



Umematsu Watada

On her graduation day, Katherine Watada places her cap playfully on the head of her father, Umematsu Watada of Honolulu, also a University graduate, as Mrs. Watada looks on.

Umematsu Watada Cited for Distinguished Service

Umematsu Watada has made numerous trips to Missouri from his native Hawaii, but the journey he made in June was one of his proudest. The 1921 graduate of the University returned this time for a double occasion: to receive the Distinguished Service Award from the University of Missouri Alumni Association, and to see his daughter, Miss Katherine M. Watada, receive an A.B. degree at the June 4 Commencement. He was accompanied by Mrs. Watada. On a previous occasion, in 1956, the parents and daughter were on the campus to see their son and brother, Gordon Watada, receive an engineering degree.

Back in 1919 Missourians in Y.M.C.A. work in Hawaii persuaded Mr. Watada to enter the University. It was his first trip out of Hawaii. He recalled that he was so lonely in Columbia at first that he simply headed for the Y.M.C.A. and sat down by himself on the front porch. Someone came along with a friendly handshake, he said, and after that things were all right. Mr. Watada made a career of Y-work, and is a retired secretary.

The Distinguished Service Award, one of the major honors conferred by the University and its Alumni Association, is presented annually in recognition of an alumnus who has given outstanding service in support of the University and its program. According to the citation, the award was made "in recognition of outstanding service to the University of Missouri by Umematsu Watada, whose enthusiasm and interest

have been directed to the development of a greater University of Missouri. The loyalty and determination exemplified by this recipient constitutes one of the University's finest elements of strength." Association President Edward W. Sowers officiated.

Mr. Watada has shown a devotion to the University since his graduation with a B.S. in Agriculture 42 years ago. In formal alumni activities, he organized and served as the first president of the University of Missouri Hawaii Alumni Chapter in 1951. Since that time he has also served first as the official and then the unofficial host to visitors to Hawaii from the University. He has maintained an outpost of hospitality in Honolulu for any and all graduates and faculty members who might pass that way; many of these visitors have been royally entertained through the efforts of Mr. Watada, who is known on the islands as "Mr. University of Missouri." A continuing service by Mr. Watada that has become somewhat of a tradition is a regular gift of flowers from the islands for the Homecoming Queen, her court, and other persons at the University each fall. Bouquets of orchids and other exotic flowers arrive on the campus by air annually for the Homecoming weekend.

In June, 1962, Dean W. Francis English of the College of Arts and Science stopped off in Hawaii while on the way to India, and at that time presented Mr. Watada with a Certificate of Appreciation from the Alumni Association.