

## Professor Gullstrand's Late Parents Honor Her Career by Creating the Kemmerer Family Scholarship Fund

"My father said the best way to double your money was to fold it and put in your pocket," fondly remembers Donna Gullstrand, Shenandoah Conservatory vocal and choral professor.

Now, her late father's keen business sense will forever benefit vocal students of Shenandoah Conservatory. When Donna's parents, Harold and Verna Kemmerer, died in 2007, their estate established the Kemmerer Family Scholarship Fund. Donna's siblings, James Kemmerer and Janice Keeley, gave their blessings to the \$100,000 endowment that honors Donna's teaching and performance career of 30-plus years.

Donna said her parents, of the Plainfield/Naperville area in Illinois, "were truly of the 'The Greatest Generation' Tom Brokaw describes in his book."

As a young grain and livestock farmer, Harold Kemmerer's investment in a corn sheller allowed him to make astute stock investments. In the 1950s, he became an investment partner and founding board member in the Bank of Naperville. The Chicago Tribune said the down-to-earth man, who played hockey well into his 60s, didn't always have time for a wardrobe change and sometimes showed up in overalls for emergency meetings in the boardroom.

Donna said Verna Kemmerer was a helpmate and vital partner in the family's success. She credits her mother for her musical ability and success: "She was creative, artistic, and an excellent student.

"Both sides of the family were musically oriented. Dad played



Professor Donna Gullstrand has trained three decades of performers, such as theatre performance major Brittany Leslie pictured above.

cornet and mother sang in the choir. My grandfather played fiddle. My great uncles played saxophone, drums, accordion and string bass instruments. We could have had our own German polka band.

"Music in church was an important part of our life, and it was where I got my first performance experience. Dad cried every time I sang 'The Lord's Prayer'."

Donna earned her undergraduate degree at North Central College and a master's at the University of Illinois. She sang with the Chicago Symphony Chorus before moving east to teach at Shenandoah. She had a regional career appearing as a soloist more than 21 times at the Kennedy Center and solo and performing recitals in Germany, the Czech Republic, Thailand, Russia, Brazil and Zimbabwe. She continues to perform in many venues.

*(continued on page 2)*

## Shafers' Stock Gift is Music to the Ears of Campaign Fund-Raisers



Why did Sharon Shafer, chair of fine arts and professor of music at Trinity College in Washington, D.C., make a generous gift of stock to

Shenandoah University's Spirit of Shenandoah campaign?

It turns out she has some close ties to SU. Her husband is Robert (Bob) Shafer. A SU faculty member since 1983, Bob is a professor of music and artist in residence and the Grammy-award winning conductor of The Washington Chorus. Their son Rob '99 married Sarah Newman Shafer '01 in Goodson Chapel.

"As a family, we have close ties and wonderful memories connected to the university," Sharon said.

"Our lives are certainly enriched by music, but as music teachers, we didn't expect to be able to make a gift that would have a real impact on the campaign."

"However, we discovered differently. When Bob was 18, his father established a life insurance plan for him. When the company's stock split, we earned stock that when redeemed would have been a tax liability.

"So a charitable gift was the best solution. Music and Shenandoah University are such important parts of our family life that it was an easy decision the gift would go to the very much needed new music facility that is in Shenandoah's future. It's a good feeling that affects the entire family."

## Message from the Campaign Director

By the time this newsletter reaches your home, the Spirit of Shenandoah campaign will have reached the \$55 million mark. I am grateful to each of you who have made a gift and brought us to this point. The largest gift to date comes from a husband and wife who each made five gifts of \$1 million for a total of \$10 million. The gifts from these long-time friends of the university and dozens like them drive us toward our ultimate goal of \$65 million, and we are thankful for this amazing support.

We are also thankful to each and every one of our alumni who gave from their hearts during our phonathons and through the mail.

