

## SPIRIT OF PHILANTHROPY AWARD GOES TO GAIL PLATER

Gail Plater, assistant dean emeritus for development and external affairs for the IU School of Liberal Arts at IUPUI, was honored with the IUPUI Spirit of Philanthropy Award on April 2. The Spirit of Philanthropy Awards recognize those who have had a profound impact on IUPUI's growth and development through their gifts and voluntary service.

A fundraising professional who helped build IUPUI over the past 30 years, Gail was an early member of the IU Foundation's Indianapolis office and spent many years on the leadership team for the School of Liberal Arts.

As she facilitated others' philanthropic hopes and dreams, she was a model donor herself. Creating with her husband, William Plater, the Millennium Chair of Liberal Arts during IUPUI's first billion dollar campaign, Gail inspired others with her leadership gift and vision for liberal arts education.

"It would be difficult to imagine a more fitting recipient of the Spirit of Philanthropy award from the School of Liberal Arts," said William Blomquist, dean of the school. "Gail has established and supported essentially every aspect of the school's approach to philanthropy, developed and mentored our staff in the Office of Development and External Affairs, and given generously to the school in every way."



*Pictured:*

GAIL PLATER (SECOND FROM LEFT) WITH PRIOR LIBERAL ARTS SPIRIT OF PHILANTHROPY AWARDEES (FROM LEFT) SHEILA LITTLE, DOLORES HOYT, GILES HOYT, VIRGINIA MERKEL, AND RUTH REICHMANN (SEATED).

## TRIBUTES TO OUR COLLEAGUES



**MARK CHAPPELL** | Mark B. Chappell, 62, a lecturer in economics, passed away on March 12, 2013. After teaching on a part-time basis at IUPUI, he became a full-time faculty member in 2003, teaching economic principles to thousands of students. Prior to pursuing college teaching, Mr. Chappell worked in management for nearly 25 years at American States Insurance Group, where he retired as vice president of corporate planning. Students benefitted from his ability to relate economic principles to the issues of the day and to situations he encountered in the corporate world. As a former basketball player at Hanover, he was a great fan of IU basketball and was always happy to engage students on that topic as a gateway to discuss economics.



**JOHNNY FLYNN** | Dr. Johnny P. Flynn, 61, assistant professor of religious studies and director of American Indian programs at IUPUI, died on November 29, 2012, after a long illness. Dr. Flynn was a beloved colleague and teacher whose Introduction to Religion and American Indian Religions classes were student favorites. He was a member of the Citizen Potawatomi Nation of Oklahoma and a longtime activist in American Indian affairs. He became an IUPUI lecturer in 2004 and was appointed assistant professor and director of Indian Programs in 2008. A highlight of his directorship was the alliance he built for the campus with the Pokagon Band of Potawatomi Indians, the only tribe with federal recognition in Indiana. Dr. Flynn was awarded the Joseph T. Taylor Excellence in Diversity Award posthumously in recognition of his contributions to diversity at IUPUI.



**DANIEL NÜTZEL** | Dr. Daniel C. Nützel, 50, associate professor of German, Hoyt-Reichmann Scholar of German-American Studies, and director of the Max Cade Center for German-American Studies at IUPUI, died on April 13, 2013. Dr. Nützel joined the faculty of the IU School of Liberal Arts in 2009 and became an integral part of the Liberal Arts family. An internationally known scholar, Dr. Nützel was a linguist specializing in dialectology, including German-American dialects. Among his many scholarly endeavors, he edited a Bavarian dialect atlas, a major undertaking for which he received funding from the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft, the equivalent to the National Endowment for the Humanities. His many accomplishments reflect his prowess as a scholar and teacher, but they do not indicate his warm personality or generous spirit. A program and reception honoring Dr. Nützel's life will take place on Thursday, August 29, from 5:00–7:30 PM, in the Damenverein Room of The Rathskeller, located at 401 E. Michigan Street, Indianapolis. For more information, contact Professor Claudia Grossmann at [cgrossma@iupui.edu](mailto:cgrossma@iupui.edu).

## A GIFT FOR THE FUTURE: SOCIOLOGY GRAD CREATES THESIS FUND THROUGH ESTATE

When Chris Conner's father passed away in 2010 he decided to make a will—not something most young people think about.

"One thing I had always talked about was leaving a portion of my estate to the university," says the IUPUI graduate with two degrees in sociology. And, he decided, why wait?

