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Wright Memorial Public Library receives \$500,000 major gift for facility

Donor credits library for his love of reading and knowledge of investing

OAKWOOD — When David L. Flory was growing up in Oakwood, Ohio, he spent countless hours at Wright Memorial Public Library checking out books and learning about financial investing.

Flory, now a retired attorney and investor, is giving back to the institution to which he credits much of his life success with a \$500,000 gift to support the library's upcoming building renovation.

The Wright Memorial Public Library Foundation is pleased to announce Flory's gift as the first major donation to a \$1.5 million private capital campaign for the building project.

Flory's gift will allow the library to transform learning spaces for children and teens, said Library Director Kristi Hale.

The library's master plan includes infrastructure repairs and replacements, as well as updates that will make the library more accessible and transformative as a learning environment, Hale said. The project will be funded in part using tax revenue from a new operating levy approved by Oakwood voters in April 2020 as well as with private donations raised during the capital campaign.

“With this one incredibly generous gift, I saw our plans for a fully updated library become achievable, in spite of the pandemic,” Hale said. “The timing could not have been better.”

Construction is expected to begin in early 2021.

Flory was born and raised in Oakwood. He lived with his parents, homemaker Mary Eleanor and orthodontist Dr. John W. Flory, and sister Jane, on both Claranna and Dellwood avenues during the 1950s and 1960s. He attended Smith Elementary and graduated from Oakwood High School in 1969.

Flory credits Wright Library with inspiring his love of reading as well as his knowledge of investing, a practice that enabled him to make this gift.

“I don’t have any institution that I owe more to than Wright Library,” Flory said.

As a youngster, Flory attended story hours with his mother at the library and later participated in Wright Library’s summer reading program known as the Johnny Appleseed reading club. For each book a child read, they earned a seed on their apple. Flory read furiously to earn the most seeds, checking out six books at a time.

“I learned to love to read. If I have a good book, I could never be lonely,” Flory said. “It was Wright Library that did that.”

He came in second one memorable summer to a girl who lived across from the library. “She stayed one book ahead of me all summer. I’m still kind of bitter,” he joked.

Investing and giving back

After being introduced to investing at age 8 by his father, Flory turned to Wright Library as a young teenager to learn all he could about the stock market, companies, and investing. Along with reading books on the topic, he relied on the library’s subscription to ValueLine, a quarterly publication that provided investing

information on companies. The subscription was out of his budget, so he spent hours at the library reading the reports and learning how to invest.

Investing enabled him to make this major gift, he said.

“It was payback time for the library and I was glad I had a chance to do it,” Flory said. “A payback to an institution that had a lot to do with my love of life.”

Flory graduated from DePauw University in 1973 and from Vanderbilt Law School in 1976. He worked as an attorney in Dayton and later as an attorney in the legal department of Hobart Corporation in Troy, Ohio. During the 1980s, Flory was appointed as Counsel for the Energy and Power Subcommittee of the U.S. House of Representatives; named Vice President for Washington Affairs for Prudential Securities Corporation; and was appointed as Chief of Staff for U.S. Sen. Robert W. Kasten (R-WI) (retired). For 25 years, Flory worked for his own government relations company, WinCapitol, Inc. before retirement.

He and his wife Juliet now split their time between Arlington, Virginia, and Miami, Florida, but he visits family in the Dayton area.

On those visits, he has stopped in at Wright Library.

“I went back and saw that they were finding ways to make the library relevant in people’s lives today,” Flory said. “Part of my learning to love to read was the library atmosphere. I think they are working hard to create the same kind of community experience that I had in new ways.”

Those interested in giving to the capital campaign should contact Library Director Kristi Hale at (937) 294-7171 or hale@wrightlibrary.org. Capital campaign donations are tax-deductible gifts made through the Wright Memorial Public Library Foundation, a fund of The Dayton Foundation.