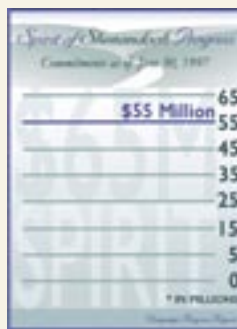
Special thanks go to our faculty and staff who have faithfully supported this university by giving not only of their time and talents, but also from their wallets.

We still have a long way to go, and the help of every stakeholder is needed. The university's endowment must be strengthened if we are to provide adequate financial aid and reward and retain the best faculty. Plans for the athletic facility and

instrumental music facility (two facilities critical to Shenandoah's future growth) are underway.

Please consider your support to the Spirit of Shenandoah campaign, making an exceptional gift to help the university secure its future. We call on you and each member of the university – whether you are an alumni, parent, trustee, friend, staff, faculty member or student – to demonstrate to the region and the world *The Spirit of Shenandoah*.

Diane Melby  
Vice President of Development  
(Interim) and Campaign Director



## Kemmerer Family Scholarship Fund

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“My parents were salt-of-the-earth people who worked hard, saved their money but also held the arts to be an important part of life,” Donna said. “They would be pleased that so many young vocal students will be touched by their gift.



Verna and Harold Kemmerer

“And, Dad, always the businessman, knew that charitable giving has financial advantages for heirs. I’m so pleased that as a family we are able to make this gift at an important time in Shenandoah’s growth. I encourage all employees to get advice from their estate planners and the Office of Development. They may be surprised to learn how capable they are of giving.”

## What’s New at Shenandoah



Above: Assistant Professor Bingguang Li strides from the Harry F. Byrd, Jr. School of Business. Right: Brian Larrick, part-time business student and project manager for H.P. Hood, Inc., and KneAndra Kelly head for class on the first day of classes in Halpin-Harrison Hall.

Early morning on Jan. 11, sunlight reflected off the glass doors of Halpin-Harrison Hall, welcoming students and faculty on the first day of spring semester classes in the new building now home to the Harry F. Byrd, Jr. School of Business.

“It was one of the most exciting, tangible and significant milestones of the Spirit of Shenandoah campaign,” said Diane Melby, campaign director.

The new building provides a state-of-art learning environment that was significant in helping the Byrd School earn last April accreditation from AACSB International – The Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business.

## Burrier's 16 Years of Small Gifts Through Payroll Deduction Make a Big Impact

Sixteen years of consistent payroll deduction gifts by Administrative Assistant Kathy Burrier '67 have added up to a large gift that has made a significant impact on the lives of SU students.

"Not a day goes by that I can't relate to the students working hard like I did to earn an education," Kathy said. "I've been able to give back, one gift after another, through payroll deduction. What better way to help Shenandoah's students as it helped me!"

If a university's faculty and staff don't believe in their institution enough to support it, why would someone else? That's why foundations often make decisions about giving to a university by looking at how the school's employees support their own.

The past three years of the



Alumna Kathy Burrier, administrative assistant to the director of the Physical Plant Office, reviews site plans with work study Toinese McWilliams.

campaign have been a good indicator: 31 percent of the faculty and staff increased their giving by 64 percent to the Annual Fund and campaign projects.

Faculty and staff can make three-to-five year pledges or cash donations or give through payroll deductions.

### Campaign Leadership

Mr. James R. Wilkins Jr., campaign chair  
Mr. Harry S. Smith, campaign vice chair  
Dr. Diane E. Melby, campaign director

### Featured Volunteer Committees

#### Faculty Campaign Council

Christopher Bean  
Gina Daddario  
Raymond Eifel  
RT Good  
Geraldine Kiefer  
Maureen Quinn  
Travis Sample  
Aimé Sposato  
Cindia Steward  
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#### Staff Campaign Council

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Patty Anderson  
Rhonda Van Dyke Colby  
Karen Hattenback  
Dick Laird  
Diane Melby  
Kelly J. Rickert  
Becky Rockwell  
Jean Swartz  
Michele Wilson

## Tony Miller Plans Ahead for Campaign Gift of Financial Aid for Students

Anthony A. Miller, director of SU's Division of Physician Assistant Studies in the School of Health Professions, directs faculty and students in developing a physician assistants program recognized as one of the top in the country.