Conner, now 32, created the Christopher T. Conner Graduate Thesis Fund to support sociology graduate students during their thesis preparation stage in the IU School of Liberal Arts at IUPUI.

"Making the university a beneficiary only made sense. I am able to provide for my nephew, and give money to the university to support scholarship—I really couldn't be happier."

The sociology department played a major role in Conner's IUPUI career from the moment he took an introductory class with Professor Jim Hunter. It opened up a whole new way of understanding people and society. Today he is constantly reminded of the stewardship and guidance he received from the sociology faculty, including professors Carrie Foote, Robert Aponte, and Peter Seybold. Other faculty who impacted him included Professor Lynn Pike, his thesis chair, who gave him the methodological tools to combine his outside career, photojournalism, with visual sociology, as well as Professor Suzanne Steinmetz, who pushed Conner to excel. "So many others touched my life in ways I cannot even begin to explain," he says.

Conner was inspired by his own thesis experience in directing his estate gift.

He says, "I had a committee that was generous, understanding, and compassionate enough to help me through the process."

Conner, who is currently working on a Ph.D. in sociology at the University of Nevada-Las Vegas, wanted to specifically support students who are pursuing topics such as GLBT studies, popular culture, and urban studies. Conner's own work touches upon all these areas.

"I also wanted to send a message to students that sociology is more than just numbers, statistics, and large scale issues," he says. "Sociology can be found in our everyday interactions—in music, sports, video games, etc."

For Conner, creating the Thesis Fund now rather than later was a deeply personal decision. He sees the fund—and helping future students succeed—as being similar to having children of his own and helping them prepare for the future. "I want this fund to get bright young men and women to start thinking about doctoral study," he says.

While the Thesis Fund will not be available until after his death, Conner is working on a secondary fund that will support IUPUI students while he is still alive—and he encourages other graduates, young and old, to do the same.

*To learn about estate giving options in the School of Liberal Arts, please contact Leslie Kidwell, major gifts associate, at [lecarter@iupui.edu](mailto:lecarter@iupui.edu) or 317-274-1496*



*Pictured: CHRIS CONNOR, BA'06, MA'10, SOCIOLOGY*

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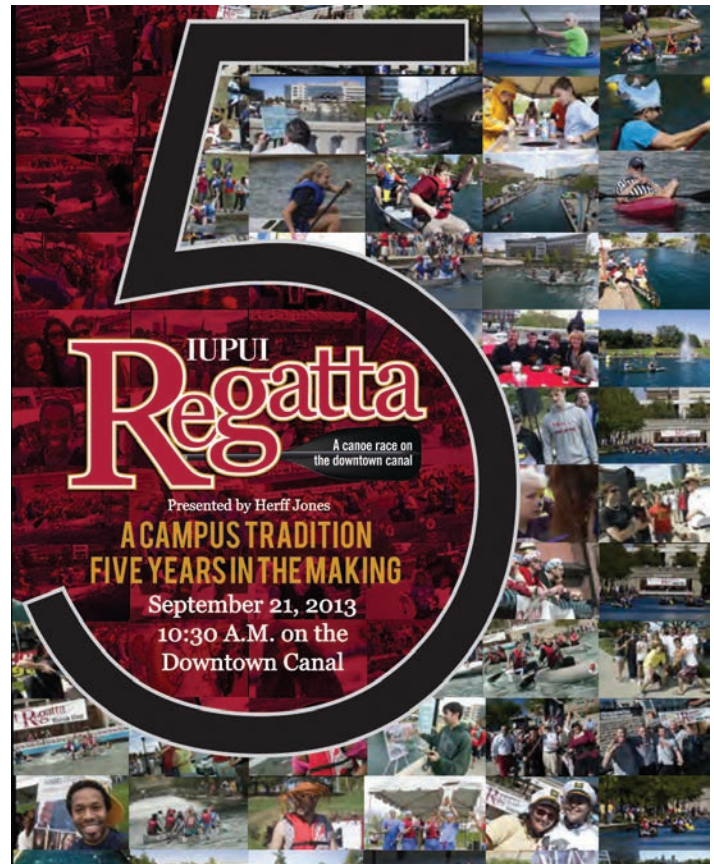


# IU EVERYDAY

“ IU was the essential step between a small town and chasing my dreams. My mentors, my best friends—IU grads. My daily life, defined by IU. I’m an IU alum, and IU Alumni Association member. IU is in my soul.”

