

JULIUS R. BLUM 1922-1982¹

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On the thirteenth of April, 1982, as he worked in his office at the University of California, Davis, Julius R. Blum was felled by a massive heart attack. His untimely death was much more than a local tragedy. Julius Blum was truly an international figure with friends and co-workers all over the world. While the impact of his prolific research record was substantial, the impact he had on his profession went well beyond his research contributions. He had a rare ability to bring the creative talents that served him so well in his mathematical and statistical investigations to bear upon thorny practical problems of the administrative or organizational type. He played a key role in the development of programs in statistics at several major universities. We expect that his overall leadership in the profession over a distinguished thirty-year career will have an influence that will persist long after the year of his death.

Julius Blum was born in Nuremberg, Germany, in 1922, the son of Abraham M. and Antonia B. Blum. Even at the age of six, he stubbornly insisted that he would be a professional mathematician. While his early years were relatively normal, his life changed abruptly in 1937, the year his parents arranged for him to leave Germany under the sponsorship of his uncle in the United States. Julius served in the United States Army during World War II and began his mathematical studies in earnest at Berkeley after the war. He was a Phi Beta Kappa at Berkeley, receiving the A.B. Degree in mathematics with highest honors in 1949. He received his Ph.D. in statistics from Berkeley in 1953, writing a dissertation under the direction of M. Loeve.

He spent his first six postdoctoral years at Indiana University and spent the three years that followed as a member of the technical staff at the Sandia Corporation. These were very fertile research years for Blum. In 1963 alone, he published eleven research papers, all of which appeared in leading journals in mathematics and statistics. Also in 1963, he assumed the dual role of Professor of Mathematics and Chairman of the Department of Mathematics at the University of New Mexico. During his six years as department chair, he helped to develop a small and relatively unknown department into a vital and extremely active group of research scientists. During this period, his distinctive administrative style became apparent. The hallmarks of the Blum style were openness, forthrightness, and an absolute insistence on quality. His years in New Mexico were happy, exciting years for him, and he often spoke fondly of Albuquerque and the many friends he made there. He left New Mexico in 1974, accepting an appointment in the Mathematics Department at the University of Wisconsin,

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