



BENJAMIN F. RAYMOND SOCIETY

THE STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK AT POTSDAM

Potsdam's planned gift donor recognition society is named for Benjamin F. Raymond, who made the first planned gift in the College's history. Individuals who have made provisions for Potsdam in their estate plans qualify for proud membership.

As you plan for your future, invest in Potsdam's.

Joy Anthony Douglass '56



"The intention of our gift was to bring teachers to campus who were music education role models. In addition to established clinicians, we wanted to include recent graduates from Crane, who were already showing excellence in teaching.

I observed the first visiting master teacher, a recent graduate, and was impressed with the skills and enthusiasm she brought to the students. This past year's master teacher was Shawn Hebert, a Crane graduate and now a high school music teacher. He said, "I wish that such a fund had existed

when I was in school. I would have loved to be able to pick the brain of someone currently working with high school students." Shawn also got to conduct Crane Chorus. Can you imagine the effect on him?

My husband, Chet, and I are pleased that this has become a reciprocal growth experience for both the students and the master teachers."

Shawn Hebert '94

2014 Joy Anthony Douglass '56 Visiting Master Teacher

"As a proud alumnus of The Crane School of Music, it was incredibly rewarding for me to serve as a guest clinician this past February. When planning the sessions, my main focus was to help developing music educators think about the way we develop musicianship, music literacy, and vocal technique in students. As I planned and worked up the five different sessions, I realized that having to articulate my philosophies really helped me to clarify some principles in my own mind. It has helped me to continue to grow as a teacher.



The two days I spent working with the Crane students were among the most rewarding of my professional life. The students were incredibly receptive and the faculty was very supportive. Joy and Chet Douglass have done a great service to the music education community."

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Potsdam

A photograph of Mike Rygel, Ph.D., sitting on a large, reddish-brown rock formation. He is wearing a light blue button-down shirt and light-colored pants, and is smiling at the camera. The background shows more of the layered rock structure.

A Conversation with Mike Rygel, Ph. D., Associate Professor of Geology

How did you decide to come and teach at Potsdam?

I earned a B.S. in geology from the University of Pittsburgh at Johnstown (UPJ), a primarily undergraduate public institution that is very much like SUNY Potsdam. I went on to earn a Ph.D. from Dalhousie University in Halifax, Nova Scotia in 2005. During my time at Dalhousie, my adviser was kind enough to give me time off to “try out” some career choices. I worked as an adjunct instructor to help cover a sabbatical at UPJ and as an intern for ChevronTexaco in their San Ramon, Calif., office. Both experiences were great, but I felt that my classical training (very focused on basic, field-based research) would make me successful at a small college. During my time as a post-doc at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, I applied only to primarily undergraduate schools. I got the offer from SUNY Potsdam and the rest is history.

How many years have you been on faculty at Potsdam?

The 2014-15 academic year will be my ninth year at SUNY Potsdam.

What do you enjoy the most about teaching?

It gives me the chance to help a young person toward a meaningful career. Students show up at college as 18 year olds and generally don't have a realistic plan for what they want to do for the rest of their lives. Through my role as teacher, academic adviser and research supervisor, I am able to help students realize their full potential. There is nothing more satisfying than seeing a former student go on to be successful and knowing that I helped give them the foundation that their success is built upon.

What has been the highlight of your career at Potsdam?

Probably field work with undergraduate research students during the summer of 2009. I was fully funded through a grant from the American Chemical Society's Petroleum Research Fund and was able to hire three students (Emily Stephan '11, Erin Sheldon '11 and Ryan Brink '11) with that grant and a fourth (Dan Slane '11) through our RSPO office. The students were a joy to be in the field with (eager, motivated, responsible, etc.) and were very good at collecting the data. They were able to present the results of their work at a Geological Society of America Meeting in Portland, Oregon that fall, partially via funding through the Title III grant.

Where was the best place you've ever taken our students for a field experience?

Although not the most exotic destination, one of the best field trips that I led was in advance of the 2010 Northeast Section Meeting of the Geological Society of America in Baltimore, MD. Through a combination of student government funding to the Geology Club and the geology department's endowed funds, we were able to leave two days early and take a field trip through the Valley and Ridge Province of Pennsylvania to see spectacular exposures of folded rocks, view the consequences of a runaway underground coal mine fire, and visit the Calvert Cliffs of Maryland to collect Miocene shark teeth. This trip stands out in my mind because a) so many students were shocked to learn that there was so much geologic diversity within a day's drive of Potsdam and b) that the “theoretical” things that they learned in the classroom were directly relevant to what they saw in the field.

How have donor gifts impacted you and what you are able to do at Potsdam?

Donor gifts have impacted me in several very important ways. Perhaps the most significant way is the Neil O'Brien Fund, which is an endowed account set up by Don '66 & Janet '67 Fiesinger to

support undergraduate research. This endowment helps to make student research possible by covering some of the basics like gas money, food, sample analyses, etc.

Donor gifts also profoundly impact our ability to take students to conferences and field trips. Students who do a research project and develop it to the point where it can be presented are able to travel and present their findings at the Northeastern Section Meeting of the Geological Society of America. This incredible opportunity is possible only because of our generous alumni.

Thank you for choosing to make your own gift. What led you to name the College as a beneficiary of your life insurance policy?

