

A Tribute to William A. Morrill

By Kristine M. Marcy

William Morrill was a public servant through and through. Bill started his career in public service in the Directorate of Manpower and Organization, HQ, US Air Force. Over the next nearly 25 years, he served under six Presidents, Democrats and Republicans alike. At the Bureau of Budget (now OMB) and then later at HEW (now HHS), Morrill's assignments included spearheading healthcare reform in the early 1970s, transforming telecommunications industries, improving emissions standards under the Clean Air Act, and helping to create the Department of Energy. The results of his work have lasted to the present.

In the early 1970s, Morrill left the federal government in opposition to the Vietnam War but continued to deploy his problem solving skills as Deputy County Executive for Fairfax, County, Virginia. In 1973, he returned to federal service as Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation at HEW/HHS. I first got to know Bill when he recruited me in 1977 to join one of the agencies that became part of the Department of Energy.

At the end of 1977, Morrill joined the private sector by joining Mathematica Policy Research, where over the next 23 years, he ultimately became its President. He next was recruited to be the Vice President and General Manager at Martin Marietta Data Systems. Next he became Chief Executive and Chairman of MATHTECH. His final private sector position was as Senior Fellow at ICF International. Even in these private sector positions, he remained engaged in solving public challenges and issues.

Bill was elected to be a Fellow of the Academy in 1974. He brought the same energy and analytical acumen to the Academy that had characterized his public and private sector work. He served as Vice Chairman of the Board of Directors. He was a steady, dedicated and engaged Fellow.

Following his death in July, his widow, Nancy, described Bill's continued dedication to the Academy:

- "Every year when the nominations for Fellows came out, Bill ...read all the bios and made his vote carefully, wanting the best and the brightest for this NAPA honor.
- He was proud of his involvement in NAPA....He looked forward to the camaraderie of NAPA colleagues.....
- Wanting to recognize his colleague, Don Wortman, Bill engaged me to help him raise the funds to name the Board Room at the Academy's Headquarters in honor of Don. Despite his ill health, Bill enjoyed this last major Academy project believing that it was an important contribution to the organization. And, we were successful which greatly pleased him.

In 2013, Bill's book, *A Journey through Governance: A Public Servant's Experience under Six Presidents*, was published. In the introduction, Bill conveyed his objective in writing this book. Perhaps, his writing best summarizes his dedication to public service. Quoting Bill, "I want to share an insider's look at events and challenges that are more exciting and historically significant than readers may have guessed. But, more important, I want to convey the necessity, even the nobility, of the work of those who serve in government."

As usual, Bill said it best.