

Generous Gift

Roker Funds Summit, Studio

A beloved former professor will be honored by a leadership gift to the college by **Al Roker '76** of NBC's "Today" show. His donation, which includes a matching gift from NBC, will support the college's annual media summit and the student television studio in the new Campus Center.

"Al Roker has been a loyal ambassador for Oswego throughout his career, and generous in sharing his love for the college," said Oswego President Deborah F. Stanley. "With this exceptional gift, he is passing on the benefits of an Oswego education to a new generation of broadcasters, and we couldn't be more grateful."

Roker gave part of his gift to name the media summit in honor of Dr. Lewis B. "Doc" O'Donnell, professor emeritus of communication studies.

"Two things made my Oswego experience awesome, and gave me a foundation for my successful career in broadcasting. First and foremost was Doc O'Donnell's encouragement and expertise, and second was the fact that as a freshman at Oswego, I was working in the campus television studio, while my friends at big private universities never touched a piece of equipment until later in their college careers," said Roker. "I'm proud to support the media summit in Doc's name and the television studio in the new Campus Center, so future students can have the advantages I did."



Al Roker '76



Lewis B. "Doc" O'Donnell

The media summit, held each October on the Oswego campus, was founded by **Louis A. Borrelli Jr. '77**, chief executive officer of NEP Broadcasting. "Doc O'Donnell gave me, not only the knowledge, but the confidence I needed to make it in the competitive world of media and communications," said Borrelli. "Thanks to Al's generous gift, we have a wonderful way to recognize Doc's career of 26 years at Oswego and his influence on so many of us!"

The annual event brings some of the top names in the fields of broadcasting and media to the college for a day of small group sessions, culminating in a panel discussion on a major topic. This year's summit, slated for Oct. 17, will focus on new media.

O'Donnell joined the Oswego staff in 1962 to set up a television studio to support instruction. He soon began teaching courses in television production and eventually became chair of the communication studies department. "Doc O'Donnell's work launched careers and laid the foundation that inspired people like Lou Borrelli and Al Roker to give back in a substantial way to this college," said Stanley.

As weatherman and a host of NBC's "Today" show, Roker is a 10-time Emmy Award winner.

He began his broadcasting career while still in college as a weekend weatherman at WTVH-TV in Syracuse. After graduation, he moved on to weathercasting jobs in Washington, D.C., and Cleveland, Ohio, before becoming the weekend weathercaster at WNBC in New York in 1983.

Roker's gift is part of *Inspiring Horizons: The Campaign for Oswego*, which has raised more than \$20 million toward a goal of \$23 million for capital projects, endowment and the annual *Fund for Oswego*. ●



Levine wants to share Oswego 'secret'

PARTICIPATING IN OSWEGO OPERA Theatre and directing the campus production of "You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown," were Oswego experiences that changed **Don Levine '78** forever.

Now Levine is giving back to Oswego so current and future students can continue to have life-changing experiences.

Don Levine '78

In addition to his annual gifts, the school counselor has set up a trust to include Oswego in his estate plans. His gift will benefit the music department, the "Doc" Soluri Memorial Scholarship Fund and the Oswego Alumni Association.

Levine has been volunteering at Reunion for more than 15 years and serves on the Oswego Alumni Association Board of Directors.

"We're all a big puzzle and some of our pieces are bigger than others," he says. "Oswego is a big piece of me." ●

'Seat for Pete' Honors Friend's Life

One Oswego alumnus was struck down at a young age, but his memory lives on at the Oswego State Campus Center. **Peter J. "Pete" Scott '81**, who passed away in January 1992 at the age of 32, was remembered by a group of his friends who donated a seat in the Campus Center in his honor.

In early 1991, Pete was stricken with amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS), sometimes called Lou Gehrig's disease, which had also taken his father's life. His friends say he bore the burden with the grace and humor that was his trademark.

"We were truly fortunate to have known Pete and still miss him terribly," wrote **Carol Hahn Patterson '82** on behalf of the group of friends. She said that Pete's memory lives on through each of his friends. "It is fairly common for a flurry of e-mails or phone calls to erupt over someone's sudden recollection of a 'Pete Story' — which is often followed by many further 'interpretations' of the particular event."

Visitors to the Campus Center and hockey fans will be able to see the friends' testament to Pete's life with his name engraved on a seat in the arena.

For more information about naming a Campus Center seat, contact **Joy Westerberg Knopp '92** in the Office of University Development, 315-312-3003 or e-mail knopp@oswego.edu. ●



Peter J. "Pete" Scott '81, gathered with a group of friends at "The Stands" during Reunion 1990. From left are **Drew Sobel '81**, **Arthur Saltzman '80**, **Ken Fund '80** (in back), **Kevin Wichter '80**, **Steve Corbett '80**, **Pete Scott '81**, **Steve Cafiero '80**, **Dave Caldwell '80** and **Dave Stulir '80**.

French 'confident in college leadership'

More than 40 years after climbing the steps of Sheldon Hall to attend classes, **Gileen Widmer French '65** found herself in familiar surroundings on a summer visit to the "friendly college by the lake."

French returned to campus on an admissions visit with her niece **Ruth Brass '10**. She encountered informative admissions personnel and engaging campus staff to welcome her back to campus. These encounters reminded French of the excellent education she received at Oswego provided by caring faculty and staff. It launched her on a 33-year teaching career that she "loved."



Gileen Widmer French '65

So she has remembered Oswego in her will, setting up an endowment to fund a scholarship for a student interested in teaching.

French describes her inspiration for giving back to Oswego as a tremendous confidence in President Deborah F. Stanley's leadership. "I see Oswego going forward as one of the prime universities in the state and I wanted to be part of it."

Her gift is her way of "giving thanks to Oswego and encouraging others." She wants to help provide recognition for her alma mater and a margin of excellence for her niece Ruth and her fellow students. ●