



## *The Walter F. Snyder Award for 1993*

*Presented to*

### *AMER EL-AHRAF, Dr.P.H.*

In presenting the Walter F. Snyder Award for 1993 to Amer El-Ahraf, we honor a unique individual who has a multitude of accomplishments in support of the environmental health field. Like Walter F. Snyder, Dr. El-Ahraf believes that this world can, and must, be made a better place in which to live. He is dedicated to bringing environmental quality to the world.

He is a teacher, scholar, and practitioner who, from the earliest stages of his career, has emphasized the role of education in bringing significant and lasting improvements to the environmental health profession. For over twenty years as a Professor at two campuses of the California State University as well as at the University of California, Irvine, he has trained and supervised hundreds of students who are currently at work in all aspects of environmental health. His concern for humankind and his compassion for individuals have come together in his personal and professional lives as an environmental health educator-practitioner, whose activities have created a record of leadership and accomplishment that is internationally recognized and acknowledged.

Amer El-Ahraf came to the United States from his native Egypt in 1963. At the age of 23, he had already completed his studies for the Doctor of

Veterinary Medicine degree at Cairo University, and had teaching experience in toxicology and forensic medicine. He expanded his professional training and educational experience by enrolling at the University of California, Los Angeles. There, he earned a Master of Public Health degree in 1965, specializing in environmental and occupational health; and, in 1971, he received the Doctor of Public Health (with distinction), specializing in both environmental and nutritional sciences.

Dr. El-Ahraf accepted employment with the Los Angeles County Department of Health Services as an environmental counselor/environmental health specialist in 1970. His supervisor recalls that Dr. El-Ahraf worked miracles. Using every available resource, he initiated a community-based program, including an environmental health curriculum for elementary school children.

Beginning his academic career as Assistant Professor of Social Ecology at the University of California, Irvine, he was quickly recruited by California State University, San Bernardino, to establish the Department of Health Science and Human Ecology. Under his leadership as Chair, Dr. El-Ahraf initiated undergraduate and graduate curricular programs in all aspects of environmental and occupational

health and other areas of public health, which laid the foundation for transition to a future School of Public Health.

Throughout his academic career, to ensure that theory continued to be linked with practice, Dr. El-Ahraf maintained a consulting relationship with the County of Los Angeles, Department of Health Services, as well as with other local health departments throughout the state and country.

In 1984, Dr. El-Ahraf became Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs at California State University, San Bernardino. In 1990, he was named Executive Vice President, California State University, Dominguez Hills, where he advises the President on all matters pertaining to the future of the University, including responsibility for the University's administration and finance. He holds this position today, while he continues his intensive schedule of scholarly and professional activities in over twenty professional societies.

Dr. El-Ahraf has been active in numerous international, national, state, and local professional organizations relating to environmental health and education. He has served as Presi-

dent of both the National Environmental Health Association and the California Environmental Health Association. He has published over ninety articles, nearly thirty books and technical papers, and made numerous presentations at professional meetings.

Dr. El-Ahraf's endless hours of dedication have brought him well-earned recognition for his work. His long list of awards includes NEHA's Walter S. Mangold Award (1992).

Even in so brief a summary as this, one can appreciate the measure of the man, of whom a colleague of twenty-five years wrote, "Dr. El-Ahraf has the rare combination of keen intellect and a most unusual ability at human leadership. He never offends, but always seems to have a way of maintaining a calm, cool, friendly, and sincerely supportive attitude. ... all who work with him love and respect him."

NSF *International* and the National Environmental Health Association take great pleasure in honoring Dr. Amer El-Ahraf for these accomplishments by presenting to him the 1993 Walter F. Snyder Award for Achievement in Attaining Environmental Quality.

#### *Past Recipients of the Walter F. Snyder Award*

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