A history behind the buildings on campus

BY GABY MARTINEZ – POSTED ON FEBRUARY 14, 2013
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Thousands of students walk through the halls and buildings of Cal State Fullerton knowing their names, locations and typical classes in each, but not many actually know about the namesake of each campus building.

Prior to any buildings or its establishment in 1957, the CSUF campus was full of orange groves.

In 1963, the first permanent building, the Letters and Science Building, was occupied by students. The six-story building's name was later changed to Dr. Miles D. McCarthy Hall.

It remains the oldest building on the CSUF campus and its interior was actually designed by McCarthy himself. It was intended to house the undergraduate and graduate science departments.

McCarthy was one of the five founding professors at CSUF. He was hired to teach biology and aid in the development of faculty, programs and facilities for the sciences.

He was also the chairman of the division of science, engineering, mathematics and the biology department.

McCarthy was a stellar professor and was awarded the Outstanding Professor Award by CSUF.

"Dr. Miles McCarthy was a well-respected and beloved vice president and later served as acting president for one year," said Sharon Perry, special collections librarian at the Pollak Library.

William B. Langsdorf Hall was built in 1969 to house the business and business administration college.

Langsdorf Hall was named after CSUF's founding president.

When hired as CSUF president, Langsdorf was the head of Pasadena City College.

Langsdorf designed the educational program, recruited top notch professors, shaped the building program and served as president for eleven years.

The Pollak Library was named after CSUF until 1998 when the library was renamed the Paulina June and George Pollak after they contributed a large sum of money.

Paulina June was a faculty member who taught English and comparative literature starting in 1961. Her and her husband's donation was the largest donation given by a faculty member.

"After many decades of service Dr. June Pollak and her kind husband Mr. George Pollak established a sizeable financial endowment for the campus when the library was undergoing a major expansion in the 1990s," Perry said.

Langsdorf, McCarthy and the Pollaks contributed to CSUF’s history. Although they were different, they had many things in common, Perry said.

"All four are/were humane, gracious, highly intelligent, well-educated and consummate professionals devoted to the university and its students and to the mission of education and learning," Perry said.

Steven G. Mihaylo and Dan Black are two alumni who recognized that Cal State Fullerton was part of the reason for their success and contributed to CSUF in such a way that their names grace two of the newer buildings.
“Steven G. Mihaylo was a finance major at Cal State Fullerton. He became the CEO of Crexendo Industries,” said Leah Espinoza, a Titan ambassador and sophomore business major.

“He became really rich and then decided to donate money to our campus as a distinguished alumni. He donated 34.5 million dollars. He’s really down to earth and nice.”

Dan Black graduated from CSUF in 1967 with a Bachelor of Science in physics. Black started two companies: Trace Analysis Labs and Mineral Lab, which later was named Advanced Medical Nutrition, Inc.

He sold this company in 1998 and made a significant amount of money and decided to give back to his alma mater.

“I thought, what really got me motivated to do what I was doing, and the only thing I could think of was my four physics professors at Cal State Fullerton. So I figured I should donate to the college,” said Black.

Since 1998 until now, Black has contributed in numerous ways to CSUF. He has given in the form of numerous scholarships for underprivileged students. He also gave a large sum of money for the already existing lab building that was renamed Dan Black Hall in his honor.

“When I went there, it was a small campus. There was only one building, McCarthy Hall. It was the physics department that I remembered. I wanted to do something for the physics students there so hopefully I can make their lives a little easier in the form of scholarships,” Black said. “Since that time, I have given to the business school.”

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