

DACC Foundation Friends Fall Newsletter

November 2021

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DANVILLE AREA COMMUNITY COLLEGE

FOUNDATION

CONTACT US

DACC Foundation Office

foundation@dacc.edu 217-443-8843

Tonya Hill, Executive Director

thill@dacc.edu 217-443-8772

Sandy Dreher, Controller/Office Manager

sdreher@dacc.edu 217-443-8843

Gina Davis, Scholarship Coordinator

gdavis@dacc.edu 217-443-8893

MISSION AND VISION

Danville Area Community College Foundation is a not-for-profit organization committed to promoting and supporting the success of Danville Area Community College through fundraising and stewardship of the Foundation's resources, with the belief in the College's positive educational, cultural, and economic impact on the communities it serves.

Committed to Supporting:

- Scholarships
- DACC Programs
- DACC Technology
- Capital Development
- Faculty Development
- Student Food Pantry

www.dacc.edu/foundation foundation@dacc.edu

217-443-8843

WHY I GIVE: SYBIL MERVIS

The Hebrew word mitzvah refers to a good deed done as a religious duty.

Sybil has been bestowing her mitzvahs on Danville since her arrival 63 years ago. She credits her Jewish faith for her values. "From an early age, I was taught through Judaism that we are here to make the world a better place. I've tried to do at least one good deed every day of my life."

DACC students are grateful recipients of Sybil's bountiful mitzvahs. Sybil and her late husband Lou are enshrined in the "Wall of Honor" in the Bremer Center for their legacy of good deeds to support student scholarships at the College.

Lou left a legacy of philanthropy and community service unlike any other in the City's history. Moreover, with Mervis Industries, he founded what was arguably the region's most successful industrial business.

Throughout her 59 years of marriage to Lou, Sybil could be comfortable in her role as a wife and mother and grandmother. At the same time, Sybil managed to cast what Emily Dickinson would call "her own slant of light"—as a cherished treasure in our community and a modern-day "renaissance woman."

After earning a bachelor's degree in journalism from the University of Illinois, Sybil has pursued an eclectic range of life passions, including service as an English teacher, author, researcher, activist, editor, fundraiser, archivist, lobbyist, and what she calls an "FTV"—or "Full-Time Volunteer."

Sybil has earned numerous civic and education awards, including being named First Citizen of Danville in 2013—which was 34 years after Lou



Sybil Mervis

earned this distinction. She has served on a number of library, museum, philanthropic, and higher-education boards and has returned to the DACC Foundation Board in 2018 after holding prior terms from 2001 to 2007.

Sybil supports myriad charities, studies and writes about Judaism and Jewish history, and engages in civic activities including a successful campaign to inoculate 10,000 children against Rubella. She also helped DACC's former President Ron Lingle launch "College for Kids," which has attracted hundreds of children to DACC every summer over the past 30 years.

Sybil's articles about Jewish history have appeared in journals published in Indiana and Chicago. She wrote a book about her parents' courtship during the Great Depression and her own "coming of age" book. Her most recent achievement—which has attracted national attention—has been the founding of the Central Illinois Jewish Communities Archives at the University of Illinois Library. More than a decade in the making, the Mervis Archives contains records, artifacts, and oral histories related to the Jewish experience in the east-central Illinois region.

Mervis (cont'd)

Sybil finds that she is motivated each day by the mission of the Mervis Family Foundation, in aspiring to "heal the world (tikkun olam) through charitable giving (tzedakah) to causes that are near and dear to our heart, including but not limited to education, the arts, Judaism, ALS research, and our communities."

While remaining an active donor to Indiana University and DACC, Sybil also invests a great deal of her personal time to mentoring students of all ages. One of her proudest achievements that few people know about is how she has quietly helped more than 20 Vermilion County students—mostly minorities from low socioeconomic status—attend

boarding schools and graduate from top universities. Education has the power to transform people's lives," she says. "An educated population can improve the quality of life for an entire community. In Danville, a skilled and educated workforce that supports our local industries is the key to our social, economic, and cultural revitalization."

