

# In Memoriam

## University Notes Passing of a Respected Faculty Member and Two Founding Administrators



### George Michael Evica

George Michael Evica, associate professor emeritus of English, died on Nov. 10 following a long battle with cancer. He was 79.

Evica, who taught at the University of Hartford from 1964 to 1992, received national and international recognition for his research into the 1963 assassination of President John F. Kennedy. In 1975 he began broadcasting *Assassination Journal* on WWUH (91.3 FM) each Tuesday until his illness forced him to stop this past July.

Evica's effect on his students was legendary.

"I took three English courses with this man, and he had the highest intellect of any professor in the department. He was . . . the most riveting lecturer known to mankind," recalls Nick Galluccio '72.

"George Michael Evica was an amazing man with an amazing mind. [He] touched the spirit and essence of everyone he came into contact with," says Terry S. Johnson '75.

"Professor Evica was my favorite teacher at the University of Hartford [1975–79]. He taught me how to write. I know that he touched so many lives," says Jane Dowling '79.

Evica was the author of *And We Are All Mortal: New Evidence and Analysis in the Assassination of John F. Kennedy*, published in 1978. His second book, published in 2006, was *A Certain Arrogance: U.S. Intelligence's Manipulation of Religious Groups and Individuals in Two World Wars and the Cold War—and the Sacrificing of Lee Harvey Oswald*.



### Irving S. Starr

Irving S. Starr, dean of the University of Hartford's College of Education (now the College of Education, Nursing and Health Professions) from 1957 to his retirement in 1982, died on Nov. 16. He was 88.

While dean, he played a significant role in the growth and development of the University, according to President Walter Harrison. "Irving Starr's inspirational and entrepreneurial leadership helped make the University what it is today. He helped define his college's, and the University's, commitment to the Hartford community by serving the professional needs of the area's teachers and developing new teachers to serve our future."

Among his many contributions, Starr is remembered for securing numerous grants to support programs in the College of Education and for creating strong ties between the college and the Hartford public schools. It was under his leadership that the college added a human services program to its offerings.

Steven Joel Trachtenberg, president of the University from 1977 to 1988, described Starr's special contribution to the University: "He was one of the founding members of the administration who helped to create a University from a random collection of small, independent colleges.

"We will not see his like again. He cared about teaching and learning. About young people and schools."



### Alan Tompkins

Alan Tompkins, painter and former director of Hartford Art School (HAS), died on Nov. 22. He was 100.

Tompkins was director of HAS in 1957, when it merged with the Hartt College of Music and Hillyer College to form the University of Hartford. He continued as director until 1969, retiring from teaching in 1974. It was Tompkins who designed the new university's official seal.

"Alan Tompkins was a giant—as an educator, as an artist, and as an administrator. He designed the seal of the University, which is still a powerful symbol in style and form," says President Walter Harrison. "As has every other president of the University, I wear the presidential medal he designed at every Commencement. In that sense, he and his art will always be with us."

In late July, Tompkins returned to campus to exhibit 45 of his paintings in the Hartford Art School's Silpe Gallery in celebration of his 100th birthday, HAS's 130th anniversary, and the University's 50th anniversary.

"I was pleased that we were able to show [his paintings] on the campus last summer," says HAS Dean Power Boothe. "It was a wonderful show, and Alan seemed to be a force that would not end. He was always planning his next painting and working on his next exhibition, and, in the words of Emily Dickinson, 'could not stop for death.'"