

Larry Gordon Presented with Outstanding Alumni Award

Steven Gold, MPH '75, member of the SPH Alumni Society Board of Governors, had the honor of presenting this year's Distinguished Alumni Award to Larry J. Gordon, MPH 'S4, during the Michigan alumni breakfast at the American Public Health Association's annual meeting held in San Diego last fall.

Gordon's degree from SPH is in environmental health. He retired from government in 1988 where he was most recently employed as New Mexico cabinet Secretary for Health and Environment (HED); presently, he is employed as a visiting professor of public administration at the University of New Mexico School of Public Administration.

During his 44 years in public health he has served as deputy secretary, HED; state health officer; director of the New Mexico Scientific Laboratory System; director of the New Mexico Environmental Improvement Agency; and as director of the Albuquerque-Bernalillo County Environmental Health Department.

Gordon was founder and two-term member of the Council on Education for Public Health and is currently a member of the National Environmental Health Science and Protection Accreditation Council. He was president of the American Public Health Association in 1981 and has served as chair of the National Conference of Local Environmental Health Administrators, president of the New Mexico Public Health Association, president of the New Mexico Environmental Health Association, and on numerous national public and environmental health committees.

He has published more than 185 articles, received numerous awards and honors, and has developed and gained enactment of numerous state and local public and environmental health statutes and ordinances. Gordon's service to the School includes a term on the School of Public Health's Alumni Society Board of Governors from 1985-89 and more recently, participation in a December 1993 SPH seminar on the issues of public health and health care reform from the state and federal perspective (the culmination of a Public Health Policy and Administration On Job/On Campus program). "Larry was a key participant at this seminar. He represented state-level public health, and his perspective was especially stimulating since he represented the point of view that public health should emphasize areas like environmental health, surveillance, health assessment, communicable disease control, health education, and so forth, leaving the delivery of health services to the private sector," explains Toby Citrin, adjunct professor of health management and policy.

"When I attended the University," Gordon said, "School faculty were practitioners' role models and mentors, as each had significant public health practitioner experience prior to joining the faculty. Students were inculcated with a vision and a philosophy of public health, as well as knowledge of the public policy, scientific, legal, and administrative aspects."

Attendance (at the University) was not without human and financial cost. Our first son was born while I was on a train enroute to Ann Arbor, and my family could not join me for three months. Following graduation, we had to sell my books and supplies in order to buy gasoline for the return trip. Forty-one years later, this recognition by my peers is the ultimate professional award, and I am deeply appreciative.



The breakfast concluded with a message on the state of the School by Dean Clark. Clark also expressed her appreciation, on behalf of the School, for Richard Cornell's superb service as interim dean.

The School's Board of Governors select the recipient of the Distinguished Alumni Award from nominees submitted by the alumni body. Past recipients include Gloria Richardson Smith, MPH 'S9; Vernice Davis Anthony, MPH '76; E. Frank Ellis, MPH '68, and Maurice Reizen, MSPH '46.