

ACCF Receives Largest Estate Gift To-Date

The Ashland County Community Foundation has announced receipt of its largest planned gift in its 23-year history from the estate of Robert and Martha Casciani.



Bob and Martie were both Ashland High School graduates, with Bob continuing his education at Ohio State University, graduating with a degree in chemical engineering in 1943. He returned to Ashland to enjoy a long and successful career at F. E. Myers & Bros. Company, retiring in 1979 as Vice President of Manufacturing and Engineering.

When they were married in 1945, Martie worked at the Mansfield Tire & Rubber Co. as an administrative assistant. They spent 35 years as avid boaters on the Great Lakes, and were active members of the Mansfield Power Squadron, where Bob was a past commander.

Both were very community-minded, with Bob having served on the board of Dale Roy School, Ashland Public Library and Samaritan Hospital and Martie volunteered as a Red Cross Gray Lady at both the hospital and blood bank.

Martie joined First Presbyterian Church of Ashland in 1934 and served faithfully until her passing on August 23, 2018, her 96th birthday.

Bob preceded her in death on November 15, 2003, just one day before their 58th wedding anniversary.

ACCF's executive director, Jim Cutright explains further, "Bob and Martie Casciani cared very much for our Ashland community, and as a lasting legacy to lives well-lived, they have provided us with the perfect example of estate planning at its finest.

When Bob Casciani passed away in 2003, Martie met with ACCF's founding president and her dear friend, Dr. Lucille Ford, to create a masterful plan, since they had no children of their own, to benefit generations of young people pursuing higher education and those with needs in our community.

In recent months, it provided great comfort to Martie to know that a plan that had been put in place fourteen years ago, and barely touched since, would be put into motion upon her passing, under the careful guidance of our community foundation.”

The Casciani gift of approximately \$1.7 million will be divided into six individual permanent endowment funds.

Half of the gift will endow a college scholarship available to a graduating senior of any Ashland County high school who may be pursuing an engineering degree, in that Bob Casciani’s profession was that of an engineer, as is the case with all three of Bob and Martie’s nephews.

This scholarship fund is permanently endowed and will be renewable to provide assistance all four years of college, but with an obligation on ACCF’s part to preserve the gift principal, it will not be immediately available until sufficient earnings are in place to ensure continuity.

The other 50 per cent of the Casciani gift is to be divided equally to provide permanent endowment funds for five individual local non-profit organizations, to include ACCF, with no restrictions as to use.

Mr. Cutright recently invited leaders of the other four agencies to ACCF’s offices to personally inform them of this remarkable gift, namely Rosemarie Donley of Associated Charities, Annalise Francis of the Salvation Army Kroc Center, Stacy Schiemann of United Way of Ashland County and Pastor Mike Parker with First Presbyterian Church of Ashland



“Each of the agency leaders expressed their amazement at the generosity of Mr. and Mrs. Casciani, and all are so grateful for families like this who are demonstrating such care for our community’s future. A proverb, that I often quote, talks about how a society grows when elders plant trees to provide shade under which they will never sit. This is the perfect demonstration of that type of unselfishness and forward thinking.

Again, it’s important to understand that, because the donors have instructed ACCF to not permit invasion of the gift principal of these endowment funds, it may be two to three years before these organizations begin to realize the financial benefit of this gift. Ultimately, based on a standard community foundation distribution policy, each of the five agencies will receive an approximate annual distribution of \$6,800, with an opportunity to grow over time,” Cutright stated.

“While this annual amount doesn’t solve all of our budget issues, the fact that we will be receiving it each year, forever, is very significant, and I will be recommending to my board that we earmark it for a specific need,” remarked Rosemarie Donley.

Mr. Cutright and Ev DeVaul, who has been working part-time as ACCF’s community relations director, have placed a recent emphasis on meeting with local non-profit agencies and estate planning professionals to encourage them to identify and work with potential donors who might consider similar estate gift planning.

Cutright reports that he and his staff are meeting with individuals nearly every week who are planting seeds that will likewise come to fruition at some point in the future.

“Not everyone has the capacity to leave a gift of the magnitude of Bob and Martha Casciani,” said DeVaul, “but every gift is meaningful.”

If you would like to know more about how to create permanent endowment to benefit future generations of Ashland County, please contact Jim Cutright or Ev DeVaul at (419) 281-4733 or visit www.communityfoundation.org .