

# THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

## *Regents Communication*

### ACTION REQUEST

**Subject: Report of Faculty Retirement**

**Action Requested: Adoption of Retirement Memoir**

**Robert E. Megginson, Ph.D.**, Arthur F. Thurnau Professor and professor of mathematics in the College of Literature, Science, and the Arts, retired from active faculty status on May 31, 2023.

After receiving a B.S. degree in physics from the University of Illinois at Urbana Champaign in 1969, Professor Megginson worked in industry for eight years at the Roper Corporation. He returned to the University of Illinois and received his Ph.D. degree in mathematics in 1984. He was on the faculty of Eastern Illinois University before joining the UM mathematics faculty in 1992. He was promoted to professor in 2000, and was named a Thurnau Professor in 2008. Professor Megginson was the associate dean for undergraduate and graduate education in the College of Literature, Science, and the Arts from 2004-2010. He also served as deputy director of the Mathematical Sciences Research Institute at the University of California, Berkeley, from 2002-2004.

Professor Megginson studied functional analysis, the geometry of Banach spaces and the problems in nearest-point theory in such spaces. His interests gravitated toward mathematics and STEM education, and climate science, particularly as it affects understanding by students from underrepresented groups. He sought ways to address disparities in early education as well as representation in higher education, with a focus on Native American groups. Professor Megginson is a Sequoyah Fellow of the American Indian Science and Engineering Society, working actively through this organization to further the participation of his people in mathematics. He serves as a member of and has chaired several national committees dedicated to this cause. His service includes many terms on various committees of the Mathematical Association of America and the American Mathematical Society. He specifically excelled in promoting teaching of mathematics and mentoring of students from all backgrounds.

Throughout his career, Professor Megginson received recognition for his outreach efforts. He was awarded the U.S. Presidential Award for Excellence in Science, Mathematics, and Engineering Mentoring in 1997, the Distinguished Mentor of the Year Award from the Society for the Advancement of Chicanos/Hispanics and Native Americans in Science in 2019, and is portrayed in the book *100 Native Americans Who Shaped American History*. Professor Megginson was named a fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science in 2009. He received the UM Harold R. Johnson Diversity Service Award in 2000, the UM Regents' Award for Distinguished Public Service in 1999, and was recognized three times with the LSA Excellence in Education Award.

The Regents now salute this distinguished scholar by naming **Robert E. Megginson, Arthur F. Thurnau Professor Emeritus and professor emeritus of mathematics**.

**Requested by:**



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**Sally J. Churchill, J.D.**  
**Vice President and Secretary of the University**

**May 2023**