



Nyle C. Brady

October 25, 1920 – November 24, 2015

The Section of Soil & Crop Science in the School of Integrative Plant Science (formerly Department of Crop & Soil Science, originally Department of Agronomy) lost a revered colleague with the passing of Nyle C. Brady at the age of 95 in Colorado.

Nyle was born in Manassa, Colorado on October 25th, 1920 to Frank and Sadie Brady. He earned his BS in chemistry from Brigham Young University in 1941 and his Ph.D. in soil science from North Carolina State University in 1947. An emeritus professor at Cornell, he was the coauthor (originally with Harry O. Buckman and later with Ray R. Weil) of the classic textbook, *The Nature and Properties of Soils*, now in its 15th edition, and was also editor of *Advances in Agronomy* from 1969-1991. “He was a giant in soil science and agriculture, and left an important legacy in many ways,” said Ray Weil, Professor of Environmental Science and Technology at the University of Maryland.

Beginning in 1947 as an Assistant Professor, Nyle worked at Cornell for 26 years, rising rapidly to the rank of full Professor. Students in the College of Agriculture named him as a Professor of Merit in 1953, an award recognizing his excellence in undergraduate teaching. Brady “was one of the giants of our field,” and yet known for his personable approach to students and colleagues, according to Pedro Sanchez ‘62, M.S. ’64, Ph.D. ’68, Research Professor of Tropical Soils at the University of Florida, whom Nyle mentored.

After beginning his Cornell career primarily as a teacher, Nyle served as Head of the Department of Agronomy from 1955 to 1963, and Assistant Dean of the College of Agriculture and Director of the Cornell University Agricultural Experiment Station from 1963 to 1973. During the latter period, he supervised the construction of Bradfield & Emerson Halls and

was also elected President of both the American Society of Agronomy and of the Soil Science Society of America.

Nyle's scientific and administrative abilities then took him to the Philippines where he was Director General of the International Rice Research Institute (IRRI) until 1981. Here, he dramatically expanded the scope and funding of IRRI's research and outreach programs. Notable amongst these were the Genetic Evaluation & Utilization (GEU) Program and the International Rice Testing Program (IRTP), which successfully brought multi-disciplinary and international cooperation to bear on problems facing rice productivity. During his stint at IRRI, Nyle gained a global reputation for successful fund raising. Dr. Bill Mather, who headed the United Nations Development Program, an IRRI donor at the time, recalls reaching an agreement with Nyle at the IRRI headquarters in Los Baños for approximately \$1M with the detailed budget to be delivered later at Dr. Mather's hotel in Manila. When Nyle arrived at the hotel with the budget the next day, the total was \$1.5M. Questioned about it by Mather, Nyle replied, "Inflation is terrible in this country," whereupon Mather agreed to \$1.5M. In 2006, Nyle described his IRRI experience as a highlight in his career because "I felt I was involved in something that would help humanity".

Nyle returned to the USA in 1981 to serve as Sr. Deputy Administrator of USAID for 10 years, retiring in 1991. During those years he contributed greatly to the expansion of the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR).

Nyle cherished his 22 grandchildren and 90 great-grandchildren. He had a passion for learning and always encouraged his family to do the same. But more importantly he taught them to love and serve others. His wonderful example of caring for those less fortunate is a quality that has guided and influenced the lives of his family and everyone around him. Nyle is survived by his dear wife and sweetheart Martha, as well as his son Donald, and two daughters, Dorothy and Carol. He also is survived by his sister, June Hunter of La Hara, Colorado. His oldest son Robert preceded him in death.

W. Ronnie Coffman, chair; Stephen DeGloria and John Duxbury