

Herbert A. Challen '42 Memorial Scholarship for Chemistry Education (since 1999)

Herbert James Challen was born June 28, 1915 in Philadelphia, PA to George and Nettie (Jergenson) Challen. He graduated from Lower Merion High School, Ardmore, PA in 1934, where he was a member of the state champion high school basketball team. He attended Drexel University while working as a production expediter at the General Electric Philadelphia plant from 1935-1938. He attended West Chester University from 1938-1941, where he was on the soccer team for three years, was a member of the Varsity Club, served as Treasurer of his junior class, was on the Men's Dormitory Council two years, and active in Little Theatre for three years. He was called to active duty by the Navy in the fall of his senior year.

In WWII, he was the commander of the USS Condor, a minesweeper, with duty in the Pacific. He received his B.S. in Education from West Chester in 1946 and did graduate work at the University of Washington in 1948-1950.

Mr. Challen worked as a foreman and chemist at the Allied Chemicals plant in Philadelphia from 1946-1947 and then moved to Pomeroy, Washington where he started his teaching career as the science teacher and boxing coach at Pomeroy High School. From 1948-1977, he was a faculty member at Olympia High School, Olympia where he taught chemistry and coached tennis and is remembered as a popular and inspiring teacher and coach. The Olympia High School annual was dedicated to Mr. Challen in 1965.

From 1934 until 1975, he served as a member of the U.S. Naval Reserve with both active and reserve duty retiring with the rank of Commander, USNR. On January 16, 1956, Olympia's Electronics Division 13-13, under the command of LCDR Challen, was formally recognized in a ceremony by the Navy Department and community officials as No. 1 in the United States in the annual Navy Electronics National Excellence competition. He was a life member of the Retired Officers' Association, a member of the Fleet Reserve Association and the American Association of Retired Persons. Mr. Challen's hobbies were steelhead and salmon sports fishing, swimming and all sports. He greatly enjoyed a variety of activities with his family.

Mr. Challen married Virginia Wiese of Olympia, Washington in 1943 in Baltimore, Maryland. He passed away in Olympia on January 31, 1999 at the age of 83, leaving his wife, two sons, Roger Wiese Challen of Fayville, Massachusetts and H. Ozzie Wiese of Renton, Washington and a daughter, Susan St. Thomas of Wellesley, Massachusetts, 11 grandchildren and one great-grandchild.

The scholarship is to be awarded to a student who is in his or her junior or senior year at the time of application. The student must be majoring in secondary education chemistry. This scholarship is to be granted on the basis of financial need.