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## John R. O'Donnell, Ed.D. 1925-1983

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# *The University of Dayton*

# *News Release*

JOHN R. O'DONNELL, Ed.D.  
1925 - 1983

DAYTON, Ohio, February 2, 1983 -- One of Ohio's leading authorities in the field of elementary and secondary school administration, John R. O'Donnell, Ed.D., of Kettering, Ohio, died on Tuesday, February 1, at the age of 57. His death followed a year-long battle with a disease diagnosed as amyloidosis of the liver.

Dr. O'Donnell was professor and chairman of the Department of Educational Administration of the University of Dayton School of Education. The department is one of the largest of its kind in Ohio and includes off-campus graduate centers in Lima and Springfield, Ohio, co-founded by O'Donnell.

A popular and influential speaker, Dr. O'Donnell gave 60 addresses a year throughout the state, on the average, and served as consultant to over 100 elementary and secondary schools. Major addresses were made by O'Donnell to the National Catholic Education Association, the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, and the First International Congress on Mathematics Instruction (held in Lyon, France in 1969).

In his keynote address to last summer's UD/National Catholic Education Association seminar on "Catholic Secondary Education: Now and in the Future," O'Donnell reflected on Cardinal Newman's definition of a university as people, saying "You can have equipment and buildings and books and laboratories, you can have all kinds of physical things, but the real definition of a university is when you have a human being who is able to

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JOHN R. O'DONNELL

Page 2

interact, to challenge, to stimulate, to motivate another human being towards learning and towards solving some of the problems in our society."

Dr. O'Donnell also published various articles in the field of mathematics education and authored two mathematics textbooks.

A native of Altoona, Pennsylvania, O'Donnell earned bachelor's, master's, and doctoral degrees from Pennsylvania State University. He taught at Penn State, Bloomsburg State, Rutgers, and Duquesne universities before coming to UD in 1964 as associate professor. In 1965 he was promoted to the rank of full professor and was recipient of the 1965-66 UD Alumni Award presented annually to faculty members making the greatest contribution to the academic life of the University. In 1967 he was named chairman of the newly-created Department of School Administration, a position he held until his death.

Visitation will be in the afternoon and evening on Friday, February 4, at Westbrook Funeral Home, 1712 Wayne Avenue. The Mass of Christian Burial will be celebrated in the University of Dayton Immaculate Conception Chapel on Saturday, February 5, at 10:00 a.m. In lieu of sending flowers, friends are asked to make donations to the Dr. John R. O'Donnell Memorial Loan Fund at the University of Dayton. The Fund will assist graduate students in the UD School of Education.

Dr. O'Donnell is survived by his wife, Ann, and sons Patrick, 27, and Kevin, 25, and daughter Lisa, 21.