Civil Service Employees & Dependents Scholarship Program Fund
in Honor of Marjorie Beasley
Inaugurated 1984
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

BACKGROUND

In 1984, Civil Service employees founded the Civil Service Employees and Dependents Scholarship Fund to support the educational aspirations of Civil Service employees and their families. The initiative, led by Marjorie Beasley of the State Universities Civil Service Employee Advisory Committee with Judy Barker's assistance, aimed to provide financial aid to eligible individuals seeking an undergraduate degree. Early contributions to the fund included in-kind donations, helping to establish a strong base for the scholarship. The fund was supported by donations from active and retired Civil Service employees, the Secretariat, the Classified Employees Association, and the Fraternal Order of Police. Unique among state-supported land-grant universities, this program has become a source of pride for the University.

Marjorie Beasley dedicated her efforts to the advancement of the Civil Service System and its staff at the University, advocating for recognition and support within the University framework. She emphasized that while Civil Service Employees and their dependents might lack certain advantages when seeking financial support for undergraduate education, they were more than capable of succeeding academically and contributing positively to society. Mrs. Beasley's commitment was fundamental to the establishment of this distinctive scholarship fund.

The fund-raising initiatives were handled by representatives from the State of Illinois Civil Service Employee Advisory Committee (EAC), initially led by Marjorie Beasley, and then followed by Marcia Miller and her daughter's Amy and Jennifer. Changes within the structure of the University's Athletics Division later altered how fund-raising efforts moved forward.

Among notable fundraising events was their participation in the first Farm Aid where despite challenging weather conditions and logistical underestimations, volunteers put forth great effort to support the Scholarship Fund, which included managing a concession stand through a 20-hour workday. Other fundraising activities by the Advisory Committee involved operating concession stands at Illinois football and basketball home games, as well as local events where EAC members served as guest bartenders, all contributing to the growth of the fund.

Thanks to these collective efforts, the scholarship fund swiftly reached a level where an endowment could be established with the University of Illinois Foundation, allowing for the first application cycle to commence in 1984. Although Mrs. Beasley retired that year, she continued to support the Program until her passing in 1995. Her legacy, echoed in the work of the State Universities Civil Service EAC and supported by countless volunteers and donors, is celebrated by her family and continues to assist Civil Service Employees and their dependents now and into perpetuity.