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EIU Foundation Announces Recipients of Philanthropy Awards

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Since its inception in 1953, the Eastern Illinois University Foundation has been dependent upon the generosity of its members and volunteers to fulfill its mission of support to the university.

And, since 1993, the foundation has formally recognized and honored its volunteers and donors. In 1997, these awards were renamed the Burnham and Nancy Neal Philanthropy Awards in appreciation of the Neals' leadership, support and dedication to Eastern and the foundation.

These awards are given to individuals and organizations who have demonstrated a sincere dedication and commitment to the financial, academic and cultural well-being of EIU. The critical support and sustaining financial commitments provided by these distinguished philanthropists are essential to the future of the university and the students it serves.



Shown from left to right, are: front row -- Robert Martin, vice president for university advancement (accepting on behalf of the Florence Ballenger Estate); and Herbert Lasky. Back row -- Garry and Janet Ernst; Dan Nadler, vice president for student affairs (accepting on behalf of Louise Boewe and Barbara Roberts); and Timothy Gover, mayor of Mattoon (accepting on behalf of Carol Richardson).

This year, the EIU Foundation is pleased to recognize the following **Outstanding Philanthropists:**

Florence Coles Ballenger Estate. Florence Coles Ballenger, an alumna of Eastern Illinois State Teachers College with a two-year diploma in 1925, went on to become a distinguished educator in Chicago and Florida schools. She retired in 1976 at the age of 70 after a dedicated career in teaching. She and her husband, William, never had children. Of the \$1.2 million given to EIU from her portion of their estate, \$250,000 was used to name the Coles Ballenger Teachers Center in Booth Library. The remaining \$1 million of her estate gift is being used to support faculty development activities linked to improvement of teaching and learning.

Louise E. Boewe of Easton, Pa., has a planned gift that will establish the John and Louise Boewe Scholarship for Eastern students who are graduates of Edwards County High School. Boewe attended Eastern for two years in 1953 and 1954. She later graduated from the University of Illinois with a degree in elementary education, and worked as an executive assistant at Arthur Anderson.

Garry E. and Janet E. Ernst of Charleston, Ill., have planned an estate gift for the support and enhancement of the Department of Communication Disorders and Sciences and for the Dr. Garry E. Ernst and Janet E. Ernst Endowment, providing scholarships for either first-generation college students or for students who plan to pursue a career as school speech-language-hearing pathologists. The Ernsts met while at Eastern and both graduated in 1963 - Garry with a degree in chemistry and Jan with her degree in CDS. Garry went on to graduate from the University of Illinois School of Veterinary Medicine and spent most of his career as sole proprietor of a veterinary practice in Panama City, Fla. Jan went on to graduate with a master's degree in speech pathology and spent her career as a teacher. The Ernsts speak about how EIU was the "foundation" for their success in both their careers and in life.

Herbert and Lynette Jane Lasky of Ashmore, Ill., have established a fund to enhance the Honors Program and have funded several endowments, two competitive writing awards for students in the History Department, and a competitive writing award for students in biological sciences. They have established a planned gift for the President's Research Fund, to foster, stimulate and strengthen undergraduate research activities conducted by faculty members, with a primary goal of enhancing the likelihood that their research will be competitive for external funding. In addition, the Laskys continue to support the fine arts, recently gifting a harpsichord to the Music Department. They established the Lasky Seminar in Early History, and are pursuing an initiative for campus beautification and the Renewable Energy Center. Herb is dean emeritus of the Honors College and professor emeritus of history, while Jane is professor emerita, Office of the Dean, College of Arts and Humanities.

Carol Richardson of Scottsdale, Ariz., has established a planned gift which will leave an unrestricted gift to be used for the university's greatest needs as determined by the president of the university. Carol Mocella Richardson graduated from Eastern in 1973 with a bachelor's degree in education; she is one of five Mocella family members to graduate from EIU. Richardson is active in EIU activities in the Phoenix/Scottsdale region, hosting EIU alumni receptions each winter.

Barbara Roberts of Lakewood, Calif., has established a planned gift for a scholarship for children from farm families who have financial need and who graduated from high schools in Coles, Douglas, Edgar, Clark, Cumberland, Shelby or Moultrie counties. Roberts is a 1949 art education graduate and a retired counselor with the Long Beach school system. She is a lifetime member of the EIU Alumni Association.

One donor, who wishes to remain anonymous, also received an Outstanding Philanthropist award for 2010 for her planned gift that will establish an endowment in memory of her late husband for students majoring in business. After receiving his bachelor's and master's degrees from EIU, he worked 35 years for the IRS and as a service manager for a nationally known asset management and financial planning firm. He was a member of the EIU Foundation and served two terms as president of the Alumni Association board.