

Diversity leader, former Michelin executive Calder Ehrmann passes away



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7:18 p.m. EST February 10, 2015



(Photo: Furman University / Provided)

Calder D. Ehrmann, a crusader for diversity whose passion to make Greenville into a world-class city spanned his career at Michelin North America and his work through Furman University's Riley Institute, died Monday night after battling cancer.

He was 74.

A longtime Greenville resident, Ehrmann was much recognized for leading Michelin's diversity efforts as its chief diversity officer and helped launch the Diversity Leaders Initiative program at the Riley Institute in the fall of 2003.

The county several months earlier had voted against observing Martin Luther King Jr. Day as a federal holiday, but Ehrmann believed Greenville could move beyond the past.

"You walk down Main Street and hear all the languages, see all the foods," Ehrmann said in a Dec. 12, 2003 story in *The Greenville News*. "The city is just this far from being a world-class community."

Ehrmann retired after 30 years at Michelin and joined the Riley Institute in 2005 as a senior associate. The institute is named for former South Carolina Governor and U.S. Secretary of Education Richard Riley.

Ehrmann "was a true community leader who had a real positive spirit about him," said Benny Walker, a Riley Institute colleague and former Furman vice president.

The recipient of numerous humanitarian awards through the years, Ehrmann now has one named after him: the Calder D. Ehrmann Outstanding Individual Award, given each year to a person who has made the greatest contribution to promoting and embracing diversity

Ehrmann is survived by his wife of 50 years, Glenda, two children and three grandchildren.

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