

2013 Walter F. Ulmer, Jr. Applied Research Award Recipient
Center for Creative Leadership Presents Ulmer Award to
Dr. William Rockwell Torbert

Leadership Professor Emeritus of Management at the Carroll School of Management at Boston College, [Bill Torbert](#) is currently a principal of Action Inquiry Associates and founder of the Action Inquiry Fellowship.

Between 1978 and 2008, Torbert served first as BC's Carroll School Graduate Dean and later as Director of the PhD Program in Organizational Transformation, the MBA program rising from below the top 100 to 25th nationally during his deanship. Within the Academy of Management, he served as Chair for the Organization Development & Change Division, on the Board of the Organization Behavior Teaching Society, as well having served on the founding Editorial Boards of numerous journals including most recently the *Journal of Action Research* and *Academy of Management Learning and Education*. Torbert has consulted widely (e.g. Odebrecht Construction [Brazil], Volvo and UBS Warburg [England], Lego, Gillette, the National Security Agency, the Canadian Senior Public Service, and the Center for Creative Leadership among many others) as well as serving on the Boards of Harvard Pilgrim Health Care and Trillium Asset Management (socially responsible investing).

With regard to scholarship, Torbert's 2004 Berrett-Koehler book, *Action Inquiry: The Secret of Timely and Transforming Leadership*, presents his theories, cases, surveys, and lab and field experiments about developmental transformation at both the personal and organizational levels, as well as within science itself, undergirded by an action research process exercised in real-time, everyday life, called "Collaborative Developmental Action Inquiry." Unlike most purely third-person, analytic social science research, the paradigm of Collaborative Developmental Action Inquiry integrates first-person, second-person, and third-person research/practice in real-time. His 2005 Harvard Business Review article with David Rooke, "Seven Transformations of Leadership," has recently been named one of top ten leadership articles ever published in HBR, having earlier won an international award for Best Published Research on Leadership and Corporate Governance in 2006. Torbert's many other books and articles include the national Alpha Sigma Nu award winning *Managing the Corporate Dream* (Dow Jones-Irwin, 1987), and the Terry Award Finalist book *The Power of Balance: Transforming Self, Society, and Scientific Inquiry* (Sage, 1991).

Torbert received a BA, *magna cum laude*, in Political Science & Economics and a PhD in Administrative Sciences, both from Yale University, holding a Danforth Graduate Fellowship during his graduate years. He founded the Yale Upward Bound (War on Poverty) program and the Theatre of Inquiry, and taught at Yale, Southern Methodist University, and Harvard prior to joining the Boston College faculty in 1978. He won the Outstanding Professor Award at SMU in 1972, in 1991 won the first Carroll School MBA Alumni Distinguished Teaching Award, in 2008 received the David L. Bradford Distinguished Educator Award from the Organization Behavior Teaching Society, and in 2010 the Outstanding Scholar award from the Western Academy of Management. Most of all, though, he takes great pleasure and pride (not to mention more than occasional pain) in the ongoing development of his three sons, Michael, Patrick, and Benjamin, and of his closest friends, colleagues, and students.

The Walter F. Ulmer, Jr. Applied Research Award is named in honor of Walter F. Ulmer, Jr., retired president, for his contributions to CCL and the leadership field, to demonstrate CCL's commitment to applied research, and to build connections with other professionals whose work and commitments are congruent with CCL's. An internal committee (Dave Altman and John Ryan) determines the winner. He or she receives \$1,500 and a trip to the Center to attend the Research Awards Event.