

6-17-2019

Donor Profile: A Home for DePaul

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Recommended Citation

(2019) "Donor Profile: A Home for DePaul," *DePaul Magazine*: Vol. 1 : Iss. 412025 , Article 10.
Available at: <https://via.library.depaul.edu/depaul-magazine/vol1/iss412025/10>

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Jean and John Masterson

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—MIKE MASTERSON

There was little in life that got **John Masterson (LASMA '52)** more fired up than DePaul basketball. “The only time I ever heard a bad word come out of my dad was when he went to the basketball games and they messed up,” says his son, Mike Masterson. “He was passionate about DePaul basketball, men’s or women’s. He loved it!”

In truth, Masterson, who passed away on Oct. 17, 2018, was passionate about all things DePaul.

That feeling is shared by his wife of 62 years, **Jean Masterson (EDU '67)**, who took a shine to a substitute teacher in her DePaul undergraduate class on Shakespeare, “some unknown, John Masterson.” She remembers

thinking, “I’ve got to do something to get to know him better,” and decided to invite him to a party she would arrange if he accepted. Although he was busy on the day she suggested, he asked her to a New Year’s Eve party; John proposed to her on Valentine’s Day, a mere six weeks later. “We just kind of knew we were meant for each other,” Jean says.

John’s ambition was to get a permanent teaching job at DePaul. After earning his doctorate from the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, he realized that dream. He was a professor in the English Department from 1959 to 1976 and a professor in the Department of Management from 1977 until his retirement in 1987. He served as dean of the

College of Liberal Arts and Sciences (now the College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences) from 1972 to 1977 and dean of the graduate school from 1980 to 1982. Masterson felt a great affection for and gratitude toward the university he served so well.

“DePaul was our home,” Mike recalls. “I remember going there as early as eight years old, sitting in my dad’s office with all the neat things that were around, and how everybody stopped him wherever we went.

“I never, ever heard him say a bad thing about DePaul,” Mike continues. “He loved his job so much, and my mom did, too. They knew that DePaul was their future.”

John’s steady job afforded the Mastersons the means to buy a house in Westchester, Ill., in which to raise their four children: Mike, **Mary Beth Riordan (BUS '80, MBA '84)**, **Maureen Pulia (CDM '83, JD '94)** and **Laura Masterson Benning (LAS '86, CSH '90)**. “They always said the home we have and the life we lived was because of DePaul,” Mike says. In gratitude, the Mastersons have made a planned gift of their house to DePaul through the Cortelyou Heritage Society.

Jean and John agreed on making the gift. “We just can’t put her on the market,” Jean remembers them thinking. “We’ve got to give her to DePaul. We never would have lived here if it were not for DePaul. Our whole family has been blessed so much, and we want to show our appreciation.”