Last spring the College Newsletter, in conjunction with the Reva and David Logan Center for the Arts, announced an art competition for College students and alumni. The contest was open to all forms of art, with just one requirement: the piece had to be about the Logan Center.

David Pickett, AB’07, submitted the winning entry, The Logan Center as Artifact of Participatory Culture, a model of the Logan Center created out of 350 Lego bricks. The model was inspired by the Lego Architecture series, which includes the Robie House and the Willis (née Sears) Tower.

“I was born into a Lego household,” says Pickett. “I don’t remember my first Lego set, because it was just always there. I can’t imagine a world without Lego.” A biology and creative writing major in the College, he is now the social media editor in the University News Office.

Most kids eventually stop playing with Lego bricks, but Pickett never did. (“We call that the Dark Age in the adult fan community—the time from when you stop playing with Lego as a child, to the time when you take it up again because you have kids of your own,” he says.) Instead he collected all of his friends’ cast-off Lego bricks and began creating stop-motion animations with them. “Then it became justified,” he says, “because it was art.”
Pickett has an ongoing animated Web series, “Nightly News at Nine,” with more than 5,000 subscribers (many of them under YouTube’s required age of 13). When his fans wanted to know how to build the creations in the series, he started posting instructional videos, such as “How to build an evil robot car” and “How to build a Lego cow (with moving legs).” “Community is really important to my art practice,” he says. “I have my story I want to tell, but I also let it be guided by my audience. The interactions with my community are an integral part of what I do.”

Pickett has posted his Lego Logan on the website Cuusoo, where Lego fans can submit ideas for new products. If a proposed product gets 10,000 votes, Lego will consider manufacturing it. To vote for the Lego Logan, go to lego.cuusoo.com/ideas/view/19620. For more contest entries, including a link to the “Logan Center Anthem,” go to college.uchicago.edu/story/logancontest.

Logan at Sunset by Anna Hill, ’14
I was skeptical of Logan at first. The clean lines and metal railings and planes of endless white seemed utterly sterile.

Then one particularly messy day in painting class, a student spilled a cupful of paint. For a tense moment we looked on in semi-terrified amazement as the puddle spread. Great, we ruined Logan. After realizing we weren’t about to be scolded or forcibly removed, we seemed to silently agree the puddle was not a mistake. By the end of the class, the floor was smeared and dolloped and splattered with colors. The mess was thrilling because it wasn’t perfect and because we had made it ourselves.

In this piece, I attempt to highlight the possibility that lies in Logan. Though comprised entirely of straight lines and geometric shapes, like the building’s exterior, no line is painted perfectly, no shape uniformly colored. The painting speaks to the power of students to create a personality for the space.

Get Stoked by Alex Filipowicz, ’15

SUPPORT CREATIVITY IN THE COLLEGE

With help from parents, alumni, and friends, the arts are thriving on campus like never before. To learn more about supporting internships, apprenticeships, and other student arts opportunities, please contact Justin Glasson at 773.702.1169 or jglasson@uchicago.edu.
If you have taken a Core course at the University of Chicago in the past several decades, you have almost certainly been taught by a Harper-Schmidt fellow.

The postdoctoral program at Chicago, now known formally as the Society of Fellows in the Liberal Arts at the University of Chicago, was founded in 1975 by the dean of the College. Its 37 Harper-Schmidt fellows, who hold four-year appointments as Collegiate assistant professors, teach Core sections in the humanities and the social sciences. These positions attract the most promising young scholars to Chicago: last year more than 1,000 people applied for 16 spots. Students have consistently ranked Collegiate assistant professors among the best teachers in the College.

“Collegiate fellows play a crucial role at this University. They provide the backbone of the Core sequences that are most characteristic of a University of Chicago undergraduate education,” says Rebecca Zorach, professor of art history and chair of the society—and herself a former Collegiate assistant professor. “I am constantly stunned by the brilliance, erudition, and intellectual ambition of these scholar-teachers.”

