

David Lee Hanson [1935 - 2020]

With sadness we announce the passing, on March 13, 2020, of our friend and colleague David Lee Hanson.

Dave grew up in Kansas, did his undergraduate work at MIT, and received his PhD degree in probability at Indiana University under the direction of J. R. Blum. Mathematical Reviews lists authorship or co-authorship of 54 research papers.

The enormous development of SUNY in the 1960's led to a fundamental change in the role of our department. Prior to 1968 it was an undergraduate teaching department, but starting in that year its mission was enlarged, making it also a graduate and research department. As part of that development, Dave was hired 1973 as a "leading professor". He was an early architect and supporter of our entry into the field of statistics, still to this day a major component of our program.

At a difficult time in the department's development - a time marked by strong disagreements among faculty members - Dave took on the arduous role of Department Chair in 1983. He remained in that role for the next sixteen years, steering the department through those difficulties.

Binghamton University's transition from being a liberal arts college to being a research university was slow and not always easy. Perhaps Dave's greatest achievement during his long chairmanship was his success at guiding the deans of that period on how a research mathematical sciences department should be structured.

Long after his retirement he also continued to teach a course each semester right up to two weeks ago.

In his retirement Dave served several terms as an elected member of the Vestal School Board.

His wife Alison passed away last Fall. He is survived by his three daughters and one son.

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