He is an accomplished chef and photographer and shares a passion for the performing arts with his wife Ting-Yu Chen, assistant professor of dance.

When Shenandoah launched the Spirit of Shenandoah campaign, Tony was one of the first faculty members to step forward to be a part of the transformational effort. Already giving annual support through payroll deduction, he wanted to make a larger impact on the life of the university and its

students through a planned gift.

Tony explained why he chose to use the vehicle of life insurance to fund his planned gift: "A life insurance policy provides me the flexibility to tailor my gift to my current and future capacity by giving in manageable, incremental premium payments."

Someday, the policy's proceeds will provide scholarship assistance to outstanding students studying to be physician assistants as well as to worthy students who demonstrate artistic and professional excellence in the field of dance.

"I said 'yes' when asked if I would share the story of how I gave because I hope it will inspire other faculty members to look for the best way they can support the campaign," he said.



Physician assistant student Megan Housel seeks advice on the run from Director Tony Miller in the corridors outside her classroom in Medical Building II on the Winchester Medical Center campus.

## Ways to Support the Spirit of Shenandoah

Contact Diane Melby at (540) 665-4936, [dmelby@su.edu](mailto:dmelby@su.edu) or go online to [www.spiritofshenandoah.org](http://www.spiritofshenandoah.org).

## Leadership Gala



Nick Nerangis '04 and Kathleen Kanter Brill (above) along with Ben and Ann Racey Butler '72, '89 (below) enjoy the November Leadership Gala, an evening of dining and entertainment in honor of leadership-level donors and volunteers who are key to the success of the campaign.



## SU Parent Phonathon Funds Critical Student Services

This year's Parent Phonathon is part of the Spirit of Shenandoah campaign. According to Dawn Danis, development officer, "Parent phonathon funds are a necessary supplement to the regular operating budgets of these departments. I hope parents will understand the value of their contributions and know how much we and the students appreciate them. Their gifts support student learning in a very direct and meaningful way."

Parents recently received a letter from Ron and Ann Sanders, co-chairs of the 2008 Parent Annual Fund Campaign, telling them to expect a



Dawn Danis gives business major Brandon Thomas some tips on phonathon calling.

phone call from students.

For more information, contact Dawn Danis at 540.545.7335 or [ddanis@su.edu](mailto:ddanis@su.edu).

## Spirit of Shenandoah Calendar

Scholarship Tea: Wednesday, March 26, Aikens Athletic Center, 4:30 p.m. For more information, contact Carol Melby, director of donor relations, at [cmelby@su.edu](mailto:cmelby@su.edu) or 540.678.4317.

Halpin-Harrison Hall Dedication: Friday, March 28, 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Contact Carol Melby at [cmelby@su.edu](mailto:cmelby@su.edu) or 540.678.4317.

Dayton Weekend: Thursday to Sunday, April 24 to 27. Contact [www.su.edu/alumni](http://www.su.edu/alumni) or 800.786.4802.

Tribute to Dr. James A. Davis: Main event, Monday, May 5; many others are planned: concerts, lectures, alumni and faculty events. Visit [www.su.edu/tribute](http://www.su.edu/tribute) or contact Carol Melby at [cmelby@su.edu](mailto:cmelby@su.edu) or 540.678.4317.

Inauguration of Dr. Tracy Fitzsimmons: Thursday and Friday, Sept. 25 and 26. Inauguration ceremony, Sept. 26, 11 a.m. Two days of events and festivities. More information to follow.

Homecoming Weekend: Friday to Sunday, Oct. 24 to 26, Contact [www.su.edu/alumni](http://www.su.edu/alumni) or 800.786.4802.



*The Spirit of Shenandoah*

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