The interdisciplinary Society of Fellows serves as a quasi-departmental home for Collegiate assistant professors. The society brings together Collegiate fellows and senior fellows—distinguished tenured faculty members also teaching in the Core—who support and mentor their younger colleagues. Collegiate and senior fellows share their work in progress at biweekly meetings. The society also sponsors two conferences a year, most recently Ground Stories at the Franke Institute for the Humanities last May.
What has been the most surprising thing about teaching in the College?
Roxana Galusca: The degree of dedication, quality of knowledge, and analytical thinking that my students possess.

James Wilson: Even by the standards of other elite universities I’ve experienced, my students this past year were remarkably eager.

Benjamin McKean: Students here really do live up to their reputation—generally, they are extremely diligent and willing to do huge amounts of work.

What have you enjoyed the most?
McKean: We start the year of Classics of Social and Political Thought with Plato’s Republic, and that is a great experience—it really throws students into the deep end, and it’s fun to see them realize they like it there.

Wilson: Sometimes the discussion reaches a special level, where students are making a series of excellent points, we’re all laughing and having a good time, and there’s a collective sense that we’re getting somewhere. It’s hard to predict when this will happen (and it’s not obvious it’s connected to anything in my lesson plan), but when it happens, it’s magical.

What has been the most difficult?
Wilson: Harper fellows are in the uncommon position at the U of C of teaching the same students for a full academic year, because we teach three-quarter Core sequences. This raises new pedagogical issues—what’s the plan for improving student writing over a year, as opposed to a quarter or semester? It also deepened my relationships with my students in surprising ways. I spent a lot of time on “pastoral care”—talking to students about their general concerns about college life and their academic plans. I enjoyed this immensely, but there’s no question that it’s a difficult job.

Which text is your favorite to teach?
Timothy Michael: Milton’s Paradise Lost. More than any other text I teach, it seems to completely expand students’ sense of what can be done with language.

Wilson: Probably Plato’s Republic. Both as a literary work and a work of philosophy, it’s a staggering accomplishment, as well as being vividly interesting.

McKean: I enjoy teaching everything we cover in Classics, but what I like best is when students get surprised by a text, when they find themselves agreeing with someone they expected to reject, or vice versa. This happens most often with Marx, whose early writings are very different from what many students expect.

Which text do you secretly hate?
Wilson: I’m not sure I’d say “hate,” but I most dislike teaching Thomas Aquinas’s Summa Theologica. Aquinas is certainly an important figure, but the text is difficult, and Aquinas sometimes doesn’t do much to motivate his readers as to the importance of the points he’s making. It’s easy on a first read to ask yourself why on earth you’re being subjected to this.

McKean: I can tell you what the students hate to read—difficult texts by Alfarabi and Aquinas. I don’t hate teaching these unloved texts, though. I’m no sadist, but I love challenging students to see what they can with these works. The results are often creative and impressive.

Michael: It would probably be a text that I personally love, James Boswell’s Life of Johnson. I find myself explaining Johnsonian wit to the students, which rarely results in the desired amount of laughter.

Harper-Schmidt fellows have a chance to teach a course of their own design. Have you done this yet?
McKean: Last spring I taught a seminar in the political science department called Political Theory After Catastrophe.

Michael: I taught a course in the English department called Formal Developments in British Romantic Poetry.

What was it like to present your academic work to the Society of Fellows?
Galusca: Energizing!

What is the most beneficial thing about the Society of Fellows—to your students and to you personally?
McKean: For me personally, the best thing is the opportunity to be surrounded by such a fantastic group of interdisciplinary scholars who also somehow manage to be delightful people.

Galusca: Having great scholars and teachers who care about their teaching and research with equal energy and passion.
“Don’t mess this up...”

Many Odyssey scholars are the first in their families to go to college. No pressure.

Five years ago, an anonymous donor known only as Homer gave the University a $100 million gift—the largest in University history at the time—to reduce student loans for low- to moderate-income undergraduates. Now more than 1,000 students in the College receive Odyssey scholarships.

Each year, one Odyssey scholar is chosen to deliver a speech at the Scholarship Celebration for students and donors, held in May. Here are excerpts from the 2011 and 2012 speeches.

