



# The Thomas H. Perkins Legacy Society

Spring 2010

## More than one way to give

For couple, volunteering and giving financially are both worthwhile investments



*Claretta and Wallace Kountze*

Wallace Kountze can't remember exactly how Perkins School for the Blind first came to his attention. But when it did, it "came with a bang."

"We volunteered two or three times and we were hooked," he remembered, smiling.

Since those initial experiences, Kountze and his wife Claretta of Medford have returned to Perkins for several years, giving their time to help with last fall's ground-breaking ceremony for the Lower School project, preparing mailings, making thank-you calls to donors and more.

Each volunteer activity was a

new opportunity to learn more about the difference Perkins makes here and around the world. Each visit solidified their confidence that this institution was the right place to give of their time.

"We feel this is a very, very impressive organization," said Claretta. "The fact it is global and reaching out to so many is really important."

But before long, the couple decided they wanted to do even more. They have since made several annual gifts and have also provided for Perkins via their will. Supporting the right organization financially was always something they had hoped to do, they said.

"Perkins has a lot of integrity," said Wallace Kountze. "It's very important that those of us who can make a contribution, financial or otherwise, do so because these are very trying times for nonprofits in particular."

Learning about places like the school's Assistive Device Center, a workshop where staff design and construct chairs and other tools to help students cope with disabilities in the classroom and at home is an "awakening" experience, he added.

"You look at things a little differently when you come here and see some of the wonderful things that are here for children who have hearing loss and vision loss and other disabilities," he said.

As the years at Perkins have gone by, their volunteer experiences have assured the Kountzes that this institution is a place where their time and financial gifts are a beneficial investment for everyone involved.

"I'm just delighted that I've been able to be a small part of this, and I hope we'll be able to continue," said Claretta Kountze.

"I'll be a part of Perkins as long as they want me," Wallace Kountze added.



*Whether rewinding audio book cassettes at the Braille & Talking Book Library, constructing a special chair for a student or cleaning toys in the preschool, volunteers' contributions are invaluable at Perkins.*

## Volunteer Services grows, adapts to students' changing needs

When Liz Hazen came to Perkins two and a half years ago in search of a rewarding volunteer opportunity, she wasn't sure what kind of work she was actually looking for.

"I had the feeling I wanted to work with kids," she said.

Since then, Hazen, a Belmont resident with a background in hospital administration, has made a habit of volunteering at Perkins multiple times per week, taking on a wide variety of jobs that allow her to work one-on-one with students. She has spent hours in the pool assisting with swim classes; helped boys with their homework after school; worked with the track team; and played with children in the Infant/Toddler Program.

"I love it," she said. "I'm learning a lot. Having spent this time at Perkins, I wish I had been a

teacher. It's the best hours of my week."

Perkins' Volunteer Services has grown significantly over the last several years under the guidance of Director Mike Cataruzolo. Cataruzolo, who joined Perkins 50 years ago as a direct care provider before serving as the school's physical education director and then becoming certified as a volunteer administrator, remembers a very different volunteer program in the 1970s. Back then, most individuals who wanted to give of their time were asked to fill the school's primary need: reading aloud to students who were blind or visually impaired in the classroom or during homework time.

"Those volunteers were needed to do the things that kids now can do on the computer," Cataruzolo said.

The shift in programming is due to a variety of reasons: a changing student population with different levels of abilities and needs, the increased use of technology in classrooms and cottages, and a bigger Volunteer Services. Today, as Hazen has experienced first hand, there's a place for volunteers just about everywhere at Perkins.

"Volunteers add to the total package Perkins offers," said Cataruzolo. "We use volunteers to meet the needs of students in recreation, academically, and to be companions to students. It adds another pair of hands, and it reminds the student receiving the assistance that they are special as well."

The value of volunteers also translates financially, he said. If the jobs currently filled by volunteers were instead handed to additional salaried employees, the school's costs would jump significantly. Volunteers willing to give of themselves and their time make so many more things possible in programs on a limited budget.

Such is the case with a student who leaves campus and travels to Bunker Hill Community College in Boston regularly to take a class.

"I have a volunteer who goes with him by cab, sits with him in class, and goes back with him from Bunker Hill," said Cataruzolo. "If you had a staff person doing that, you'd be taking away from another area of the school.

Individuals and corporations looking to get involved in their community have contributed to the growth of Perkins' Volunteer Services over the last several years – a shift that is just as rewarding to the school as it is to those who choose to give, Cataruzolo said.

"Could we survive without volunteers? Probably," he said. "Volunteers come to assist and add to a program that already exists. But would those programs be as high quality? I don't think so."

## From the Chair



Anyone who has spent time volunteering, at Perkins or elsewhere, knows this to be true: **Giving feels good.** Here, whether you volunteer weekly by helping students with their homework, or by making the occasional

thank-you phone call to donors, the gift of your time and your caring is immeasurable.

The same goes for planned financial gifts of any size to Perkins. Bequests – the bedrock of our endowment – are critical to ensuring our institution continues serving students and the community, here and around the world.

We are so grateful to those individuals who make Perkins a priority in their charitable giving. Some donors, like Wallace and Claretta Kountze, choose to give annual gifts and include Perkins in their estate plan. Others, like Rosetta Quimby, who bequeathed nearly \$1.4 million in unrestricted funds upon her passing, had never set foot on campus but chose to donate because her brother was a member of the 1938 graduating class.

While our donors' preferences and styles all differ, they all have one thing in common: our deepest gratitude.

If you would like to learn more about including Perkins in your charitable giving, please call the Gift Planning Office at 617-972-7680 or email [Alleather.Toure@Perkins.org](mailto:Alleather.Toure@Perkins.org).

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads "Charles Platt". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Charles Platt, Chair

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# Celebrate Perkins

## **BAA Boston Marathon**

Monday, April 19, 2010

## **Perkins Possibilities Gala**

Thursday, May 6, 2010

## **Graduation**

Thursday, June 18, 2010  
Dwight Hall

## **Vision 5K**

Sunday, June 20, 2010,

For more information, please visit [www.Perkins.org](http://www.Perkins.org), or contact Emily Goodman by phone at 617-972-7583 or by e-mail at [Emily.Goodman@Perkins.org](mailto:Emily.Goodman@Perkins.org)

## Not One Cent

With so many competing demands on financial resources, how do you also support charitable causes that are important to you? Here are a few tested and time-honored ways that cost you nothing now.

## Wills and Trusts

Estate gifts ensure that assets are distributed in the amounts you designate. Bequests from a will or trust provide an important source of financial support for the school without depleting assets during your lifetime.

## Retirement Assets

Designating the school as a full, partial or contingent beneficiary of your IRA, 401(k), 403(b), Keogh, or other qualified retirement plan is a tax-efficient way to include Perkins in your estate plan. Retirement assets are easily designated for charity on the beneficiary designation form. You may wish to consider leaving other assets to your heirs, such as cash or securities, which are not as highly taxed as IRAs or retirement plans.

## Life Insurance

Life insurance that is not needed by family members can be designated for Perkins. Simply list Perkins School for the Blind on the beneficiary designation form.

## Create an Endowed Fund

An endowed fund provides support in perpetuity to a Perkins program or department of your choice. An endowed fund may be established through a bequest in your estate plan. Endowed funds are invested as part of the school's permanent funds, and an annual income supports the area of your choice.

An outright gift of cash or long-term appreciated securities, a pledge, or additional gifts can also be made to your endowed fund at any time to honor or commemorate a loved one.