



Dr. William E. Sterling, Jr. showed his ability to lead with drive and determination while a student at Auburndale High School. Sterling graduated among the top 25 in his class in 1967. Sterling knew with hard work, achieving goals and upholding personal beliefs would lead to an outstanding future. Sterling was a member of AHS Imperial Sound, Golf Team, Key Club and Beta Club.

After graduation, Sterling pursued his goal of becoming an Optometrist by attending the Southern College of Optometry in Memphis, TN. In 1975 he graduated with his Doctor of Optometry (O.D.) and immediately put his degree to use as an Optometry Officer in the US Air Force. Sterling served in the Air Force from 1975-1978. While stationed in Louisiana, he earned his M.A. in Human Relations from LA Tech University in 1977.

In 1978, Sterling returned to Florida where he worked as an Optometrist with Dr.'s Davidson and Tivnan, P.A. from 1978-1985. In 1985, Sterling opened his own practice where he practices today. He remains an active member in the following organizations: Florida Optometric Assoc., American Optometric Assoc., Lake Region Optometric Assoc., and the American Public Health Assoc.

In addition to achieving career goals, Sterling has given back to Auburndale since 1980 when he joined the Auburndale Rotary Club and the Auburndale Chamber of Commerce. He served as the Rotary Club President from 1983-84; and Auburndale Chamber of Commerce from 1986-87. He was a member of the Camp Rotary Operating Assoc. from 1980-1993; Served as the Manager of Camp Rotary from 1981-1993; He was involved with the Auburndale Main Street Redevelopment Assoc., from 1990-1994 serving as Vice-Chairperson then Treasurer. This involvement evolved into his participation with the Auburndale Community Redevelopment Assoc. (CRA) where he served as Vice-Chairperson then Chairperson. Sterling served two terms on the Auburndale City Commission and was elected Mayor in 2001. After sitting out one year, Sterling was reelected to the Auburndale City Commission in 2003 where he continues to serve today.

He served as the Honorary Chairperson for the Auburndale Relay for Life in 2001. He is an active member of Gideon's International, Polk County Central Gideon Camp and an active member of the First United Methodist Church of Auburndale. He has volunteered on various church committees and has served as church Lay Leader for 6 years. He is a certified Lay Speaker who currently teaches a High School Sunday school class.

In 2000, Sterling was diagnosed with Cancer. After undergoing surgery and radiation treatments from 2000-2001, he has been cancer free for six years.

Sterling has been married to Jo Anne for 31 years and they have 1 daughter Emily (AHS Class of 2004). Dr. William E. Sterling, Jr. would like to thank his family and friends for loving and supporting him, the community of Auburndale for allowing him to give back to the town he loves, the AHS Hall of Fame Committee for honoring him, and all of his teachers for encouraging him and providing him with a strong educational foundation.