

Giving back to the School of Education

Mary Mykietiuk was the eldest daughter of immigrants from Austria—or perhaps it was the Ukraine, for the family records are missing or unclear. Steven, a baker, and his wife, Eva, settled first in Manhattan, where Mary was born in 1913, and later in Hackettstown, where she attended high school. She went on to State Teachers College at Trenton, graduating in 1934.

What very little we know about the details of Mary's life comes from a second cousin, Lois Maloney, the executrix of her estate, and from Robert Novy, her attorney. It was they who helped carry out Mary's wish that nearly all her estate be placed in a trust that will provide scholarships to students at TCNJ. On January 16, they presented a symbolic check in the amount of \$1,339,000 to President R. Barbara Gitenstein and representatives of the College.

Mary Mykietiuk had one younger sister, Anna, with whom she lived all her adult life, first in their parents' apartment in the Jackson Heights section of Queens, NY, and later in the Lakehurst area of New Jersey.

Hand-written records in Green Hall show Mary attended the College from the fall of 1930 to June 1934, when she graduated with a BS in English, prepared to teach English in secondary school. She had been active in Sigma Sigma, a sorority with a tradition of Shakespearean studies, and Kappa Delta Pi, the education honor society, as well as *The Seal*. As a senior, she received the Elizabeth Allen Scholarship, worth \$50 at a time when the full tuition was \$100.

It is not clear that Mary ever taught school full time. The records show she substituted and held a variety of jobs as a stenographer, secretary, and computer programmer for firms such as GE Services, Blue Cross of New York, and AGS Computers.



Mary Mykietiuk

Mary's life was exceptionally private; it was not that she was a recluse in any sense, but she had a very limited circle of friends. Maloney described her as a very intelligent, sweet, gentle, and quiet woman who had a wonderful sense of

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humor and was fun to be with, even when she was sick in the hospital. She and her sister traveled often to Europe, Canada, and the western states, lived simply, and invested their savings. Anna died in 2001; Mary followed her in 2004 after several months of heart trouble. She was 90.

Toward the end of her life, Mary expressed the wish to do something significant for others, something that would enable her to keep the Mykietiuk family name alive. She felt a gift to the College that created a number of Mykietiuk scholarships would serve that purpose.

Once the details are worked out, the College expects to provide up to five scholarships a year worth up to half the cost of tuition to School of Education students who qualify in terms of financial need and academic standing.

President Gitenstein was thrilled with the donation, saying, "This is a wonderful gift and will go a long way toward helping with the education of future teachers."



giving back