

## **Alumna creates fund for classified staff**

by **Barbara Beuscher - Friday, March 06, 2009**

<http://www.uwosh.edu/today/1749/alumna-creates-fund-for-classified-staff/>

“Jumpstart to a dream” — that is how Annette Blanchette '60, describes the Sally Margis Classified Staff Professional Development Fund, which Blanchette established to provide professional development opportunities for Classified Staff at the University of Wisconsin Oshkosh.

Blanchette named the UW Oshkosh fund after Margis, who served UWO in many capacities as a member of the classified staff. Margis began her career in the history department in 1972, worked in the Graduate School Office, College of Business and, finally, as a clerical assistant in the geology department.

Margis went on to work at UW-River Falls, serving 10 years as secretary to the chancellor. She lost her battle with cancer in 1998.

“We all have dreams. One of mine is provide resources that will enable people to work towards realizing their own dreams,” said Blanchette, a retired UW-River Falls classified staff member. “I love watching people grow and fulfill their potential. That’s what the Sally Margis Fund is all about.”

The Classified Staff Advisory Council is accepting applications for the Sally Margis Classified Staff Professional Development Fund, which can be used toward a class, textbooks and other expenses related to training or workshops. The deadline is April 10.

For more information, visit [www.uwosh.edu/csac/assets/csac/grants/sallymargis.php](http://www.uwosh.edu/csac/assets/csac/grants/sallymargis.php).

Blanchette also established a similar fund at UW-River Falls.

### **Remembering Sally**

Bill Mode, a geology professor at UW Oshkosh, and Margis both arrived in the geology department in fall 1981.

“The combination of her clerical skills, knowledge of how the University ran and patience —mostly the latter; she raised three boys and a girl — helped me keep my head above water those first three years,” Mode said.

Ellen Lloyd, College of Letters and Science dean assistant, also has fond memories of working with Margis.

“Sally was a very kind person with a great sense of humor; the type who believed the glass was always half full,” Lloyd said. “She quietly accepted whatever circumstances were handed her, meeting challenges head on with wisdom and dignity. She also was the spark that livened up any occasion.”

## **Coming back, giving back**

Blanchette is well known at UWO, and not just because she earned a bachelor's degree in English there. During a visit in October, she met with Chancellor Richard H. Wells and representatives of Alumni Relations and the UW Oshkosh Foundation as well as the deans of College of Letters and Science, College of Education and Human Services and College of Nursing to discuss various funds she previously had established at the Foundation,

Those funds include the Roy Dixon-Robinson Scholarship (psychology), Nevin James Writing Award, Burton Karges Memorial (geology), Irene L. Blanchette Sophomore Achievement Award (COEHS) and Irene L. Blanchette Nursing Award. However, the highlight of her visit was a meeting with the Classified Staff Advisory Council (CSAC), where she announced the creation the Sally Margis Classified Staff Professional Development Fund.

“We are honored that Annette has chosen to set up this fund to benefit Classified Staff at UW Oshkosh. Her dedication to helping others is both impressive and inspiring,” said Jane Preder, CSAC vice chair. “The grants generated from this fund will help one or more employees each year with costs associated with education, training or workshops.”

Blanchette will present the award at UWO's Classified Staff Development Day in June.

*Barbara Beuscher, College of Letters and Science director of development and UW Oshkosh Foundation planned giving specialist. Pictured: Annette Blanchette meets with the Classified Staff Advisory Council at UW Oshkosh.*