

Dixie Leavitt

Founder of Leavitt Group Enterprises

Born August 27, 1929 and reared on the family farm in Bunkerville, Nevada. Dixie learned the values of honesty, integrity and hard work, which he exemplified his whole life. While attending the Branch Agricultural College, he excelled academically, served as yearbook editor and student body president and became the institution's first four-year letterman in football and track. He married Anne Okerlund and together they reared their family of six sons. After graduation, Dixie became a fourth grade teacher at Cedar West Elementary in 1951 and started selling insurance during the summer. He loved the business and decided to pursue that as his career.

Dixie started his insurance business from their small basement apartment and from the beginning was determined to create a reputation for honesty and dependability. The oft-told story of his kindness to one young client who became United States Senator Harry Reid, was shared in the halls of government as eldest son, Michael O. Leavitt, was being confirmed as a member of the Presidential cabinet.

Dixie's business grew and in 1962 he created Leavitt Group Enterprises (LGE). He partnered with other individuals and insurance agencies using a unique 60/40 ownership model based on the principle of aligned interest between LGE which maintains contractual control, and its local managing co-owners who maintain client control. Sharing significant ownership and profits provided the natural incentives to make each agency thrive. Dixie's pattern of finding partners with solid work ethic and integrity continues today. The Leavitt Group now has affiliated agencies in 14 states and is the 12th largest insurance brokerage in the nation.

Dixie served for 18 years in the Utah State Legislature and was instrumental in helping SUU (then the College of Southern Utah) obtain four-year status. An incident that illustrates his commitment to integrity occurred as Utah struggled with the question of liquor served by the drink. He needed the vote of his fellow legislators to accomplish the four-year status. All his colleagues knew how important it was to him. One powerful senator offered to trade his vote for CSU's advancement for Dixie's vote for the liquor bill. Dixie told him that was a trade he couldn't make. His understanding has always been that compromise is the stuff of government and of life and living, but in his words, "You never compromise a principle." A colleague from his years in the Utah State Legislature, Senator Warren Pugh, declared, "No one will ever corrupt Dixie Leavitt."

We are proud to have Dixie Leavitt's name on the Business Building. He is the first inductee into the School's Wall of Honor for his success in business and ethical leadership.