**LORRY PLASTERER, BS'11**  
MODEL / ACTRESS / FASHION DESIGNER / MEMBER

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# 5

## IUPUI Regatta

A canoe race on the downtown canal

Presented by Herff Jones

**A CAMPUS TRADITION  
FIVE YEARS IN THE MAKING**

September 21, 2013  
10:30 A.M. on the  
Downtown Canal

ADVANCES IS A PUBLICATION OF THE IU SCHOOL OF LIBERAL ARTS AT THE IUPUI OFFICE OF DEVELOPMENT AND EXTERNAL AFFAIRS.

Writer: Josh Flynn, BA '07, English • To contact the editors email [libarts@iupui.edu](mailto:libarts@iupui.edu).



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# ADVANCES **IDEAS INSPIRATION IMPACT**

**IMPACT**  
*The campaign for IUPUI*

News from the IU School of Liberal Arts at IUPUI  
**VOL. 15, NO. 1 / liberalarts.iupui.edu**

## **A CAMPAIGN WELL DONE: LIBERAL ARTS ENDS SEVEN-YEAR EFFORT ON A HIGH NOTE**

WILLIAM BLOMQUIST, DEAN, IU SCHOOL OF LIBERAL ARTS AT IUPUI

The seven-year *IMPACT: The Campaign for IUPUI* has raised support for teaching and learning, research and creative activity, community service and engagement on our campus. It is a great pleasure to share the news in this issue of *Advances*, which focuses primarily on the recently concluded IMPACT campaign. Many generous gifts made during this campaign will contribute to the achievement and success of our students, faculty, and staff for decades to come.

The School of Liberal Arts set an ambitious goal of \$18 million for this campaign, to be raised from mid-2006 through mid-2013. Thanks to the dedicated efforts of our faculty, staff, and volunteers, we reached that goal through a combination of individual and organizational donations, and grants from foundations and other nongovernmental organizations.

Over the course of the campaign, new scholarships and fellowships were established to benefit undergraduate and graduate students in the School. Other existing scholarship funds attracted additional gifts of support. At our most recent Celebration of Scholarship program in April, Liberal Arts students were awarded nearly \$200,000 in scholarships and awards for 2013 alone, owing to the generosity of many people and organizations committed to aid them in advancing their education.

Much of our greatest support comes from those who know us

best—current and former faculty and staff, and our alumni who make gifts large and small year after year. Alumni giving provides an essential foundation for our efforts to advance the school and increase opportunities for our students, and we are grateful for it. Major gifts and grants from foundations also support the work of our research centers and interdisciplinary programs.

We are extremely grateful to our campaign co-chairs, Alpha Blackburn and Dr. Giles Hoyt, for their tireless advocacy during the campaign, and it is my pleasure to thank our campaign volunteer committee

for their efforts on our behalf. They are: Dr. Peg Brand, Byron Buhner (BA '76, speech), Stephen Kern (BA '90, philosophy), P. E. MacAllister, Robert Vane (BA '94, history/political science, MA '99, history), and Gretchen Wolfram.

As you will see from the stories in this issue, our successes were a team effort made possible through the efforts of many, many people, inspired by what is core to the kind of school Liberal Arts is, a place where IMPACT is made by extraordinary people like you.

Thank you for sharing your time and treasure with us. Every gift made these last seven years matters, and we are grateful.



MEMBERS OF THE 2013 GRADUATING CLASS SAY "THANK YOU"!





## ENGLISH ALUMNUS' FAMILY, PROFESSOR CREATE AWARD IN HIS MEMORY

Eric Sharp (BA Cum Laude '03, English) loved words. He loved reading them and loved the writing process that allowed him to fill pages of his own. He could stand before an audience of his peers, fearless, passionately sharing his work. He loved helping other writers as well, and was always willing to provide thoughtful feedback on fellow students' and friends' writing projects.

But like all writers, Sharp shared a fear his work would never be read. After he passed away last fall at the age of 39, English professor Karen Kovacik, along with Eric's family, worked to create the Eric Sharp Gateway Poetry and Creative Writing Awards in the IU School of Liberal Arts at IUPUI. These awards will help Eric's writing and love of words endure.

