From the Desk of the Chancellor

Simon Philanthropy Chair

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by Charles R. Bantz

Last week, I was pleased to announce Cynthia Simon Skjodt has created the Melvin Simon Chair in Philanthropy at the IU Lilly Family School of Philanthropy. Cindy established the chair in honor of her late father, Mel Simon, cofounder of the Simon Property Group, headquartered in Indianapolis. He was also a visionary leader in philanthropy. Mel was extremely generous by nature and established a tradition of giving that changed Indianapolis and Indiana University.

We are deeply honored that Cindy chose the Lilly Family School to honor her father. The Simon family exemplifies philanthropy at its best. It is thoughtful, careful, strategic, focused, and designed to make the maximum impact for those they intend to help.

In J. Warren McClure’s book *Hands-On Philanthropy*, he recalls an expression he once heard. It was attributed to a woman who was describing her mother’s philosophy of giving. She called it, “giving with warm hands.” To her that meant not only giving from the heart but also giving while one is alive, with warm hands, so that one can see good works being accomplished, so that one can experience the satisfaction of helping others, and so that one can practice philanthropy actively while one’s children can take notice and be inspired to give of themselves also.

Mel Simon’s generous nature was in this way inherited by his daughter, Cindy, whose giving to IU has included scholarships, athletics, cancer research, and many others. We are particularly grateful for a gift that helped provide start-up funding for Herron’s Master of Art Therapy Program. The Herbert Simon Family Foundation, the Samerian Foundation (which Cindy founded), and IU Women’s Philanthropy Council generously provided funds that allowed 10 graduate students enrolled in the inaugural year of our new art therapy program to acquire internships with numerous healthcare facilities throughout central Indiana.

Our thanks to Cindy Simon Skjodt for this latest chapter in the Simon family history of generosity.

Comments? Write chancllr@iupui.edu.

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