

Helen M. Voorhees
Ninth President
1939-1941

Helen M. Voorhees, the fourth women president of ACPA, was elected near the close of the annual Business session in Cleveland on Thursday, February 23, 1939. As was the custom, she assumed the presidency at the close of the annual conference meetings. Her election was the first in which members of the Nominating Committee, appointed at least three months before the annual meeting, were able to consult the membership in advance for nominees. Helen Voorhees was Director of the Appointment Bureau at Mount Holyoke College in Massachusetts at the time of her election.

Born in Three Ridges, New Jersey, she was a graduate of High Bridge High School in that city in 1910. After a year at home and traveling she entered Mount Holyoke College, the oldest college for women in the United States. She completed her undergraduate degree at Mount Holyoke, and then she taught English and History in a public high school for a year. The next four years were spent with Phi Beta Kappa when she served as assistant to the national secretary. Helen Voorhees returned to her alma mater in 1920 to serve for nine years as Assistant to the Dean. On leave of absence for a year, she earned the M.A. (1926, Sociology) degree at the University of Wisconsin. In 1929 she was appointed Director of the Appointment Bureau at Mount Holyoke, acting also as Dean of Residence for the first two years. For many years she was secretary to the Scholarship Committee and was Secretary of the faculty for 10 years. After nearly 30 years of career counseling, Helen Voorhees retired in 1958.

She first attended a NAAS conference in 1927 at New York City. She represented the Mount Holyoke Dean of Women and participated in discussions. She first appeared on the NAAS membership list during 1928-29. At the 1929 conference in Cleveland when ACPA was NAPPO, Helen Voorhees gave a report and she spoke at a session at Atlantic City in 1930 about her college placement office. At the Detroit meetings in 1931, she reported on personnel procedures and techniques. At the Washington, DC meetings in 1932, she was elected vice-president to the ACPA Educational Counseling and Administration division for 1932-33. She presented her divisional report on principles, functions, and standards at the Minneapolis conference in 1933. Also, she served as member of the Nominating Committee. At the Cleveland conference in 1934, she presented a "Report on Conference of College Placement Officers and Business Personnel Officers." Helen Voorhees was a speaker at a General Placement session at Atlantic City in 1935. Her topic was "Specific Methods of Finding Openings." She served as a member of the Nominating Committee in 1935. At the annual Business meeting that year, Voorhees moved to approve the ACGPA committee on financial arrangements recommendation that a \$ 1.00 registration fee for each convention registrant be allocated to the work of the coordinating organization plus a minimum contribution of \$25.00 from each active and affiliated member of ACGPA, whenever the registration fees did not amount to the minimum fee. Her motion was carried.

At the 1938 conference in Atlantic City, Helen M. Voorhees was elected vice-president of ACPA. During 1938-39, she served on the Program Committee, and she chaired the Committee of Regional Meetings consisting of ACPA Executive Council members. She presided at the ACPA luncheon session on Friday, February 24, at the Cleveland convention in 1939. At the first session of the annual Business meeting, she reported on the replies received from a survey of fellow committee members. At the second Business session, while continuing to serve as vice-president, Voorhees presided in place of

President Brumbaugh.

The ACGPA Board of Representatives, meeting in New York on Sunday, December 3, 1939, selected Helen Voorhees as one of three members of a steering committee to attend a Saturday, February 17, 1940, Washington, DC meeting, sponsored by ACE. The joint committee consisting of ACGPA members and three persons from the Akron-Cleveland-New York regional group discussed ways to coordinate personnel work at the college level.

The ACPA News Letter was issued again during 1939-40 and announced that the seventeenth annual ACPA convention was to take place at the Hotel Coronado in St. Louis, Tuesday through Saturday, February 20-24, 1940. One hundred seventy-eight members registered.