Rebeca Carrillo, ’14
(public policy)
Las Cruces, New Mexico
2012 student speaker

The Christmas before last, my family and I made the trip across the Mexican border to celebrate with my extended family in Juarez. It was shortly after I had begun attending the University of Chicago, and my father had taken it upon himself to describe the school to my grandmother with a tone somewhere between “college brochure” and “exuberant car salesman.”

“It’s one of the most distinguished schools in the whole world,” he said proudly. “They have 87 Nobel Prize winners. Do you know how much it costs to go there? Sixty thousand dollars a year.”

My grandmother, who had been listening intently, was horrified. “Omar,” she said. “How are you paying?” At this point my father beamed, and in a sweet if somewhat inaccurate reference to my financial aid package, he replied, “Don’t worry—they gave her a scholarship called the ‘Needs-Blind.’ It’s new.”

My father went on to deliver what must have surely been an entertaining explanation of need-based aid while my oldest cousin pulled me aside. In a grave voice, he gave me a lecture that amounted to one stern message: “Don’t mess this up.” I was brilliant, he said, but so was the rest of my family. I was the only one who had had my education laid out for me like this, and as such, I had the responsibility to take advantage of everything that my family had been denied access to. To let myself down was to let everyone down. In a way, I suppose I was benefiting from the long-standing Mexican tradition of being scared straight by guilt. I am grateful to my cousin for being lovingly terrifying; it is a technique I hope to learn myself one day.

Needless to say, it can be an intimidating prospect for an 18-year-old to undertake something on behalf of her entire family, especially when that family has overcome challenges I could never hope to match. However, I am immensely grateful for the focus it’s given me. This is now my second year at UChicago, and I have experienced things that are completely new to me: I learned calculus, I saw fog, I read books I would have previously used as doorstops. I met people who have reassured me of the incredible capacity of humans and people who showed me that no amount of education can fix bad priorities. After two years, I can finally articulate my intellectual identity: I am a public policy student, with a love for everything from programming to Jimi Hendrix; who is fascinated by organized crime and who thinks
Jonathan Lykes, AB’12
(political science)
East Cleveland, Ohio
2011 student speaker

The University of Chicago has allowed me to live a life of the mind. It has also enabled me to live a life of activism, community engagement, and personal growth. I am “here,” but I have come a long way to be here. I am from a place that rarely achieves any level of intersection with universities like Chicago. In my high school in East Cleveland, Ohio, there is a 50 percent graduation rate, and only half of the students who graduate will go on to college. The majority of those who do will be women.

In the city of Chicago, only three out of 100 black men will graduate from college. I will be the first person in my family to do so. The University of Chicago was the only school I applied to. I applied early admission and knew from the very beginning that this was the institution that would help break this cycle and defeat the barrier that commonly exists between poor inner-city communities and elite colleges and universities.

Some believe that this institution is only about theory, but in my experience the College has taught me to turn theory into practice. I have become both a full and active member at the University and an active citizen in the larger city of Chicago. I helped lead a performing arts group that goes into high schools and teaches civic education. I can remember one student explaining how happy he was to see University students coming into their community to build bridges.

The University of Chicago did not teach me everything. More important, it has given me the framework and the opportunities to go out and learn anything I need to know.

The University of Chicago has augmented my life and cultivated many of my talents and skills. I have grown in my theory but also in my practice. My experience here has been so positive that I have decided to continue my Chicago education at the School of Social Service Administration.

But I can only be here because of all those who were here for me: my professors, the staff, and the generous individuals who have invested in the future of this school they also love. My life has been changed because you were “there.”

I am grateful to my cousin for being lovingly terrifying; it is a technique I hope to learn myself one day.

SUPPORT THE ODYSSEY SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

Helping Chicago students graduate with less debt has inspired more than 3,000 donors to make gifts to Odyssey. For more information on naming an Odyssey scholarship or endowing a scholarship as a group, please contact Paul Seeley at 773.612.7544 or pseeley@uchicago.edu.
He connected with people, found out what they were made of, and then helped.