As much as possible, Sybil tries to do her charitable work without any fanfare. That is, she derives her greatest satisfaction when the mitzvah is anonymous. "You try to do your good deed without people knowing it was you who did it. That's where the true spirit of giving is most meaningful."

Mazel tov to you, Sybil Mervis.



First Year Presidential Scholars



Second Year Presidential Scholars

DACC Foundation Honors Program Returns to Mary Miller Gym

The numbers that jump out at you are \$704,000, 560, and 100.

The first number is the estimated value of the scholarships awarded to DACC students over the past year. The second is the total number of scholarships awarded.

But it's the third number that's arguably the most astounding of all.

2021-2022 By the Numbers **560 scholarships awarded = \$704,000**

As Foundation Executive Director Tonya Hill says, "Thanks to the generous support of donors and the DACC Foundation Board, we were able to award scholarships to every single student who applied and is attending DACC. That's 100 percent. This is the first year that the Foundation has ever been able to do this."

On Sept. 17 the DACC Foundation held its annual Honors Program before an audience of hundreds of scholarship donors, students, and families in the Mary Miller Gym.

Honors Program (cont'd)

After delivering the program virtually last year, the return to a live audience—albeit in masks—proved to be a big hit.

The program included a testimonial from Chris Hanson, the executive vice president of IEA Renewable Energy, whose company donates \$20,000 annually to support DACC's Alternative Energies program. Following Mr. Hanson to the podium were student testimonials from Cade Cummins and Mikayla Williams. The ceremony concluded with DACC's 31 presidential scholars parading onto the stage to introduce themselves individually.

Scholarships Awarded After the Honors Program

Hoopeston Higher Learning Center - \$750Annalin Schaumburg
Lauren Sheppard

Vermilion County Elementary Principals Association -\$300

Parker Stonecipher

Senior Citizens Life-Long Education - \$175Rosemary Butler

Troglia Family - \$1000 Conley E. Bateman

Marilyn F. Campbell -Illinois Audubon Society - \$500 Jack Silver

New Scholarships Established 2020-2021

We are grateful for these new scholarshp funds established in the past year. It is especially heartening to receive such generosity while the world was dealing with a deadly pandemic.

- Linda Laird Botlon Women in Law Enforcement Scholarship
- Keith and Nancy Dalenburg Scholarship
- Danville Rotary Club –Service Above Self Scholarship
- Nathan Donaldson Scholarship
- Dr. Ann Wagle RN Scholarship
- Dreher Family Scholarship
- Friends of Healthcare Scholarship
- Flemish Connection Fund Scholarship
- The Gifford State Bank Scholarship
- John L. and Bessie M. Hare Memorial Scholarship
- Bob Hatfield Memorial Scholarship
- Jean Haun Memorial Scholarship
- The Heartland Properties Group, LLC Scholarship
- IEA Partnership Scholarship
- Honesty Kiley Memorial Scholarship
- Russell Leigh and Associates Scholarship
- Doug Maxwell Memorial Scholarship
- Mimi Reitemeier Scholarship
- June R. Jackson-Seitzinger and Grover
 L. Seitzinger Endowed Scholarship
- Sara Snyder Culinary Arts Scholarship
- Snyder Family Achievement Scholarship
- John Spezia DACC Male Athlete of the Year Scholarship
- Troglia Family Scholarship
- Judy Turner Memorial Scholarship
- Vermilion Chevrolet Buick GMC Partnership Scholarship
- Village of Tilton Scholarship
- Vocational Scholarship

Why I Give: Toby Peck

Toby Peck took to heart the Biblical story about the poor widow who put two small copper coins into the treasury. As Jesus would say to his disciples, "Truly I tell you, this poor widow has put in more than all the others. They all contributed out of their surplus, but she out of her poverty has put in all she had to live on."

