

BROMMEL-LINDBERG SCHOLARSHIP IN HISTORY

Richard Lindberg, Northeastern Illinois University’s 1997 Distinguished Alumnus of the Year, is a noted and prolific author who has published 17 books. Primarily an editor and historian, he has also worked as a journalist, publicist, and marketing professional, as well as serving as a guest commentator on dozens of television and radio programs.

Lindberg attended NEIU in the 1970s and was a student of Dr. Bernard J. Brommel, professor emeritus, communication, media and theatre. Over the years, Lindberg and Brommel’s relationship evolved through a mutual involvement with the Society of Midland Authors (SMA). Lindberg credits Brommel, an author himself, for supporting his early writing career and acting as a champion of his work. Both Brommel and Lindberg served as Presidents of the S.M.A.

“NEIU and Dr. Brommel have helped make it all possible for me. I have always said that without the chance NEIU took on me—as a high school graduate in 1971, lacking the financial means to attend the university—and the encouragement of faculty, and Dr. Brommel, I would be nowhere today,” said Lindberg.

“Where do I begin to describe this amazing former student?” Brommel mused. “Tritely stated, Rich was like a sponge. He wanted to know what I knew and more about how to succeed. No matter how much red ink I put on his papers chasing every comma or requests to recast his thoughts for greater clarity, he never protested. He wanted constructive criticism! In a speech course he worked up from a C to a B. (I have always felt guilty I did not give him an A when I know now how competent he is both as a writer and speaker.) Rich and I bonded because we both majored in history. He looked up my writings; years later I have had the great joy of reading his brilliant histories, especially those focused on Chicago history.

In 2012 when Richard wrote his autobiography, *Whiskey Breakfast: My Swedish Family, My American Life*, he asked me to speak at a large book signing event. What a joy to see this humble kid who worked at Sears just to go to Northeastern, honored by so many readers of his earlier books! As a teacher there is such a wonderful feeling to see one of your students surpass your own writings and reach larger audiences. Richard, I salute you and two other former students, Dr. Jarice Hanson and Dr. Michael Kramer, for how well you

have represented NEIU. I think you three are the most published graduates of NEIU. That is why I created scholarships in honor of each of you!”

The Brommel-Lindberg Scholarship in History was created to honor Lindberg by providing an annual scholarship to a junior or senior majoring in history who demonstrates academic promise and financial need. Lindberg has said that having a scholarship named for him has been “one of the highest attainments I have received in my professional career.” Lindberg noted he is privileged to know Dr. Brommel, who he calls “Bernie,” and to be recognized by him in a way that also serves future generations of students.

Recently, NEIU commissioned Lindberg to write a manuscript of the history of NEIU in book form. To complete this work, Lindberg has been collecting history and materials as well as first-hand written and oral accounts from alumni, faculty and staff. NEIU looks forward to the publication of this work, which will be the first published history of the University.