Metcalf in his office at the Graduate School of Business.
The Unknown Metcalf

The man who launched two thousand internships.

Over the past 15 years, Jeff Metcalf has become one of the best-known names in the College. Since the Jeff Metcalf Internship Program was established in his honor in 1997, more than 2,000 College students have won “Metcalfs”—paid, substantive internships during summer break.

The program was founded by Byron Trott, AB’81, MBA’82, in honor of Harold R. “Jeff” Metcalf, AM’53, dean of students in the Graduate School of Business (1956–75) and the University’s athletic director (1976–81). Metcalf died in 1994.

“He was a great man. He was just a great man,” says Trott, a varsity football and baseball player who knew Metcalf when he was athletic director. “He connected with people, found out what they were made of, and then helped.”

Metcalf encouraged Trott to study business and—back when career guidance for College students was all but nonexistent—used his vast network of contacts to help Trott and others find summer jobs. “He wouldn’t get you the job. He would get you the interview,” says Trott, now chairman and CEO of BDT Capital Partners and a University trustee. “He was his own little placement office. If it weren’t for Jeff Metcalf, I would not be in the career I am in now.”

The internship program is not the only thing at the University named in Metcalf’s honor. In 1994, more than 100 alumni and staff made a collective gift to name the lobby of the Gleacher Center for Metcalf. “I think only three people turned us down,” says co-organizer Fred Sweeney, MBA’66, who served as one of Metcalf’s assistant deans. “He was more than the students’ dean,” reads the dedication, which Sweeney wrote, on the lobby wall. “He was their mentor, their advocate, and their friend.”

What kind of man inspires that level of devotion? What was Jeff Metcalf really like?

The College Newsletter spoke with Karlyn Metcalf, his wife of 34 years, who shared her memories and a lighthearted 1966 Sun-Times article about her husband, “The Dean and a Ramos Fizz.” The picture that emerges is of a man who was deeply intellectual, funny, gregarious, kind, and, in the University of Chicago tradition, a little idiosyncratic. Here are a few things we discovered.
I thought, who is this fellow? He’s wearing a beret,” she says. “Somebody said, ‘He’s at the University of Chicago.’ I said, ‘Well, that figures.’”

His name wasn’t Jeff.
Born Harold R. Metcalf, he acquired his understated nickname in the Marines, after his unit watched the 1941 film noir *Johnny Eager*. The character Jeff, Johnny Eager’s best friend, “was a college man who had fallen under the influence of evil companions and spirituous beverages,” Metcalf told the *Sun-Times*. “When the lights came up, there were fingers pointing at me from all directions. And I have been known as Jeff ever since.” Even Karlyn thought he was called Jeff: “I didn’t know his real name until we went to get our marriage license.”

Despite several close calls, he never earned a college degree.
“He was the 89th member of his family to attend Oberlin College,” says Karlyn. After just one semester, the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor, and he joined the Marines. “He thought the Marines were the best trained, so that was the safest place to be.”

While serving in the South Pacific, Metcalf received an appointment to the Naval Academy from Harry S. Truman, then a senator from Metcalf’s home state of Missouri. Metcalf was given leave to go, as long as he could arrange his own transportation. “So I stole a rubber boat and outboard,” he told the *Sun-Times*. He managed to haul a passing ship, but it broke down. When he finally arrived, it was too late.

Instead Metcalf enrolled in the V-12 Navy College Training Program at the University of Southern California. His career there ended abruptly after a university official gave a speech against President Roosevelt, whom Metcalf considered his commander-in-chief. “I jumped up in the middle of the speech and yelled ‘dismissed’ to my troops. Then I walked out,” he told the *Sun-Times*. “It was a little embarrassing, due to the fact that nobody followed me.” Metcalf was expelled and sent back to the Pacific.

(After the war, he was admitted to graduate study in history at the University of Chicago on the basis of an examination; he earned a master’s degree in 1953.)