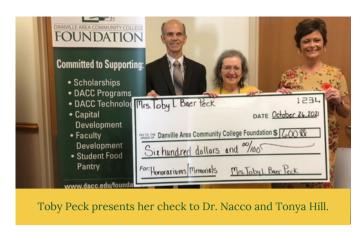
Ms. Peck is the modern-day embodiment of that widow. Throughout most of her adult life, she's had to struggle to make ends meet. When she graduated from high school, she planned to study theater at a major university but was thwarted for financial reasons. "Back in my day, scholarship eligibility was contingent on parents' combined income. By the 1970s, when my mom went to work for the Vermilion County State's attorney, our combined family income was \$500 over the limit."

But then she found Danville Junior College.

"Thanks to DJC, my dream of a college education was realized. And from that point on, I vowed that, if I could ever donate money (to DACC), it would be toward helping other serious theater students have the chance that I never had."

Ms. Peck credits DJC for giving her the general-education classes that would ignite her love of learning. She says, "When I went to DJC, I fell in love with my classes. I was blessed to have professors like Alice Morrison Guin, who encouraged me to want to learn all I could. DJC gave me a wonderful education and inspired me to be the life-long learner I am today."

After graduating from DJC in 1974, Ms. Peck transferred to Illinois State University, where she happily recalls, "all 62 DJC credits transferred." For the next 15 years, she taught English for K-12 in Glenrock, Wyoming, and in Danville. But catastrophe struck, and she would wage life-and-death battles with poverty and stress. Even so, she remembered the promise she made to herself about "giving back to the College." She says, "I



started setting aside every little bit I could. When you don't have much money, you really learn to be a good money manager."

This year Ms. Peck made good on her promise. Foundation Executive Director Tonya Hill recalls seeing an envelope on her desk with Toby's name on it. "When I saw the check Toby left, I was floored by her amazing generosity. For Toby to write a check for a hundred dollars for DACC students felt like a million dollars."

Dollar by dollar, Ms. Peck's total donation has reached \$600. During DACC's Oct. 22 donor-recognition dinner in Jacobs Hall, Ms. Hill asked Ms. Peck whether she would be willing to publicize her generosity with a "Big Check" ceremony.

Ms. Peck initially demurred. "I didn't think Tonya was serious. We were at an event with people who were donating thousands and thousands of dollars. I didn't understand why anyone would want to recognize me for giving only a fraction of what the others had given."

Fortunately, Ms. Peck would be persuaded to participate in an interview and a photograph. She wanted to inspire others to give for the same reason she gave--from the heart.

Like the widow with two coins, Toby Peck accepts the hardship that comes with life and trusts in God's plan for her. "I just do the best I can with what God provides. This is the year I said, 'Now is the time, Lord.' And miraculously, I was able to scrape together what I had to give to DACC. I'm not perfect—just blessed."

As are everyone touched by Toby Peck's generosity and her humanity.

THE FOUNDATION'S SUPPORT OF DACC 2020 -2021: **\$2,610,508**





\$488,908 Scholarships



\$1,958,323
Grants/Capital Funds



\$65,000Library Funds



\$19,134
Instructional
Materials



\$76, 381
Instructional
Equipment



\$1,187
Training &
Professional
Development



\$916
Promotions



\$659 Student Emergency

Honors & Memorials (10-01-20 to 9-30-21)

In Honor of

Dr. Keith Bates Becky Estill

Dr. Jamie Berthel Toby Baer Peck

Glenda Boling Toby Baer Peck

Dick Cheney Michael Cheney

Dick and Pat Cheney Nan Payne

Tonya Hill Sandy Dreher Alice Vernon

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Dave Kietzmann (cont'd)

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John and Theta Lee Anonymous

Robert Muirhead Vermilion Healthcare Foundation

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Laura Williams Sandy Dreher Stacy Ehmen

In Memory of

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John GirtonJames Dawson
Janis Dunn

Kevin Goodwin Neal and Melody Ehrlich

Mary Josephine Graham Danville Area Community College Bill and Marilyn Satterwhite

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Danville Area Community College

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Mackenzie Kizer

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Danville Area Community College Janis Dunn

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Larry Korte

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Loretta "Jean" Thompson Rose Askam

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Danville Area Community College

Cody Alan Wilson

David Sanders

Carl Wise Shawn and Lara Conklin

Patricia York Danville Area Community College

Heidi Young

Danville Area Community College

Cumulative Donor Listing

Thank you to the many donors who provide hope to students and see dreams realized. With your continued support the possibilities are endless.

