

PIONEER MEMORIAL AWARD 2022

James Field '54

James (Jim) Field of El Paso, Texas, graduated from Luther College in 1954, with majors in mathematics and physics. After graduating, Jim went on to study at Vanderbilt University and George Peabody College for Teachers in Nashville, Tennessee, where he earned a joint master of arts in teaching degree in mathematics in 1955.

After teaching high school math for one year, Jim was drafted into the Army on July 25, 1956. He attended basic training at Fort Chaffee, Arkansas. Following his training, he went on to White Sands Proving Ground, later renamed White Sands Missile Range, in New Mexico. He was assigned to an organization doing ballistic missile simulation studies on a new machine called a scientific digital computer, which is where he learned computer programming. In 1964, he left White Sands Missile Range for a short time to take a position at the Headquarters, North American Air Defense Command in Colorado Springs, Colorado. Jim returned to White Sands Missile Range in 1965, where he worked until his retirement in 1987.

Jim is fond of his time at Luther and thankful for the opportunities he had as a student. Professors Herbert Rebasoo, Emil Miller, and Orlando “Pip” Qualley, and Coach Hamlet “Pete” Peterson influenced Jim in a significant way. He notes that everything he accomplished during his working career can be traced directly back to Luther College and the professors who helped him succeed.

In appreciation for the quality of Luther’s academic program, the sensitive spiritual guidance, and the overall value of his Luther experience, he established the Jim Field '54 Scholarship in 1997 to give back to the college and provide support for future students. This scholarship is awarded to students with financial need, with preference given to students majoring in mathematics, computer science, and education. In the past few years, Jim has worked with the college to establish a charitable remainder unitrust to significantly increase support for his scholarship now and in the future.

The Pioneer Memorial Award was established in 1988 to honor individuals who characterize the spirit of Heritage Club, and whose generous support serves as an inspiration to others. It is with sincere thanks for his visionary commitment and steadfast support of the college that we present the 2022 Pioneer Memorial Award to James Field.

Luther College
Decorah, Iowa