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Lifelong friendship leads to planned gift of \$1.5 million

By **Ann Ruppenthal**, Assistant Director of Media Relations

With no children or family to provide for, Paul and Lenore Richardson generously left their estate of \$1.5 million to Oakland University more than four years ago. Their bequest was a surprise since the couple had no direct contact with OU. Paul Richardson made this gift based on a lifelong friendship with his mentor, Harold Pryale, who also made a planned gift to OU in 1964 and who was a friend of OU benefactors Matilda and Alfred Wilson.

In 1929, at 18, Richardson left Iowa for Michigan with \$1.51 in his pocket. In a crowd of young men at the Baldwin Rubber Company in Pontiac, he landed a job working 10 hours a day, seven days a week. It was there he met Lenore whom he married in 1930.

Over the years, Richardson worked his way to vice president and met Pryale, president of Baldwin Rubber. Pryale Hall at OU is named in his honor.

Through his relationship with Pryale, Richardson realized the many benefits Oakland offered and he decided to make this lasting gift, according to Marguerite Meyer, a friend of Richardson and executor of his estate.

"Paul had bonds from World War II, which is where the money came from to give OU," Meyer said. "Harry (Pryale) encouraged Paul to leave his estate to Oakland University since he and Lenore had no children. He would've liked to have the money go toward scholarships or something that would help students."

The gift is a reminder of the importance of designations when planning gifts. In their will, the Richardsons did not designate how they wished their funds to be spent.

"We are grateful for the generosity of any gift we receive, and that is why we want to make sure the gift is used in a way that honors the donor," said Dennis Sheridan, director of planned giving at OU. "To be sure your gift is used the way you would like, it's important to talk with someone at the university or to designate the areas where you want to provide support."

For more information on donating to OU, visit the [Giving to OU](#) Web site.

SUMMARY

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