appointed Special Assistant to the Vice President for Business Affairs in 1963. He became the Director of the Equipment Division, Office of Facilities Planning, in 1968, where he was responsible for managing the \$70 million overall capital equipment budget. In 1972, he was appointed Secretary to the New York State Task Force appointed by then-Governor Nelson Rockefeller to establish the value of assets owned by SUNY statewide. He was responsible for planning and coordinating much of the activity that took place when the new University of Buffalo campus was constructed in Amherst. This included acquiring new laboratory equipment, coordinating the moving of many departments, and the acquisition of temporary space. It was during this time that Bill was instrumental in acquiring the then state-of-the-art \$1.5 million seismic simulator for the civil engineering department's laboratory.

In 1974, he was asked to join the Town of Lockport's Cable Television Planning Committee as Secretary to assist in evaluating the Town's cable television requirements and coordinating merger efforts with the City of Lockport. The net result of these efforts was a single non-profit local Commission responsible for administering a cable television franchise for two separate municipalities, a first for New York State. This public access television station now has an annual operating budget in excess of \$250,000, operates two TV studios (one of which is named in Bill's honor), including a mobile van, and has produced local programming which has received national recognition. Bill continued to serve as secretary of the Cable Commission until the time of his death.

Survivors include his wife of 19 years, the former Gail Provenzano, four sons, Timothy and Christopher Johnson and Marc and Michael Marotta; one daughter Patti Bednarz; a sister, Janet Long of Watertown; and three grandchildren. ❖



■ *Bill Johnson, George Lee, Robert Ketter, all of UB, and Joe Hubbard, MTS Corp. complete negotiations for UB's \$1.5 million seismic simulator laboratory*