...Billy invited our school to compete at the annual Southern Bell Debate Tournament at MBA.

I had heard about how wonderful this tournament was, but the experience far exceeded my expectations. Billy and the MBA team were consummate hosts. Most tournaments are like staying in a Holiday Inn. The Southern Bell is the Ritz. That weekend I discovered one hallmark of Billy’s character: He was the most hospitable person I had ever known. The food, parties, entertainment, and friendly atmosphere were the equal of all other debate tournaments combined.
He coached two MBA debate teams who closed out the National Debate Tournament. In more than 85 years of scholastic debate that had never happened and it has not happened since.

....he built a debate program at MBA that is a dynasty today.
I always share with my English students a freeing experience I had in his one-semester class.

If I can talk extemporaneously for two minutes about GRASS, then we-- with time to prepare-- should be able to interest ourselves in ANY assigned topic enough to interest someone else.
“For my part I know nothing with any certainty, but the sight of the stars makes me dream”

— Vincent Van Gogh
He identified talent in me that I didn't know I had, and he carefully cast a vision of what I could do if I worked to develop that talent. As a man of letters, he didn't merely teach me public speaking; he taught me how to pull my experiences from across MBA's many disciplines together so that I could become a great public speaker.
“For my part I know nothing with any certainty, but the sight of the stars makes me dream.”

— Vincent Van Gogh
Mr. Tate was world class. I still use the speech mechanics that he taught me every day at work— not exaggerating. He will be missed.