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## In Memoriam: Janet Pappert

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## IN MEMORIAM

**Janet Pappert**

The Mary Pappert School of Music and the Duquesne University community are deeply saddened by the passing of Janet Pappert—alumna and devoted friend. The following is an excerpt from the eulogy presented by President Charles J. Dougherty during Pappert’s memorial service on Friday, September 12, 2014.



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Janet Pappert came to Duquesne from McKeesport, where her father was a superintendent of a steel mill. She came for pre-medical studies. Ultimately, she would not pursue a medical degree, but instead completed her bachelor’s degree in chemistry and later earned a teaching certificate.

Janet met her destiny at the University. It happened in German class, and it came in the form of a fellow student, David Pappert. For David, as well, that German class was a turning point. It is not unusual for couples to meet and fall in love on our campus. Many of them marry and remain active in the life of the University for years to come. Rarely though, does a pair make an impact as significant as Janet and David.

In Janet and David Pappert, we had a team of alumni who seized the opportunity to shape their alma mater. And they did so consistently—touching and enhancing the lives of so many students, faculty, and administrators. My emphasis on the word *team* is intentional. Anyone associated with Duquesne over the past two decades likely recognizes the Pappert name. They are probably aware that David led the University as Chair of our Board of Directors. Perhaps they know that he chaired our Audit and Finance Committee through some challenging times. They may even know that it is his mother’s name, and that of his brother Tom, that grace our School of Music. What may not be so obvious to the casual observer was the depth of Janet’s partnership with David in all of this. The truly attentive may notice the commemorative brick on Academic Walk inscribed with both of their names, or the sign outside the P. David and Janet Pappert Lecture

Hall in the rotunda of our Bayer Learning Center. These are more than mere formalities. They are reflections of Janet’s full support, her personal commitment, and her own vital role in the life of her Duquesne University.

The highest non-academic honor we bestow on our graduates is membership in the Century Club of Distinguished Alumni. Established during the University’s centennial year in 1978, the Century Club recognizes remarkable personal and professional achievement, excellence in community involvement, and outstanding service to the University. All three attributes are required – not just one or two. About one hundred thousand alumni have graduated from Duquesne. Only three hundred twenty four have been accorded Century Club membership. In nearly all of those cases, they have been inducted as individuals. A rare exception was made in 1996, when both Janet and David were inducted together. Perhaps more than anything else, this honor underscores the unique contributions Janet made in her own right—and the greatest investment of love and energy that Janet gave to David, as well as to Duquesne.

We will all miss Janet’s devoted service to the University. More than that, we will miss her friendship, her smile, and the warm energy that radiated from her whenever she entered a room. I join with the Pappert family and the entire Duquesne community in remembering a life lived well, and a partnership like no other. Janet Pappert’s legacy will live on in the lives she touched across our campus—and in our hearts—so long as there is a Duquesne University.