"While visiting Eric in the hospital and sharing memories of him with his parents and siblings, I remembered what a positive influence Eric had on his fellow students, how committed he was to diversity, and how he taught through wit and humor and kindness," says Kovacik. "I wanted his memory to live on."

Eric's father, Tom Sharp, remembers his youngest son's tireless desire for reading as a small child, particularly such books as *The Cat in the Hat*, *Lovable Lyle*, and *Alexander and the Magic Mouse*.

"We would read these books over and over and over to him," Mr. Sharp recalls. "This gave him a fascination and appreciation for words early in his life. As a matter of fact, looking through Eric's possessions, he still, somehow, hung onto these books after almost 35 years."

Eric's family hopes award winners will gain a deeper respect for the power of words, a respect that was present in Eric's life.

Eric shared the same passion he had for writing with a commitment to helping the less fortunate, his father says, adding, "These virtues were key drivers and motivators to his writing. He championed causes such as the Human Rights Campaign, the Simon Youth Foundation,

and Global Gifts.' He left a very good job in the corporate world to go back to school and secure an MPA so he could spend his time and energy in helping the less fortunate through the nonprofit sector."

Eric's wide community ties and involvement and warm and engaging personality were evidenced by the dozens of friends, family members, and co-workers who celebrated his life with contributions to the new awards, making it possible to endow them.

Eric's partner, Jason Owens, says Eric approached serious life issues and conversations by prewriting about them, including anticipated outcomes. It helped him prepare and make sense of situations.

"Eric was one of the only truly compassionate people that I've ever met," he says. "He truly did want to make a difference with his life in this world. Almost everything he did had the purpose of helping someone else. He loved an underdog and always championed for the rights of the underrepresented. He argued for hours on a point he didn't even agree with if he thought that group was being mistreated. When in doubt Eric always erred on the side of being kind."

With the new awards, Eric will be able to help writing students who are just beginning to find their voices. Students in introductory-level writing courses are eligible for the awards. The first awards were presented this spring at the Liberal Arts Celebration of Scholarship to Erin Furnish and Keegan Cooper, for the best poem and fiction short story, respectively.

"Learning to write can feel like a long trudge," says Kovacik. "Winning an award can provide much needed encouragement."

"This award reenforces the fact that Eric was truly loved and respected by so many people as demonstrated by the many well wishes and visits while he was ill," his father says. "It was the generosity of his many friends that made it possible for this endowment to go forward."

*Pictured:*

ERIC SHARP; ERIC'S PARENTS, TOM AND CAROLE SHARP, WITH ERIC'S PARTNER, JASON OWENS, KAREN KOVACIK, AND THE FIRST RECIPIENTS OF THE SHARP AWARDS, KEEGAN COOPER AND ERIN FURNISH.

## NEW BOOK MAKES THE CASE FOR EUROPE

The news coming out of Europe in recent years has not been good: high unemployment, recession, austerity, threatened bank collapses, and speculation that the bold experiment of the euro might be on the verge of collapse. But the pessimism is misplaced, argues an IUPUI professor of political science, and it is well past time to get the debate back on a productive track.

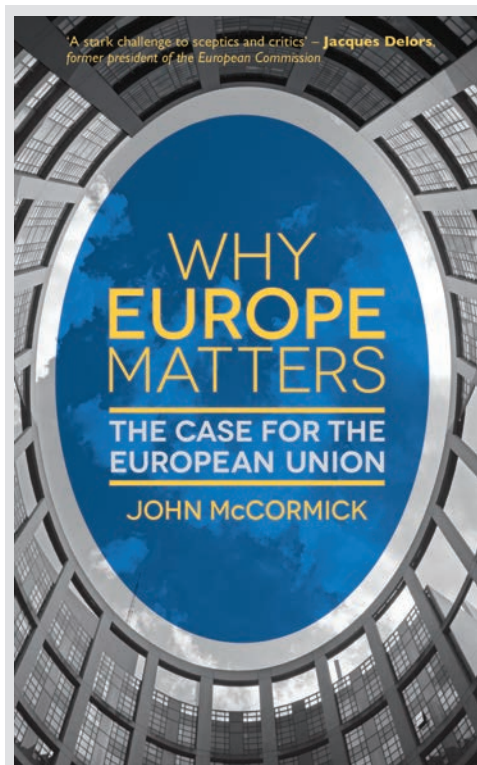
In his new book, *Why Europe Matters* (Palgrave Macmillan), Dr. John McCormick argues that the European Union (EU) is widely misunderstood—on both sides of the Atlantic — and that the debate has for too long been dominated by critics known as euroskeptics.