He was a member of the famed Carlson’s Raiders.
In World War II, Metcalf served in the Second Marine Raider Battalion, the light-infantry attack force headed by Colonel Evans Fordyce Carlson. The unit, made famous by the 1943 film *Gung Ho*, was unconventional (Carlson modeled its organization on the Chinese Communist army) and terrifyingly successful. Metcalf fought in the Battle of Midway and the Battle of Guadalcanal, where his battalion annihilated a Japanese regiment that outnumbered them two to one. “It was very scary stuff,” says Assistant Dean Sweeney. “He never, ever talked about it.”

After Metcalf was expelled from USC, “he was supposed to be part of the invasion of Japan, but that never happened because the Japanese surrendered,” says Karlyn. “The atomic bomb probably saved his life.” Metcalf ended the war as an MP in charge of the red-light district in Nagasaki.

He roomed with all kinds of famous bohemians.
When the war ended, “the brother of a high school friend was renting this big old house in Big Sur,” says Karlyn. “Much to his surprise, Salvador Dali was one of the people staying there, as well as D. H. Lawrence’s widow, the swami Krishnamurti, and Henry Miller. It was a quite a crew. Apparently they took turns cooking and cleaning.”

His marriage began like a romantic comedy.
“We met in 1953, I believe,” says Karlyn. It was her first day working at a market research company, Market Facts, and Metcalf’s last. “I thought, who is this fellow? He’s wearing a beret,” she says. “Somebody said, ‘He’s at the University of Chicago.’ I said, ‘Well, that figures.’” And she didn’t see him again for seven years.

Then, in May 1960, Metcalf was called to jury duty downtown. He came into the LaSalle Street office to see if any of his old colleagues wanted to have lunch. Most of the people he knew had already left for lunch, “and I was there, so he asked me,” says Karlyn. “We got engaged in July and married in September.”

He had no business training.
In 1954, Metcalf left the PhD program in history (his unfinished dissertation was on mountain men of the West) to take a position as assistant dean of students in the Graduate School of Business. He was appointed dean of students in 1956 and served for nearly 20 years. “He enjoyed everything about the job,” says Karlyn. “He was a people person. He really enjoyed recruiting. He was one of the first recruiters to visit women’s colleges, with some little prodding from me. He also went to black colleges to...”
recruit minorities.” In 1970, he became a founding member of the National Black MBA Association.

**He was not particularly athletic.**

Metcalf was appointed athletic director in 1976: he had been on a search committee to fill the position, and the committee selected him. “He enjoyed golf, but he was not a very good golfer,” says Karlyn. “I think he ran track in high school.”

“At the University of Chicago, being athletic director was not a power seat,” says Trott. “But he took it very seriously. He would go on football trips on the bus, there and back. He was a great mentor and a great guidance counselor for us. He would go have a beer at Jimmy’s with us. Jeff was the guy that you could talk to.”

**He was a co-owner of the legendary Hyde Park bar, the Eagle.**

In 1965, Metcalf and three partners opened the Eagle, a tavern and restaurant, at 5311 S. Blackstone (where Giordano’s is today). The name was taken from the old music-hall tune turned nursery rhyme: “Up and down the City Road/In and out the Eagle/That’s the way the money goes/Pop goes the weasel.”

The pub was intended to be a quiet place, “where diversion would be supplied by your own talents and power of articulation, rather than the mechanical marvels of the day,” Metcalf told the *Sun-Times*. “We wanted something informal but not decadent or sloppy or beat.” The Eagle, mentioned by name in Saul Bellow’s *To Jerusalem and Back*, closed in 1980. It was so beloved that a group of customers still holds an annual remembrance.

**He loved the University of Chicago.**

“He had three great loves: the Marines, and the University of Chicago, and I was in there somewhere,” says Karlyn. “I was never quite sure where I stood in his affections compared to the other two. Possibly third.”

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SUPPORT THE METCALF PROGRAM

The College is seeking more alumni, parents, and friends to host and sponsor Metcalf internships in organizations around the world. For more information, please contact Marthe Druska at 773.834.1739 or mdruska@uchicago.edu.
During Alumni Weekend 2012, the Harper Library Reading Room and the Stuart North Reading Room were renamed the Arley D. Cathey Learning Center. The new name recognizes the generosity of Arley D. Cathey Jr., PhB’50, who made a pledge of approximately $17 million in honor of his father, Arley D. Cathey Sr., M.D.

