



John D. Odegard

1941-1998

John Odegard, a Minot, ND native, began his aviation career working as a crop sprayer in the summers while attending the University of North Dakota. As an undergraduate he revitalized the schools flying club by generating support for leasing an aircraft and offering lessons. His Master's thesis, "Feasibility and Cost Analysis of Institutional Private Aircraft Transportation," earned him approval to establish an air service for UND.

After joining the UND faculty in 1966, Odegard's proposal to merge a business degree with a flight program gave birth to UND's aviation program. He became chairman of the new department of aviation in 1968 and in 1982 was named dean when the department was reorganized to become the Center for Aerospace Science. It was granted full status as a college in 1984 and was named the John D. Odegard School for Aerospace Sciences in recognition of his achievements in 1998.

Beginning with only 12 students, enrollment in the school is now over 1,500 students and draws students from all over the world. The program and its 500 faculty and staff members are housed in a unique aerospace education complex with the largest flight training facility of its kind in North America. Under his leadership, the college has become one of the nations most widely respected aerospace education programs, a leader in atmospheric research and severe weather analysis and UND's second largest degree granting program.

During his 32-year career, Dean Odegard's visionary leadership, persistence, and accomplishments in aerospace education earned him industry wide respect and numerous prestigious awards and honors. He is widely published on subjects of aviation education and flight training and the coauthor of a leading textbook. He served as a consultant and guest speaker to national governments, corporations and educational institutions. A member of the North Dakota Aeronautics Commission for twenty five years, he was a pilot's pilot with over 14,000 flight hours, a FAA pilot examiner, and a certified flight instructor.