

Maurice Gollé

Inspiring teacher, genial administrator, sensitive counselor and visionary internationalist, Maurice Gollé was for generations of international students the embodiment of the history, spirit, culture and character of France.

Renowned for his seemingly endless network of contacts, his intimate knowledge of the intricacies of the bureaucracy both within and without the university, and his forthright, imaginative and persistent approach to problem solving, he earned the esteem, admiration, and gratitude of colleagues and students alike as intermediary, innovator, and regulator of the impossible.

A teacher for almost four decades, Maurice Gollé was a masterful interpreter and presenter of the essence of French culture and the history of France through the medium of its language and literature. Reading Madame Bovary under his direction was to participate in the society of the Nineteenth Century, visiting the Musée d'Alsace or strolling through the streets of Riquewihr to relive the history of his native Alsace and France.

As we gather here tonight to celebrate the thirtieth anniversary of a cordial and productive partnership in learning between France and Kalamazoo College, it is most fitting that we honor one whose contribution to this partnership has been unique and who for so many years served as a bridge between his people, culture, and language and those of other nations. Scores of international students, both from Kalamazoo College and elsewhere, remember warmly his affable manner, his engaging sense of humor, his contagious joie de vivre and his gracious hospitality at home or in a Winstub. His continued active participation in such organizations as the Association Alsace-Etats-Unis testifies to his ongoing interest and commitment to international understanding. To Kalamazoo and its students, whom he served for almost two decades, he has been an esteemed colleague, a loyal and true friend.

I recommend, therefore, on behalf of the Faculty of Kalamazoo College, that upon Maurice Gollé be conferred the honorary degree, Doctor of Humane Letters.