With two kids in daycare, my budget is stretched a bit too thin to give anything significant right now! But really, when my wife became pregnant with our first child we decided that it was time to start putting our financial affairs in order. Given that I spend 2-3 months every year doing field work in remote areas, I felt that it was important to make sure that my family would be taken care of if something happened to me. So, we each took

out a universal life policy that was a bit larger than what we needed and decided to give 25% of that amount back to schools that we had some affiliation with. When they effectively closed the geology department at UPJ a few years back, I decided that I would split funding equally between the geology departments at Dalhousie University and SUNY Potsdam.

My wife and I both went to primarily undergraduate institutions and value the quality educations that we got there. I came from a very modest background and put myself through college. I would not have been able to do this without affordable public education. I believe that these types of schools can provide an undergraduate education that is comparable or superior to private institutions and certainly superior to what you would get at a big, Ph.D.-granting institution. Growing the endowed funds at SUNY Potsdam will help us achieve this goal despite reductions in funding from the state.

How old were you at the time you made this decision?

I was 32. It was during my third year on faculty at Potsdam. Although that was not much time on

the job, it became clear to me (and hopefully to others!) that SUNY Potsdam was a good fit for me. This was one of those decisions that I just decided to make right then and there, rather than falling into the "I will do it next year" trap.

I made the decision to include SUNY Potsdam because I am willing to gamble that I will spend my career here. If that holds true, I will be able to spend my working years doing a job that I love. Beyond being intellectually and personally satisfying, my job provides me with a modest, but comfortable, income and allows me to live in a friendly and welcoming small town. This type of idyllic situation is only possible because of my job at SUNY Potsdam; it is only appropriate that I give back to the school when I have the means to.

What are you hoping your gift will accomplish someday?

I would like the funds to go toward field trips, whether they are in association with a class, a summer trip, or a conference. Seeing as much geology as you can in as many places as you can is an important part of one's undergraduate training. Having endowed funds to support this is important.



The Gift That Pays You!

A charitable gift annuity is a simple contract between you and the Potsdam College Foundation that may offer a tax-wise way to diversify your portfolio.

BENEFITS:

- Make a gift in support of Potsdam, plus . . .
- Receive guaranteed, quarterly lifetime payments for you, your spouse or other named individual backed by the assets of the Potsdam College Foundation
- Diversity in a portion of your portfolio with fixed income
- Potential increase in income you currently receive from select investments
- Immediate tax deduction for a portion of your gift
- Potential tax-free income
- Potential reduction or elimination of estate taxes

CRITERIA:

- Must be 60 years of age or older to receive payments
- Minimum gift of \$10,000 cash, securities or other property
- Subject to approval by Potsdam College Foundation

*Please note that some state regulations may prevent the Potsdam College Foundation from offering gift annuities to residents of certain states.

For additional information or gift illustration, please contact Jason N. Ladouceur '94, Director of Planned Giving at (315) 267-2123 or jason@potsdam.edu.

Potsdam Gift Annuity Rates*

Payment rates are based upon your age or the age(s) of your beneficiary(ies) at the start of quarterly payments.

Established at age(s)	Rate of annuity
60	4.4%
60/60 (two beneficiaries)	3.9%
65	4.7%
65/65 (two beneficiaries)	4.2%
70	5.1%
70/70 (two beneficiaries)	4.6%
75	5.8%
75/75 (two beneficiaries)	5.0%
80	6.8%
80/80 (two beneficiaries)	5.7%

**Subject to change and Potsdam College Foundation Board approval*

Who Should Receive Your IRA?

If you are considering a gift to Potsdam, you may want to list the College as the beneficiary of your Individual Retirement Account (IRA), or at least a portion of it.

IRAs are highly taxable (potentially over 60%) when passed to individuals upon your death. Your heirs may face double taxation on IRA assets due to both federal estate and income taxes. Rather than the federal government taking more than half of your IRA (designated to individuals), you can designate Potsdam as the beneficiary and 100% will be used as you direct to benefit the College.

If charitably inclined, the best assets to pass along to individuals are income tax-free assets such as cash, stocks and real estate.

Important to Note:

Your IRA is not governed by your Last Will and Testament. It is a separate asset that passes outside of probate. You must review your beneficiary designation form obtained from your IRA administrator.

Three ways to donate your retirement account to Potsdam:

1. List us as beneficiary and have your spouse sign a written waiver, if necessary.
2. Name us contingent beneficiary to your spouse.
3. Designate a specific amount for Potsdam and designate the remainder to your children.

Easiest Gift You Will Ever Make (sample bequest language)

"I give, devise and bequeath (specific dollar amount, percentage of estate, and/or residual beneficiary) to the Potsdam College Foundation, Inc., Federal Tax ID #23-7088021, for its general purposes."

*Specific named endowments, schools, departments, etc. may also be listed as gift designations.

SPECIFIC ASSETS TO CONSIDER:

- Retirement plan assets (often heavily taxed when passed on to individuals)
- Cash
- Securities
- Real estate
- Percentage of estate
- Residuary of estate

PROPER BENEFICIARY FOR ALL GIFTS:

Potsdam College Foundation, Inc.
44 Pierrepont Avenue
Potsdam, NY 13676
(315) 267-3053
Federal Tax ID #23-7088021

For gift projections, additional information or to notify us that you have already included Potsdam in your estate plans, please contact:

Jason N. Ladouceur '94
Director of Planned Giving
(315) 267-2123 or jason@potsdam.edu



BENJAMIN F. RAYMOND
Illustration by J. P. Manke

For more on the Benjamin F. Raymond Society or information featured in this issue please visit us at:

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