At the dedication, John W. Boyer, Dean of the College, gave a brief history of the storied building. Here is an excerpt.

Nearly 100 years ago today, on June 10, 1912, the University of Chicago dedicated the William Rainey Harper Memorial Library. The library contained what a later University report would call “the most beautiful reading room in the world.”

Before Harper Library was built, the University had already assembled a large number of books—the fourth largest university library collection in the country—which were scattered around the campus, frustrating faculty and students alike. A 1902 report to the trustees recommended siting a new library on the south edge of the quadrangles along 59th Street. It also recommended that the new library have the capacity to seat 700 students and store 1,500,000 books and thus last at least a hundred years.

William Rainey Harper’s untimely death in January 1906 became a practical spur to build the new library. Before Harper died, he said if the University wanted to create a memorial in his honor, he hoped it would be the new central library.

Within weeks of Harper’s passing, the trustees took the decision to dedicate the new library to Harper.

Charles A. Coolidge, an architect from the firm of Shepley, Rutan, and Coolidge, produced a design in the English Collegiate Gothic style, inspired by King’s College Chapel at Cambridge and Magdalen and Christ Church Colleges in Oxford. The costs of the project were covered by a gift of $655,000 from John D. Rockefeller in honor of Harper, plus
$385,000 raised from almost 2,000 donors, including many alumni and faculty. The largest single local donor was Martin A. Ryerson, the exceptionally generous chairman of the University’s Board of Trustees and a man whose fine aesthetic judgments are reflected in every major building of the early University.

Led by Ernest DeWitt Burton, the director of the University Libraries and a professor of New Testament Studies, the faculty formulated the rich iconography of coats of arms, shields, gargoyles, and medieval motifs that adorns the facades of the main entrances and the walls of the East and West Towers.

In the Great Reading Room, we find the two screens laden with such symbolic ornamentation. On the screen over the eastern entrance, we see the inscription, “Whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning” (St. Paul), and the emblems and coats of arms of great foreign universities such as Berlin, Paris, Bologna, Oxford, Cambridge, St. Petersburg, Tokyo, and Calcutta. On the screen over the western entrance, we encounter the inscription, “Read not to contradict nor to believe, but to weigh and consider” (Francis Bacon), and the coats of arms of Harvard, Yale, Johns Hopkins, Columbia, Michigan, Wisconsin, California, and Chicago.

On the facade of the West Tower, facing 59th Street, are still more coats of arms of other foreign universities, including the double eagle of the Imperial University of Vienna. So far as I know, Harper Library is the only building in North America to have the symbol of the Habsburg Dynasty on its façade.

The selection of these symbols was cause for vigorous, if somewhat amusing, debates about the relative prestige of foreign universities. The distinguished botanist John Coulter argued that Bonn and Munich deserved pride of place over Leipzig and Heidelberg on the West Tower because they had superior botany programs (to no avail). The great Egyptologist James Henry Breasted was equally unsuccessful in lobbying for the University of Königsberg as the home of Immanuel Kant. Partisans of the University of Salamanca were able to displace the University of Pisa at the last moment.

Once Regenstein Library opened in 1971, Harper Library was reborn as the administrative and teaching center of the College. The main reading room became the site of a small book collection used to support our general-education courses, but which also led to the interposition of ugly stack-like components throughout the floor plan that interrupted the visual sight lines of this great hall.

The construction of yet another major library in 2010–11, the Mansueto Library, permitted the University to consolidate all of our book collections in the humanities and social sciences in one place. This decision made it possible for the College to redeclare these impressive spaces to a study and learning center, plus an extremely popular student-run café, Common Knowledge.

Harper Library has always been an auspicious building, and today it faces an especially bright and confident future because it has found a new patron, a man whose extraordinary generosity has led him to join the ranks of John D. Rockefeller, Martin A. Ryerson, and other early donors who constructed this building.