“Many of their arguments are based on myths and misrepresentations about what the EU does,” claims McCormick, “rather than on a fair and informed assessment. They say that the EU is undemocratic, that it is expensive, that it is unresponsive, that it means more—not less—regulation, that it is unpopular, and that it reduces the sovereignty and independence of its state members.” But while the EU is far from perfect, McCormick continues, euroskeptics have exploited confusion and misunderstandings to make its problems seem much worse than they are.

McCormick is professor of political science in the School of Liberal Arts, and has been studying and writing about the EU for more than 20 years. A citizen of both the United States and the United Kingdom, he was awarded a Jean Monnet Chair in European Union Politics from the EU in 2010, and has just spent several months in Europe as Fulbright-Schuman chair at the College of Europe in Belgium.

There has been a rising tide of euroskepticism since the early 1990s, he notes, which has moved into high gear since the sovereign debt crisis broke in Greece in 2009. “The euro suffered from the perfect storm of fallout from the global financial crisis, problems in the design of the euro, a failure by several of its member states to respect the euro zone rules on budget deficits, and some foot-dragging by EU governments reluctant to bail out countries that misbehaved.”

The euro crisis zone has created a depressed mood for much of Europe, McCormick says, which has led to several rough years for the EU. “But people have tended to forget all the good and positive things that have come out of the EU, and more people need to step



up and speak up to balance the debate,” he says. “That’s why I wrote the book. I’ve been a longtime supporter of the EU, still believe strongly in what it does, and thought it was time that someone made the case for Europe in the face of all the myths being generated by its critics.”

McCormick argues that the EU has helped bring a lasting peace to Europe (for which it was awarded the Nobel prize for peace last year), has created new jobs and opportunities, has helped Europeans learn more about what they have in common, and has helped individual member states of the EU to work together in being a substantial global actor and to wield the kind of influence they could not if working alone. “The EU has a population of more than half a billion, is the wealthiest marketplace and the biggest trading power in the world, is the biggest source of (and magnet for) foreign direct investment, and has shown that it is possible to wield influence without relying on military power.”

During the time McCormick has been researching and sharing his extensive knowledge of the European Union with IUPUI students, he’s helped bring the Euroculture program to IUPUI, and for 20 years ran a Model EU for students around the Midwest. McCormick has also been a prolific writer, with 13 books to his name. Included in his publications are textbooks designed to help students understand the complex issues surrounding the European Union. His book *Understanding the European Union* will soon be coming out in a sixth edition and has been translated into Polish, Romanian, Slovak, Ukrainian, Croatian, and Macedonian.

Unlike previous books that focused on an academic audience, *Why Europe Matters* was written for a general audience. McCormick wanted a book that was accessible for readers, feeling that the scholarly research on the EU and its academic nature was contributing little

to the debates on the topic. “I didn’t think that another academic tome would contribute as much to the debate as a book that tried to reach a broader audience by making some of the academic research more accessible and relevant to the debate about the EU,” McCormick says. “And even though the book is about Europe, Americans also stand to benefit by learning more about how the EU works and how its approaches and values are distinctive.”

*Pictured:*

JOHN MCCORMICK, PROFESSOR OF POLITICAL SCIENCE;  
JEAN MONNET CHAIR IN EUROPEAN UNION POLITICS



## TURNER-WRIGHT SCHOLARSHIP SUPPORTS STUDY OF AFRICAN AMERICAN EXPERIENCE

Marie Turner-Wright first learned the richness of her African American heritage while attending an all-black elementary school. She later attended predominately white schools and the African-American history void was filled by her paternal grandfather, parents, and older siblings who had attended Crispus Attucks High School (Indianapolis), which was an all-black school for many years.

To encourage others to study and learn the full spectrum of Africa and the African Diaspora, in 2007, Marie Turner-Wright established the Turner-Wright Scholarship in Africana Studies. The scholarship is a culmination of Turner-Wright's appreciation of African American contributions to society and her hope for growth in the IUPUI Africana Studies program enrollment.

Following graduation from Indiana University-Bloomington with an AB in English, an MLS, and a SpLIS, she worked at the Indianapolis-Marion County Public Library in the 1970s. Following the civil rights movement, federal grants made it possible for librarians to select books, magazines, and audiovisual materials about

a neglected part of American history. Turner-Wright was a member of a library system that worked hard to collect books and change the image of Blacks in American literature.

