

## **Robert Stobaugh**

### **A Memorial by Duane Kujawa**

There were three major “episodes” characterizing Bob Stobaugh’s contributions to the AIB: his name change leadership, his Vice-Presidency experiences, and his presidency’s focus on growth of both performance quality and membership numbers.

The original name of the AIB was the Association for Education in International Business (the AEIB). Bob was one of the group that felt this name was attractive to educators but likely not accommodative to business leaders and public sector policy makers, and that it was not inclusive of the educator’s research role. He “led the charge” (e.g., chaired the special committee) to change the name. At the 1971 Annual Meeting Bob moved the name be changed to “International Business Association”. There was no supportive consensus. But there was strong interest in a name change. Several subsequent samplings of the AEIB members’ name preferences narrowed the field to two: Academy of International Business (AIB) and International Business Association (IBA). The former, AIB, eventually won out via a constitutional amendment changing the name. Bob Stobaugh provided the leadership energy and foresight to underscore new directions being taken by the Academy implicit in the name change.

As Vice President, 1973-1974, Bob was Program Chair for the Annual Meetings in New York City and in San Francisco, and, of course, sat on the Academy’s Executive Committee. This experience gave him an “insider’s view” on the functioning of the Academy and the locus of its strengths and weaknesses. It also gave him an appreciation for the enormous explosive growth being experienced as the membership grew some 30 percent during those two years to approximately 750 members by the end of 1974.

Bob served as President of the AIB during 1979 and 1980. He and his Executive Committee set a membership growth target of 250 net new members. During those two years, membership grew about 40 percent to a total of approximately 1,400. This was nearly double what Bob saw when he finished his term as Vice President six years earlier. This growth implied structural change with added emphasis on the AIB Regions to initiate and present regional AIB meetings. Bob worked hard to support the regional

chairpersons in being more expansive and effective. Quality enhancement took several turns. One was the expansion of the JIBS Editorial Board by a third to 60 members to improve the quality of the manuscript reviews and encourage more manuscript submissions. The Academy also doubled its financial contribution to JIBS in 1980. Enhancements to improve the quality of the Annual Meetings included - to name a few - more dissertation presentations, especially from those from the more established university IB programs; joint sessions with more functionally oriented associations, such as in financial management and economics; more cooperation between the European International Business Association (EIBA) and the AIB regarding joint meetings; and adding a keynote speaker from business (CEO) or government, such as from Bank of America, U.S. Steel, or the Secretary of the Treasury. Bob “pushed forward” on all these ideas and others, and succeeded in achieving many of them.

The AIB is certainly much better off today because of the many leadership contributions of Bob Stobaugh.