

## Boyd E. Wolff '53

Boyd E. Wolff of Harrisburg graduated from Penn State in 1953 with a bachelor's degree in dairy husbandry. His career has taken him from a farm in rural Pennsylvania to the Governor's Cabinet Room to farms around the world. At first glance, these career pursuits may seem an odd combination, but a common thread runs through them—one of leadership, innovation and service to Penn State, agriculture and community.



After graduation, Wolff returned to the family farm and began farming with his father. Within five years, he had become sole operator of Wolfden Farm and later increased the farm from 110 to 410 acres. For his management and production methods, he received the "Outstanding Grassland Award" given by the American Forage and Grassland Council. In 1966, with his Registered Holstein herd now including 100 milking cows, he moved into an innovative free stall barn of his own design.

Wolff has served in various leadership positions in community, church, and agriculture. He has received many awards for his service to agriculture. Most notable of these are the Pennsylvania Farm Bureau "Distinguished Service for Agriculture Award," the "Master Farmer Award," and the "Outstanding Farm Conservationist Award" from the Westmoreland County Conservation District. He takes much pleasure in the fact that both he and daughter, Patricia, were selected as "Outstanding Senior in the Penn State College of Agriculture."

Now a trustee emeritus of Penn State, Wolff served on the Board of Trustees from 1984 to 2001. He served the College of Agricultural Sciences in a wide range of capacities including being a member of the Grand Destiny Campaign, chair of the Ag Council's Partnership Building Committee, and trustee liaison for the Pennsylvania Council of Cooperative Extension Associations.

With his wife, Margaret, he has funded two endowments at Penn State. The Paul B. Wolff Memorial Endowment to support mental health of students in transition and the Boyd E. Wolff GOTCHA Endowment in International Agriculture to "Give Others the Chance to Have an Adventure" in international study. Wolff says simply, "Penn State has been a key part of my life beginning with my first 4-H Dairy Judging Contest at Penn State when I was 15. I am hopeful my various contributions since then will enable others to learn and develop through their association with Penn State."

In 1987, Wolff was appointed Pennsylvania Secretary of Agriculture serving through 1995. During his tenure many county, state, and national organizations recognized him for his advocacy for agriculture. Many new agricultural programs were initiated during his administration including the Pennsylvania Farm Land Preservation Program, the Animal Health Commission and the Tri-partite Laboratory System that enables the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture, Penn State and the University of Pennsylvania to share resources.

After his departure from state service, Wolff answered a new calling—to share his experience and knowledge with farmers worldwide through the US Agency for International Development (USAID) programs. During these assignments he travels to a developing part of the world to help farmers with a range of issues from developing cooperatives to increasing crop and dairy production. Since 1996, he has completed 11 volunteer consulting assignments in Russia, Ukraine, Moldova, Zimbabwe, Venezuela, and Poland. In addition, he was a presenter at the 1997 “Penn State Polish-Ukrainian-Lituanian-Armenian Seminar” held in Boguchwala, Poland. He is scheduled for a project this June in Macadonia.

Currently he serves on the Boards of 10,000 Friends of Pennsylvania and of The South Central Assembly for Effective Governance where he chairs the Agricultural Committee.

Boyd and Margaret had four children. Their daughters, Patricia, Corrine and Margaret all have at least one Penn State degree. Their son, Paul, died in 1981.

\*This career summary is excerpted from the 2002 Distinguished Alumni Awards Ceremony booklet (2002, The Pennsylvania State University).