I have had the privilege of knowing Arley Cathey for almost 20 years. Arley’s devotion to and his respect for the University may literally be said to know no bounds.

Over the years and many conversations about his legacy at the University, Arley said he wanted to make a gift to honor his father, a highly respected physician in El Dorado, Arkansas. Dr. Cathey was responsible for introducing Arley to the College and brought his son to campus himself to enroll him.

Last year, Arley and his wife Betty decided to give to the University of Chicago a gift of $17 million that will enable us to restore the luster and the pragmatic functionality of this great room, as well as the adjoining great reading room in Stuart Hall.

On the anniversary of the opening of this great building 100 years ago, it is with great pride that we gather to dedicate these magnificent interior spaces as the Arley D. Cathey Learning Center in Harper Library.

"So far as I know, Harper Library is the only building in North America to have the symbol of the Habsburg Dynasty on its façade."
A highlight of Alumni Weekend 2012 was the dedication of one of the University’s most historic and beautiful spaces. Together, the Harper Library Reading Room and the Stuart North Reading Room were renamed the Arley D. Cathey Learning Center.

The name recognizes the generosity of Arley D. Cathey Jr., PhB’50, who made a pledge of approximately $17 million. Cathey named the learning center in honor of his father, Arley D. Cathey Sr., MD.

Two additional spaces were named in recognition of Cathey’s commitment to the College. The South Campus dining complex was renamed the Arley D. Cathey Dining Commons, and the South Campus residential house previously known as Chautauqua House is now Cathey House.

Cathey, who built several successful businesses in his hometown of El Dorado, Arkansas, traveled to Chicago to attend the dedication. During his visit, he spoke with the College Newsletter.

You enrolled in the Hutchins College at 16, which would have been 1943—is that right? Yes. I was a junior in high school. I was in residence at what is now Alumni House. It was a fraternity house before that, and the College was using it as a dormitory space. There were 25 of us boys domiciled over there. I enjoyed it very much. That’s where I stayed until I was drafted out into the Navy.

Were you sent abroad? I was in the commandant’s office, the 11th naval district, in San Diego, California. I guess it was because I’d been to Chicago that they put me there in that position. So I enjoyed that.

When I got out of the service, I went to Southern Methodist and the University of Louisville. I was in danger of becoming a professional student. I decided it was time to give my parents some relief. So I returned here to graduate, and then I went to work.

I was in college for six or seven years, but I didn’t major in anything. I got a PhB. I put in enough hours, if I’d concentrated them on a certain subject, but I wanted to do what I wanted to do. It didn’t exactly meet the criteria of the University. But it met my criteria.

What do you remember most about your time at Chicago? I enjoyed it. I enjoyed all of it. I learned that I
didn’t know very much about very much. I learned that I had better get busy if I was ever going to know anything.

Ms. [Frances] Seneseu was the English instructor. I remember her very well. She suggested that everyone in the class should start making a diary and continue it for their lifetime. So I have done that. And I still make entries in it, to this day. I don’t know how many volumes I have now.

**Have you ever gone back and reread them?**

I haven’t had time.

**How did the College influence you?**

I learned my love of the classics at the University. The Great Books, as Mortimer Adler and Robert Maynard Hutchins called them, helped me develop my life philosophy.

From my reading, I’ve learned that we’re all looking for happiness, but we look in the wrong places. How do you find happiness? There are several things you’ve got to have, so I’ve been told, from my reading of the classics. You’ve got to have wisdom. You’ve got to have courage. You’ve got to have virtue. And you’ve got to be moderate. If you have all of that, you’re going to be happy. I’m as happy as I can be.

**Did you consider going into medicine?**

My father wanted me to. My grandfather was a general practitioner, and his son, my father, was a general surgeon. He would ask me if I would like to go to the hospital with him and view certain surgeries. And I enjoyed that. I watched him do a lot of different procedures.