(Through 8-31-21)

Achievement \$1,000,000 +

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Honor \$500,000>\$999,999

Frank Brittingham Lowell and Florence Crawford Steel Grip, Inc. Vermilion Healthcare Foundation

Opportunity \$250,000>\$499,999

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Inspiraton \$100,000>\$249,999

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Dave Kietzmann Scholarship

Gary L. and Kathy R. Sturgeon

Dave Kietzmann kept his word. A 50-year employee at Danville Area Community College, Kietzmann (second from left) pledged to match whatever money was raised for his family's scholarship fund during his July 15 retirement dinner. When the event raised the stunning total of \$12,000, Kietzmann wrote the matching check—thereby funding his scholarship with \$24,000.

An alumnus of DACC, Kietzmann began working for the College in 1970 as a computer instructor and retired as executive vice president.

Holding the check with him is his wife Glenda. Flanking the Kietzmanns are DACC President Stephen Nacco and DACC Foundation Executive Director Tonya Hill.



Dave & Glenda Kietzmann with Dr. Nacco and Tonya Hill

Magic Number: 9.1%

The default rate for DACC students on federal loans—which is extraordinary for community-college students.

President Nacco says, "A single-digit default rate shows that our Financial Aid Department and our Foundation are doing great work." He says, "By having a Financial Aid staff that carefully and personally helps make college affordable to students and by having a Foundation that awards scholarships to every student who applies for one, you get outstanding results like this."

DONOR RECEPTION & 75TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

DACC celebrated its 75th anniversary by unveiling its new donor wall and then by opening the doors to the newly renovated Jacobs Hall.

The Foundation-sponsored donor reception began with more than 150 donors and community members assembling in the lobby of the Bremer Center for a first glimpse at the recently installed "Wall of Distinction." The display includes donors ranging from \$1,000 to more than a million dollars. The wall also recognizes people who have named DACC in their wills via the "Mary Miller Society."

On the opposite side of the lobby are plaques for donors whose endowments surpassed \$100,000. Most of these plaques memorialize the donors by presenting their faces in bronze.

From the Bremer Center, guests processed to the grand entrance to Jacobs Hall, a former Carnegie Library that was named in honor of emerita President Alice Marie Jacobs. Philanthropist Julius W. Hegeler II funded the project.

Guests were pleased to see the majesty of the gallery, which was adorned with art work by Professor Ronnie Johnson's students. DACC's Culinary students, under the direction of Instructor Dana Wheeler, treated guests to a delectable range of goodies. Music Professor Dr. Eric Simonson entertained the crowd with selections from the grand piano. Singer Kelly Holden delighted the audience with a spirited repertory of classical songs. Students from the Hegeler Horticulture Center prepared beautiful floral arrangements.









Top Left: Tonya Hill unveils the new Wall of Distinction; Top Right: Donor Plaques in the Bremer Center foyer; Bottom Left: Guests ascend the steps of Jacobs Hall; Bottom Right: Dr. Eric Simonson and Kelly Holden entertain.

As Foundation Executive Director Tonya Hill says, "This was a spectacular evening in every way imaginable. We had an opportunity to thank our donors by showing them our new donor wall and then by giving them a showcase of our beautiful new campus building."

President Nacco adds, "This 75-year-old community college continues to embody founding President Mary Miller's vision of a 'chance for all.' The DACC Foundation and the generosity of donors that help ensure that DACC degrees, certificates, and programs are affordable and sustainable for today's students and residents."

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DACC Foundation Scholarships 2022-2023

The DACC Foundation Scholarship Application for the 2022-2023 academic year will be available online beginning **January 3, 2022.**

All applications must be submitted electronically no later than **March 7**, **2022**.

The Scholarship application may be found at: www.dacc.edu/foundation Click on the DACC Scholarships button to be taken to the online application.