Following the Tuesday afternoon meeting of the ACGPA Board of Representatives, the ACPA Executive Council members assembled for their customary pre-conference dinner meeting. During the first general session, there were three speakers who made formal presentations on Diagnosis and Counseling, followed by a discussion. In the afternoon, six groups, each with a chairman and recorder, discussed facets of personnel work. Another general session was held in the evening on the subject of Research. Two papers were presented, and a symposium of three members made presentations on the applications of research procedures. On Friday morning a general session on Placement was held. Student Activities was the topic of the general session on Saturday morning. Joint meetings for members of the cooperating organizations of ACGPA were held all day Thursday. The opening joint session was held in the St. Louis University auditorium. Helen Voorhees chaired an afternoon group session at which time The Role of Education in Emotional Adjustment was discussed.

ACPA members attended Business sessions on Wednesday afternoon, February 21, and on Friday afternoon, February 23. President Voorhees called the first Business session to order. Most of the standing committee reports were deferred to the second Business session so that special business could be transacted. ACPA members were to be canvassed for suggestions as to nominees for office not earlier than four months or later than three months before the annual conference. The latter part of the first Business session was devoted to the presentation and discussion of the ACGPA Policy Committee report. Helen Voorhees presided at the second ACPA Business session when much early conversation included election procedures and a vote was taken to raise the annual dues from \$3.00 to \$4.00 on a trial basis of one year. Approximately 39 ACPA members were present. A vote was taken to have the secretary send each ACPA member a voting ballot not later than six weeks before the annual convention. Also, a vote was taken to accept the action of the ACPA Executive Council to request CGPA (changed from ACGP the day before) to establish a College Section with an executive committee to coordinate college personnel work in CGPA. ACPA committee reports took up much of the Business session. ACPA membership for 1939-40 was approximately 291.

During 1940-41, President Voorhees continued to serve as an ACPA delegate to the CGPA Board of Representatives, and she served on the ACPA Program Committee. The eighteenth annual ACPA convention was held in Atlantic City from Tuesday through Saturday, February 18-22, 1941. The Chalfonte-Haddon Hall served as ACPA headquarters. CGPA financed the printing of the convention programs. Helen M. Voorhees addressed ACPA members on "The Responsibilities of the Heritage of Personnel Work." She presided at two Business sessions held in the Music Room of the Chalfonte-Haddon Hall. Seventy-two people were present at the first session on Thursday afternoon which lasted about an hour and thirty-five minutes. At the first session, the dues increase of the previous year was extended to 1942. President Voorhees announced that 115 nominating ballots were received from members. During 1940-41 there were 252 ACPA members. At the

conclusion of the second Business session, Helen M. Voorhees was given a rising vote of thanks.

Helen Voorhees served as President of the Council of Guidance and Personnel Associations during 1943, midway through World War II.

Among her awards, she received a medal of honor from the Mount Holyoke Alumnae Association for outstanding service to the association and the college. The citation referred, in part, to her excellent administrative procedure and her far-seeing counsel to generations of undergraduates who attended the college. At the 1958 national APGA/ACPA convention in St. Louis, ACPA presented her with a citation "in grateful appreciation for leadership and service to the ACPA and to the profession of student personnel work."

On July 12, 1977, Helen Voorhees reflected upon her general activities in the student personnel movement. An excerpt from the text in *Presidential Reporting* (1978) reads as follows:

...My chief contribution, as I recall it, was in the development of college personnel work for which in the early days there was little academic training offered or available. One learned the hard way and tried to help new or younger people make a start in the field. I was fortunate in that Mount Holyoke began early to offer moderate and somewhat trained service in the field, thanks to an excellent dean.

For many years from 1961 to the dusk of her life, Helen Voorhees was President of the Van Voorhees Association, a Dutch family of 700-800 members.

She died within two months of her 90th birthday in 1982. The May 1983 issue of *ACPA Developments* reported that the ACPA Executive Council endorsed a memorial resolution in her honor at the 1983 national convention in Houston.