

Maurice John Koury
Doctor of Laws

Businessman and philanthropist Maurice John Koury personifies the American dream. His parents, John Abdou and Edna Jerdini Koury, immigrated from Lebanon to the United States in 1919. In 1945 his brother, Ernest, started a business manufacturing hosiery in the basement of the family home in Burlington. That same year, Maurice Koury graduated from high school and enrolled at UNC-Chapel Hill. Four years later, armed with his Carolina B.S. in Chemistry, Maurice returned to Burlington to join the family firm. Under Koury's leadership, this small family business grew into Carolina Hosiery Mills, Inc. In later years Koury expanded his business interests to development of hotels, motels, and shopping malls.

Maurice Koury's four years at Carolina were the beginning of a life-long commitment to public higher education in general and Carolina in particular. Koury served two terms on the University's Board of Trustees (1981-89), and two terms as president of the Educational Foundation (1972-73, 1983-84). Koury is the long-time chair of the Educational Foundation's Endowment Trust. Under his stewardship, the foundation has built one of the nation's largest privately funded endowment for athletic scholarships. Koury played a major role in securing funding for the Dean E. Smith Center and made a generous leadership gift to the George Watts Hill Alumni Center. The Koury Natatorium adjacent to the Smith Center is named in his honor, as is the Alumni Center's Koury Library, which is paneled with heart pine salvaged during the recent renovation of Old West.

Maurice Koury has served on the Bicentennial Campaign Steering Committee, the Kenan-Flagler Business School Board of Visitors, the Medical Foundation Board, and the Morehead Scholarship Selection Committee. In 1987 Maurice Koury established the Edna J. Koury Professorship in the College of Arts and Sciences in honor of his mother. He has given generously to the School of Dentistry and the Kenan-Flagler Business School. Ernest and Maurice Koury are also major benefactors of Elon University where the John Koury Field House is named in memory of their father.

Maurice Koury's awards and honors from Carolina include the William Richardson Davie Award (1995) and the Distinguished Service Medal of the General Alumni Association (1994). The Roman Catholic Diocese of Raleigh has honored him with the Bishop F. Joseph Gossman Award (2000) for extraordinary service to Catholic education, and Elon University has honored him with the Frank S. Holt, Jr. Business Leadership Award and an honorary degree. Maurice Koury exemplifies vision, quiet determination, strong ethical character, and personal modesty. North Carolina's state motto, *esse quam videri* (to be rather than to seem), aptly describes his life and career.