

Biography of William E. Becker

Bill and his wife Sue marked their 50th wedding anniversary on a cruise in 2017, with the families of their three daughters that include three grandsons. Bill and Sue have traveled the world together during his career as an economist and econometrician specializing in the development and assessment of educational practices along with analysis of issues related to human capital.

In the 1970s and 1980s, Bill and Sue toured Germany, England, Italy and Yugoslavia for Bill to lecture and consult. A notable consultancy in 1978 was at the then Karl Marx University of Economics (now Corvinus University of Budapest, Hungary). Through the 1990s Bill and Sue toured Indonesia (with their two younger daughters), when Bill was assessing university programs for the World Bank Midwest Universities Consortium for International Activities; they visited Spain with Bill consulting for Universidad Carlos III; Thailand where Bill lectured at Thammasat University; Australia, where Bill held visiting positions at the Universities of Adelaide, Melbourne, and South Australia; Riga, Latvia and St Petersburg, Russia where Bill worked with the Soros Foundation and Abu Dhabi when Bill consulted for the Emirates Center for Strategic Studies and Research on the role of education in the new millennium. There were multiple trips to Mexico between 1998 and 2002 for Bill to lecture at the Universidad Autonoma de Nuevo Leon and Centro de Investigacion y Docencia Economicas. In 2003, they visited Portugal and Scotland where Bill worked with the University of Evora and the Economic Centre of the Learning and Teaching Support Network in Edinburgh. They were also in New Zealand where Bill gave the keynote address at an Auckland University of Technology conference. In 2006, they were in Singapore with Bill consulting for Singapore Management University and in 2007 consulting on the teaching of economics at the University of Western Australia. In 2009, they were in Germany and The Netherlands where Bill was a visiting scholar at the Institute for the Study of Labor (IZA), Center for Economic Studies and Institute for Economic Research (CESifo) and Erasmus School of Economics; in Belgium he also contributed to an OECD project on tuning in higher education. For three months in 2010, there was a five-city lecture tour in Australia on behalf of the Australian Business Deans Council. Bill and Sue were again in Australia in 2012, with the University of South Australia where Bill held an adjunct appointment (1996-2015). They were last in Australia in 2015 when Bill served as a visiting professor at Queensland University and where he delivered the keynote address at the annual Australasian Economics Conference.

In retirement Bill and Sue have continued to travel, touring Vietnam in 2015, traveling European rivers in 2016 and 2017, cruising around Cape Horn in 2018 and a passage through the Panama Cannel in 2019. Bill's winter months are spent serving on the Coconut Grove Sailing Club Race Committee (Biscayne Bay, Florida) and summers sailing Lake Monroe (Indiana), with occasional work as the Fourwinds Marina sailboat rigger.

In the past, Professor Becker's academic pursuits were supported by the National Science Foundation, Kazanjian Foundation, Russell Sage Foundation, Helen Dwight Reid Foundation, the Bush Foundation and Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation. In part these grants supported his research that resulted in 90 articles, all meticulously edited by Sue, and appearing in the *American Economic Review* (refereed and proceedings), *American Statistician*, *American Journal of Agricultural Economics*, *Econometric Theory*, *Economic Inquiry*, *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, *Journal of Finance*, *Journal of Human Resources*, *Journal of Economic Literature*, *Review of Economics and Statistics*, *Southern Economics Journal*, and numerous other journals. Of special note in human capital is his work with G. Alter in the *Monthly Labor Review* (February 1985) and *Journal of Risk and Insurance* (June 1987) that identified an error in the US Bureau of Labor Statistics *Worklife Tables* and the Tables misused in forensic economics. Publication of the *Worklife Tables* by BLS were subsequently termination. His research in education was featured in a *Journal of Economic Literature* (June 2015) review article by S. Allgood, W. Walstad and J. Siegfried.

Professor Becker is the author of 12 books, also skillfully edited by Sue: *Statistics for Business and Economics* (South-Western, International Thomson Publishing) and *Statistics for Business and Economics Using Microsoft Excel* (SRB Publishing), and is co-author of *Business and Economics Statistics* (Addison-Wesley), and co-editor of *Academic Rewards in Higher Education* (Ballinger), *Econometric Modeling in Economic Education Research* (Kluwer-Nijhoff), *The Economics of American Higher Education* (Kluwer), *American Higher Education and National Growth* (Kluwer), *Assessing Educational Practices: The Contribution of Economics* (MIT Press), *Teaching Economics to Undergraduates: Alternatives to Chalk and Talk* (Edward Elgar), *Incentive-Based Budgeting Systems in Public Universities* (Edward Elgar), *The Scholarship of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education: Contributions of the Research Universities* (Indiana University Press), and *Teaching Economics: More Alternatives to Chalk and Talk* (Edward Elgar).

Dr. Becker is a professor emeritus of economics at Indiana University Bloomington, a research fellow of the Institute for the Study of Labor (IZA, Bonn Germany), and a research network member of the Center for Economic Studies and Institute for Economic Research (CESifo, Munich Germany). Before joining the faculty of Indiana University in 1979, he was a tenured faculty member at the University of Minnesota, where he also served as executive director of the Minnesota Council on Economic Education and where he returned for the academic year of 1988 to serve as acting director of the U of M Management Information Division. He has held extended visiting appointments at Princeton University and the universities of Adelaide, Melbourne, Queensland and Western Australia. Within the United States, he has been a paid consultant for the United States Department of Justice, United States Department of Education, Ford Motor Company, Chrysler Corporation, Nissan, and Westinghouse, as well as many smaller firms and individuals, for whom he has given expert statistical and econometrics testimony in Minnesota, Illinois and Indiana courtrooms.

Professor Becker earned a bachelor's degree in mathematics from the College (now University) of St. Thomas in 1967, a master's degree in economics from the University of Wisconsin in 1970, and a doctorate in economics from the University of Pittsburgh in 1973. He was editor of the *Journal of Economic Education* (1989-2009) and simultaneously served on the editorial board of the *Economics of Education Review*. In 2005-06, he was president of the 450 member Midwest Economics Association. He has received several teaching and research awards and in 2003 he received the Council for Economic Education Marvin Bower Award for leadership and service to economic education. His career is featured in *Who's Who in Economics*, *Who's Who in the World*, *Who's Who in America* and *Who's Who in Science and Engineering*.