The late Marilyn Stein (BA '55, education) of Denver generously bestowed $3.2 million of her estate to fund the arts and early childhood education programming at the University of Denver. This significant gift, which the University recently received, supports the creation of endowments for the Lamont School of Music, the Morgridge College of Education and the School of Art and Art History in the following ways:

$1.1 million will support the Lamont School of Music to fund materials, supplies and equipment that facilitate student learning and creativity in the performing arts. For instance, the endowment can fund the repair and replacement of musical instruments, such as percussion sets and pianos, which are heavily used on a daily basis.

$1.1 million will support the School of Art and Art History to fund materials that facilitate student learning and creativity in the visual arts. For example, this gift enables faculty to purchase a digitally programmable kiln for ceramics students, textbooks for art history students or darkroom equipment for photography students.

An additional $1 million will support the Morgridge College of Education’s Fisher Early Learning Center and fund student scholarships and speech therapists.

“Ms. Stein’s estate gift significantly increases our ability to serve and teach our students,” said Danny McIntosh, dean. “She was a long-time teacher for Denver Public Schools; it seems clear to me that because of her experiences as a teacher, Ms. Stein understood firsthand the financial hurdles facing educators. As the DU community mourns her passing, it’s wonderful that her estate gift creates a legacy at DU through which we can honor her lifelong passion for education and the arts.”
ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

Alumna Lands Job With Bernie Sanders Campaign

A state director for Bernie Sanders’ presidential campaign, alumna Dulce Saenz (BA ’11, political science) first discovered her voice in a public policy class taught by former Colorado Gov. Richard Lamm, co-director of DU’s Institute for Public Policy Studies.

The class was talking about immigration, and Saenz found many of the viewpoints—including Lamm’s—difficult to hear. So she mustered her courage and shared her thoughts: “The immigration system is broken, and there are families that are suffering because of it.”

Saenz’s views grew out of personal experience: Her family was directly affected by a broken immigration system that ultimately separated Saenz and her sister, also a DU student, from the rest of their family. That happened when, worried about Dulce’s father’s undocumented status, Saenz’s mother and youngest sister followed him to Cuidad Juarez, Mexico—then billed as the murder capital of the world.

“Especially during that time, I would feel guilty when I had the opportunity to go to dinner and be safe and comfortable” Saenz says. Read more...

FACULTY SPOTLIGHT

Professor Examines Human Behavior through Visual Perception

Human perception is keen. We can appraise an individual in the blink of an eye, and discern a group or a crowd at a glance. Our visual perception often guides our behavior, whether we know it or not.

Timothy Sweeny, assistant professor of psychology, studies visual perception, and in particular how neural and cognitive mechanisms shape what people see and hear. His goal is to understand how basic perceptual processes shape complex social and emotional behavior.

Sweeny and students in his Visual Perception, Emotion and Cognition Lab use behavioral and imaging methods to understand how the brain allows people to recognize faces and emotions quickly and how people subtly mimic the expressions of others in social interactions. Some of their current work focuses on how people see groups and how groups change the way people behave.

“In the same way that people see and evaluate the direction of a cloud of blowing snow, all at once, people can also see the gist of a crowd,” said Sweeny. “For example, in a fifth of a second, people can see a group of people and indicate where they are looking or how they feel, as an entire unit.”

“We’re finding that when people see emotional groups, they also tend to reproduce the facial expressions of the people in those groups. The big idea here is that we might be gaining insights into how people see and act in crowds,” he said. Read More...
Graduate Student Seeks Adventure in the Unknown

Some people discover their calling through trial and error, an accident, or revisiting something that had been previously overlooked. International and Intercultural Communication (IIC) graduate student Andrew Repp found his calling from a lifetime of globetrotting.

“I chose to study International and Intercultural Communication at DU after a three year tour with the U.S. Peace Corps in Azerbaijan,” said Repp. “My experiences there, especially with my amazing host family, solidified a lifelong curiosity in intercultural exchange that came from a childhood living around the world with my family.”

After packing up and moving from Chicago to St. Petersburg, Russia in 1999, Repp and his family lived there for four years while his father taught at a Lutheran seminary. His parents met in Moscow during an undergraduate study abroad program and speak near-fluent Russian which allowed for a more immersive experience for Repp and his family. Read More...

FEATURED EVENTS

OPEN-AIR CONCERT: July 17 and 31, 7:00 p.m. — Sixth Annual Carillon Summer Recital Series

Join us for a carillon concert at the Williams Carillon at the Ritchie Center, featuring DU carillonneur Carol Jickling Lens (July 17), and Carolyn Bolden, Denver (July 31). The best listening place to enjoy the free concert is in the courtyard at the south end of the Ritchie Center, which is located on the SW corner of Buchtel Blvd. and University Blvd. A carillon is a set of chromatically tuned stationary bells, usually hung in a tower and played from a keyboard. For updates, call the Lamont Concert Line's weekly recorded message at (303) 871-6412.