



### **GALLERY OF DISTINGUISHED CITIZENS INDUCTEE 1982**

**DR. JOSEPH F. VOLKER** came to Birmingham in 1948 at the age of 36 to establish a dental school at the University of Alabama. He had no faculty and the students took their science courses with medical students. He taught all the dentistry classes until the junior year. Many distinguished educators and physicians followed him to Birmingham after working with him elsewhere. In his scientific research, Dr. Volker was the first in the world to show that fluorides incorporated into enamel structure reduces dental cavities when applied to the teeth. He played many roles at UAB: Dean of the School of Dentistry, Director of Research and Graduate Studies, Vice President for Health Affairs, Executive Vice President and President. Dr. Volker then became the first Chancellor of the University of Alabama System in Tuscaloosa, Alabama.

Before there was a court order, Dr. Volker was impartial in dealing with blacks and other minorities. Through his Unitarian Service Committee and his interest in students and faculty, regardless of color, sex or nationality, Birmingham's UAB Campus became a cosmopolitan oasis while much of Alabama was still segregated. Dr. Volker's concern for the physical and social health of our city as well as its economic stability helped Birmingham become an internationally renowned city. Today, UAB is the largest employer in the City of Birmingham and a central force in the cultural, recreational and educational development of the city.

He passed away on May 3, 1989.