The other day I was reading Charles Darwin. Darwin studied medicine, but he couldn’t stand it, because he didn’t like to hear the people screaming during surgery without anesthetic. I could understand it, because although I was witnessing surgery that was performed under anesthesia, I still didn’t enjoy watching some of the procedures.

**Did you always have a head for business?**

Oh yes. In grade school, we would all get the *Wall Street Journal*, and we would select stocks. I loved that, and I still do. If you do what you like to do, you don’t work a day in your life.

**How did you get into business?**

One of my father’s friends was in the propane gas business. He and his wife didn’t have any children. They were like second parents to me. I told him one day that I didn’t want to go into medicine. He said, “Well, don’t tell your father, but I know something you can do. One of my distributors wants to sell his business.” So I went to talk to the man. And sure enough, he did want to sell it.

So I told my father what I wanted to do, and he said, “Well now, I’m disappointed. But you do what you want to do.” I worked a deal out on the price, and the bank said, “We want your father to sign this note.” See, I wasn’t worth anything. So my father signed the note.

It was on rock bottom when I bought it. There wasn’t any problem finding out what needed to be done. Even though I didn’t have business experience, I had a natural inclination about business.

Of course, all important changes require capital. The bankers believed in me after a while, but the bankers were also in the habit of saying, “OK, sign this note, but incidentally, we want Doc’s signature also.”

**How did you expand into other businesses?**

A few years later, one of my competitors wanted to sell. And with it came another business located in a different town—a furniture business. So my partner, when he saw that I was in the furniture business, scouted out a furniture store in the town where he was located, so we had a furniture store.

I was in my early 30s then. It was just so much fun. I get excited just talking about it.

**Did you work long days?**

Oh yes. I was the first one on the job, and I was the last one to leave. And I worked seven days a week. And before I married, there were many times when my mother would worry about me if I didn’t come home until two o’clock in the morning. She said it’s dangerous for you to be in the office that late. People know you’re there. It’s just dangerous.

**How did you meet your wife?**

I was in the propane gas business, and her father was in the drilling business. He drilled oil wells—he drilled *wells*, hopefully oil wells. So I was calling on him in the line of business. So one thing led to another. We were married in 1957.

**And then later you went into property?**

If I saw a property that I thought should be bought, I would buy it and hold it. I didn’t want to develop it. The city at that time was growing. So I would sell it to developers that wanted to put in a strip mall.

I sold it all about five, six years ago. Turned out luck played a big part in that—I got out when it was good. When we liquidated all of the loans, we had a big cash flow, and I put that all into stocks.

**You did that when you retired?**

I haven’t retired, but I’m doing something different.

**What did you enjoy most about business?**

I enjoyed all of it. Dean Boyer and I were in an automobile one day, and he posed a question: “Ashley, why do people want to accumulate money beyond what they actually need for living expenses?” We came up with the idea that it was just a way of keeping score.

But recently I have been rereading Hobbes. His mother was seven months pregnant with him, so Hobbes’s story goes, and she looked out the window across the channel and saw this fleet of Spanish galleons headed toward the coast.

And Hobbes said, on that day, my mother gave birth to twins. She gave birth to me and to fear. And we all have fear. Money is a defense. That’s why we want to accumulate more than we need to meet our daily living expenses.

**Why did you decide to make a gift in support of the library?**

I love the place so much. I did more studying in my dorm room than the library. But I did go to the library a lot just to read.

I realize how much the University gave me, and I hope that other people have found out how much the University has given them. That’s why I think people should contribute to the University, because the University gave us all so much. And when they find that out, they’re going to want to give.

Was that a pretty good sales pitch? Keep those cards and letters coming in.
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... Leave the Reg. Go to the newest temple erected by your fine institution, take the elevator to the ninth floor and wander into the giant performance hall, stand before the towering window there ... You are filled, as you gaze onto limestone foreheads in a Hyde Park slumber, with a crescendo of science of a different kind, a vital exculpation, a purity of knowledge which is not knowledge and facts which are not facts, indefinable forms that exist as mystically as experience: sight.

—excerpted from the essay
“Sermon About Gifts,” Emily Holland, '14

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