In 1982 Turner-Wright accepted a library faculty position at IUPUI's University Library, eventually becoming collection development librarian for Afro-American Studies and various departments in the IU School of Liberal Arts. Progress toward her goal, to enrich the minds of all IUPUI students about African Americans' contributions to America, came in unexpected ways.

She wrote three successful proposals to host American Library Association exhibits. These public programs, funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities, were conceived and designed as traveling exhibitions. "The Jazz Age in Paris, 1914-1940" offered Turner-Wright the opportunity to present the art, literature and music of great African-American expatriates to campus and community. The following year Turner-Wright again received a National Endowment for the Arts grant to present "A Tribute to Louis 'Satchmo' Armstrong! New Orleans, Chicago, Harlem, and the World"—

yet another opportunity to highlight the contributions of a great African-American, with strong ties to Indianapolis.

Through these exhibits, a sabbatical supported by the Herbert S. and Virginia White Professional Development Award and dedicated to creating an online bibliography on "Africanisms in African-American Material Culture," and her central work as a librarian at IUPUI, Turner-Wright enhanced all students' understandings.

With the Turner-Wright Scholarship she chose to focus her energies on a more narrow population: those students who had decided to major or minor in what is now known as Africana Studies.

Although now "retired" from the university, through her scholarship fund, Turner-Wright continues her quest to inspire the next generation of students to discover and explore the world through their education. She knows the challenges they face, and she wants to make a difference in their futures.

"I hope others will be encouraged by my story to do the same and contribute in support of our students," she says.



*Pictured:*

MARIE TURNER-WRIGHT WITH SCHOLARSHIP WINNER KENDREA WILLIAMS AND FOUNDING DIRECTOR OF THE AFRICANA STUDIES PROGRAM, PROFESSOR MONROE LITTLE.



## FIRST LIBERAL ARTS RISE SCHOLARSHIP CREATED BY DEAN WILLIAM BLOMQUIST

A commitment from William Blomquist, dean of the IU School of Liberal Arts and professor of political science, will endow the school's first RISE scholarship for Liberal Arts majors who enroll in classes with the RISE designation. The IUPUI RISE initiative challenges undergraduates to incorporate research, international studies, service, or experiential learning into their degree programs.

Fewer know better than Dean Blomquist the importance of complementary out-of-class experiences for IUPUI students. Not only do such programs make graduates more competitive in the job market, they also provide students with priceless academic and personal experiences that they will carry with them throughout life.

"For many students, pursuing these opportunities stretches their financial resources," explains Blomquist. "The opportunities either cost money directly (for instance, studying overseas) or indirectly by requiring students to fit them into an already busy schedule, possibly by working fewer hours and therefore earning less money for school. A RISE scholarship is a way to make this trade-off a little easier for one of our students each year."

Blomquist created the new scholarship as part of the 2013 IUPUI Campus Campaign, which provides opportunities for faculty and staff to give to the university, and is making the gift through payroll deduction over the next several years.

The School of Liberal Arts Deans' RISE Scholarship, so named by Blomquist to honor his predecessors in the deanship, will become available to students after 2018. Once funded, the Liberal Arts Deans' RISE Scholarship will receive matching funds from the university as part of the IUPUI IMPACT Campaign, a seven-year comprehensive campaign that recently ended, enhancing the amount that scholarship recipients will receive.

"These RISE experiences are what we call 'high-impact practices,'" says Blomquist. "Research on students' persistence toward graduation, completion of a degree, extent of intellectual and personal growth, and reported satisfaction with their educational experience indicates that students who engage in one or more of these activities succeed at a higher rate than comparable students who do not. That alone would be a good reason to support RISE. In addition, many employers report that they prefer graduates who have had experiences beyond the classroom as part of their undergraduate education."

Blomquist, who has been a faculty member in the School of Liberal Arts since 1987, reflects, "I'm happy to be able to do this at this point in my long association with the school, and that future Liberal Arts students will be able to benefit from it."

*Pictured:*

DEAN BLOMQUIST (CENTER) CELEBRATES THE CREATION OF THE NEW SCHOLARSHIP  
WITH MEMBERS OF THE LIBERAL ARTS DEAN'S OFFICE.

# RISE