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Syracuse University Libraries receives two major gifts, creates new endowment funds

The Syracuse University Libraries have established two new endowment funds that will have a favorable impact on the student experience at Syracuse: the Libraries Student Employee Scholarship Fund and the Donald P. Ely Memorial Fund, in memory of the longtime SU faculty member.

Generously funded by Stan and Kathy Walters '73, a member of the Syracuse University Board of Trustees and of the Syracuse University Libraries' Advisory Board, the Student Employee Scholarship Fund will provide annual awards to help deserving Libraries' student employees defray the cost of books or other equipment necessary for their coursework.

One of the largest student workforces on campus, Libraries' student assistants provide critical staffing for programs and services benefitting the entire University community. Criteria for nomination include an exemplary service record, high academic achievement, and a recommendation from the student employee's supervisor.

Ms. Walters is executive vice president of Georgia-Pacific, leading the consumer products group. She received a bachelor's degree in mathematics and earned an M.B.A. with distinction from the Wharton School, University of Pennsylvania (1978). In endowing the scholarship fund, Walters said, "Stan and I are pleased to help support the student scholars who work so tirelessly in the Syracuse University Libraries to help make Libraries' resources accessible to all students and faculty."

The Donald P. Ely Memorial Fund was created by his wife, Martha Spencer Ely, and his family as a living memorial to him. The purpose of the fund is to aid the Libraries in developing and outfitting new spaces that advance teaching, scholarship, and research amidst a continuously evolving information and technology landscape. In describing the family's interest in supporting the Libraries, Mrs. Ely said, "The Ely Fund will help ensure that the Syracuse University Libraries are prepared to meet radical changes in higher education, and that student interactions with the Libraries evolve in a way that encourages their academic success."

As a teacher, writer, and mentor, Donald Paul Ely (1930–2014) was known internationally in the field of education, specializing in the area of audiovisual education/instructional technology. His passion for and pioneering work in the study and use of technology to advance educational excellence will be carried on through the establishment of this fund.

After holding positions at SUNY at New Paltz, and the Hicksville, NY public schools, Dr. Ely began a 40-year career as a professor at Syracuse University in 1956. He earned a master's degree and Ph.D from Syracuse University in 1953 and 1961, respectively. He served as the director of the ERIC Clearinghouse on Information Resources from 1977–1990.

To learn more about these funds or other Syracuse University Libraries giving opportunities, contact Ronald L. Thiele, assistant dean for advancement, at rlthiele@syr.edu or (315) 443-2537.

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