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# Honorary Degree Award Citation for R. Eugene Davis

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## Honorary Degree Awarded to Retiring Faculty

### **R. Eugene Davis, Professor of Physical Education and Director of the Recreation Center, 1991**

"Roy Eugene Davis, you have served Lawrence University for 35 years as varsity coach and as teacher, roles that you practiced as not only compatible but as one. From your early years as an assistant football coach under the legendary Bernie Heselton, you also served for 20 years as assistant track coach with Art Denny before taking over the helm yourself, and for the last 32 years you have been head swimming coach and head cross-country coach. During all of those years, you took only one term of leave and, upon finding your teams disrupted during your absence, you never took another one. Thus, you have served the college and its students for 114 out of 115 term equivalents, making you the Lou Gehrig of Lawrence varsity coaches.

From the beginning of your career until the present, you have displayed a remarkable versatility in your coaching and teaching. And so it was no surprise that in 1986 you agreed to become the first director of the Buchanan-Kiewit Recreation Center--a building you helped design and which you insured had a state-of-the-art pool--and moved across the Fox River to a new location and an enriched set of professional obligations. Moreover, whereas in Alexander Gymnasium you had played handball each noon, in the rec center you alternated that crude form of exercise with the much more sophisticated and challenging sport of racquetball, thus continuing to display your versatility.

The true measure of your success is not the number of teams you have coached, or the number of contests and championships they have won--though each is numerous. Rather, it lies in the affection, esteem, and respect that Lawrentians display toward you as coach, mentor, and friend. And while they will miss your so-called wit at season-end banquets and your ever-stylish Marine haircut, they will miss even more your tutelage and your encouragement. Today, I speak on behalf of all of them in expressing Lawrence's thanks for all that you have contributed to our college over the years.

By the authority vested in me, I now confer upon you the degree of Master of Arts, *ad eundem*, and admit you to its rights, its privileges, and its obligations."

*Citation read by President Richard Warch at Commencement, 1991*