



## William Brewster "Bruce" Nickerson

Lt. William "Bruce" Brewster Nickerson was the son of Cape Cod Community College President E. Carleton Nickerson, who led the institution from 1964-1972 while overseeing the planning and establishment of the West Barnstable campus. Bruce Nickerson was born of a storied Cape Cod heritage as a direct descendent of William Nickerson who purchased from the Native Americans and settled what is now the town of Chatham, and of Elder William Brewster who came to Cape Cod on the Mayflower in 1620.

Much of Bruce Nickerson's life was devoted to serving others. In 1957 he was a representative of the United States at the International Conference of Boy Scouts in Europe. For two years he served as an unpaid counselor at the Episcopal Camp for boys from Harlem. He was a member of Winant's Volunteers in settlement work in England in 1962. Lt. Nickerson graduated from Deerfield Academy, and was a 1964 graduate from Dartmouth College where he was president of Palaeopitus, the student governing body, a member of the Undergraduate Judiciary Committee, the executive committee of his class, the Handel Society, Glee Club, Winter Carnival Council, and Psi Upsilon fraternity.

Upon graduation, he enlisted in the Naval Training Program, and was first in his flight class, academically, and third when

academic and physical factors were balanced. He was to have been limited to ground service because of a minor physical disability, but he appealed the decision to the Secretary of the Navy, and because of his excellent record, was allowed to fly.

The Naval Air Force Lieutenant planned a career of further service to others, either in the Ministry or teaching, upon completion of his duty, but gave his life instead on a mission from the Aircraft Carrier U.S.S. Kittyhawk over Vietnam on April 22, 1966. Lt. Nickerson was awarded ten medals posthumously. For heroism and extraordinary and meritorious achievement, the President of the United States awarded him the Distinguished Flying Cross, Gold Star in lieu of the second Distinguished Flying Cross, the Air Medal, and Gold Stars in lieu of the 2nd, 3rd, 4th, and 5th Air Medals. He also received the Purple Heart, National Defense Service Medal, the Vietnam Service Medal, and three citations from the President of the United States for heroism and achievement.

To pay tribute to this outstanding young man, the students and staff of Cape Cod Community College proposed the William Brewster Nickerson Memorial Room, which was dedicated in October of 1971 and opened in January of 1972.