

UNC Pembroke Creates Martha Humphrey Beach Chair in Art

Pembroke -- the University of North Carolina at Pembroke recently completed agreements to establish the Martha Humphrey Beach Chair of Art.

The new position in the Art Department is expected to be filled with an outstanding teacher and artist. University officials said. It is the third distinguished professorship for UNCP.

Pembroke becomes the first of the 16 UNC campuses to receive matching funds for a distinguished professorship under a special initiative from the C.D. Spangler Foundation.

The \$500,000 endowment was launched by a contribution from Fairmont resident and 1962 UNCP graduate, Mrs. Martha Beach. The N.C. General Assembly contributed \$167,000 through its Board of Governors Distinguished Professors Endowment Trust Fund, and the Spangler Foundation contributed \$100,000.

For Mrs. Beach, a noted philanthropist in North Carolina, the UNCP Art Chair is her second contribution to a distinguished professorship at a UNC campus. She endowed UNC-Chapel Hill with the Berg-Beach Professorship in Community Social Work.

As a 40-year-old housewife and mother of two school-aged children, Mrs. Beach enrolled at Pembroke State College. After graduating with a teacher's certificate, she earned a Master in Social Work degree from Chapel Hill in 1972.

Born in Proctorville in 1917, Mrs. Beach nurtured a life-time habit of helping people that led to a career in social work and counseling. She officially retired this fall, closing her Fayetteville office.

"I have always loved people and loved helping them," she said in a recent interview. "I wanted to help them, not to do for them. My conception of social work is that of a behavior modifier who enables people to help themselves."

Funding higher education, Mrs. Beach reasons, helps people help themselves and others.

"The University has done so much for me and this county," Mrs. Beach said. "I don't think people appreciate it enough."

"I would like to pass that idea on to other people so that they can do this too," she said. "My mother always said, 'After you're dead and gone, all you've got is what you've given away.'"

The Spangler Foundation
C.D. Spangler, Jr. is president emeritus of UNC and a Charlotte businessman. The Spangler Foundation, through other initiatives, provided financial assistance for one of UNCP's other chairs. The William C. Friday Distinguished Professorship in Molecular Biology and Biochemistry.

With the funding of the Martha Humphrey Beach Chair in Art, UNCP becomes the first of the 16 UNCP campuses to qualify for matching funds under a new Spangler Foundation five-year program, which aims to create a total of 80 distinguished professorships.

"It makes me feel real good that Pembroke is the first to meet the requirements for a matching grant," Mr. Spangler said. "Pembroke was one of the first campuses I visited when I became president of the UNC system. It always had a special place in my heart."

The quality of higher education in North Carolina depends on a high

quality faculty. Mr. Spangler said in outlining the purpose of the Foundation's program.

"My family and I realize how important it is to have distinguished professors on our faculty," he said. "We want to do what we can to help, so we are funding chairs on all 16 UNC campuses. A university can only be as good as its faculty, and it is up to us, as individuals and as a state, to maintain and enhance our faculty."

Enhancing UNCP's Mission
The Martha Humphrey Beach Chair in Art will be filled by a newly faculty member for a five-year term with an option for a second five-year term. Then, the professorship must be awarded to another newly recruited faculty member.

UNCP Chancellor Joseph B. Oxendine praised Mrs. Beach for her gift and Mr. Spangler for his support of UNCP Pembroke.

"I am thrilled by this very generous gift from Mrs. Beach in support of our Art Department," Chancellor Oxendine said. "Although art was not her major area of study or her life's work, she has in many ways shown her great love for art on this campus. The endowed chair will enable us to reach the next level of excellence in that department."

"President Emeritus Spangler continues to contribute to this institution," he said. "I always felt that he had a special affection for UNCP Pembroke. In fact, we expect to cash in on his offer to support several additional endowed chairs."

With the new chair in art, UNCP will seek a professor to teach either art education, art history or work in the studio, said Paul Van Zandt, chair of the Art Department. With four full-time professors and two part-time instructors, the new position will add substantially to the department's pro-

grams, he said.

"This chair will enhance our mission as well as the mission of the institution as a whole," Mr. Van Zandt said. "We hope to add a talented professor with abilities we don't already have in the department. This should be someone who can do community outreach in our region."

"Mrs. Beach's generosity has far-reaching potential for us to improve our teaching ability and program development," he said.

Martha Humphrey Beach: A Lifetime of Helping Others

"I was 40 with two children in school and sweeping dust off the front porch of our house," Mrs. Martha Beach remembers of the morning she decided to go to college. "My husband was not well. I had a cracked tooth and had to hold the newspaper at arms length to read it."

"I was whistling a tune that was stuck in my head called 'Is That All There Is,'" she said. "A young girl in the neighborhood came by and said she was going to school at Pembroke. She said all you had to do was send your grades."

"Well, they couldn't find my grades at Orrum," Mrs. Beach said. "I told them to keep shakin' that dust because I'm going to college."

That Mrs. Beach is a progressive thinker may be an understatement. In 1958, women didn't work outside the home, in fact, it was frowned upon, she said.

"The merchants in downtown Fairmont bet on whether I would finish," she said. "I don't know if anyone won that bet. But I know I won."

She was able to pay tuition from grocery money and car pool with neighbors who supported one another through good times and bad. Mrs. Beach proved a capable student at the college, but the thing she is most

proud of is being elected Miss Congeniality by her classmates.

She graduated from Pembroke State College in 1962 with a teacher's certificate and a thirst for learning that would prove unquenchable.

Martha Humphrey Beach grew up in Proctorville in a well-to-do farming and business family. She remembers when the small south Robeson crossroads community had a bank and many stores.

Family fortunes fluctuated during hard times as blanks closed and prices for crops plummeted. A young Martha Humphrey never gave college a thought as an Orrum High School student. She married and settled into family life.

After graduating from college, Mrs. Beach, now the breadwinner of the family because of her husband's failing health, got her first job teaching in Sampson County. When an opening came up as a caseworker at the Robeson County office, she came home.

As a counselor, Mrs. Beach found her lifelong calling.

"I believe social workers are born not educated," she said. "My conception of a social worker is a behavior modifier who enables people to be successful... not a check writer."

"I always loved people and helping them, which should never be confused with doing for them," she said.

She also found helpful supervisors who encouraged her decision to enroll in the UNC School of Social Work. As a graduate student in Chapel Hill, Mrs. Beach's life took several turns as her husband died and her own health declined for a period.

But adversity was nothing new to the new graduate who began a career in child therapy at Cape Fear Valley Mental Health Center in Fayetteville. Later, she would take a job at Womack Army Medical Center that included a short stint in the emergency room as a crisis counselor.

Always there was that "hunger for knowledge" as she describes it. Mrs. Beach continued her education in conferences and workshops with some of

the most respected and innovative psychologists in the nation including Masters and Johnson, Elizabeth Kubler-Ross, William Glasser and M. Scott Peck. She recently told a writer for UNC-Chapel Hill's alumni magazine that she continues to use self-hypnosis and recommended it to patients who suffer from common anxieties.

It is not surprising that a woman who started her professional career late in life should have a long and full career. Mrs. Beach closed her private practice this fall, some 40 years after that fateful morning sweeping the porch.

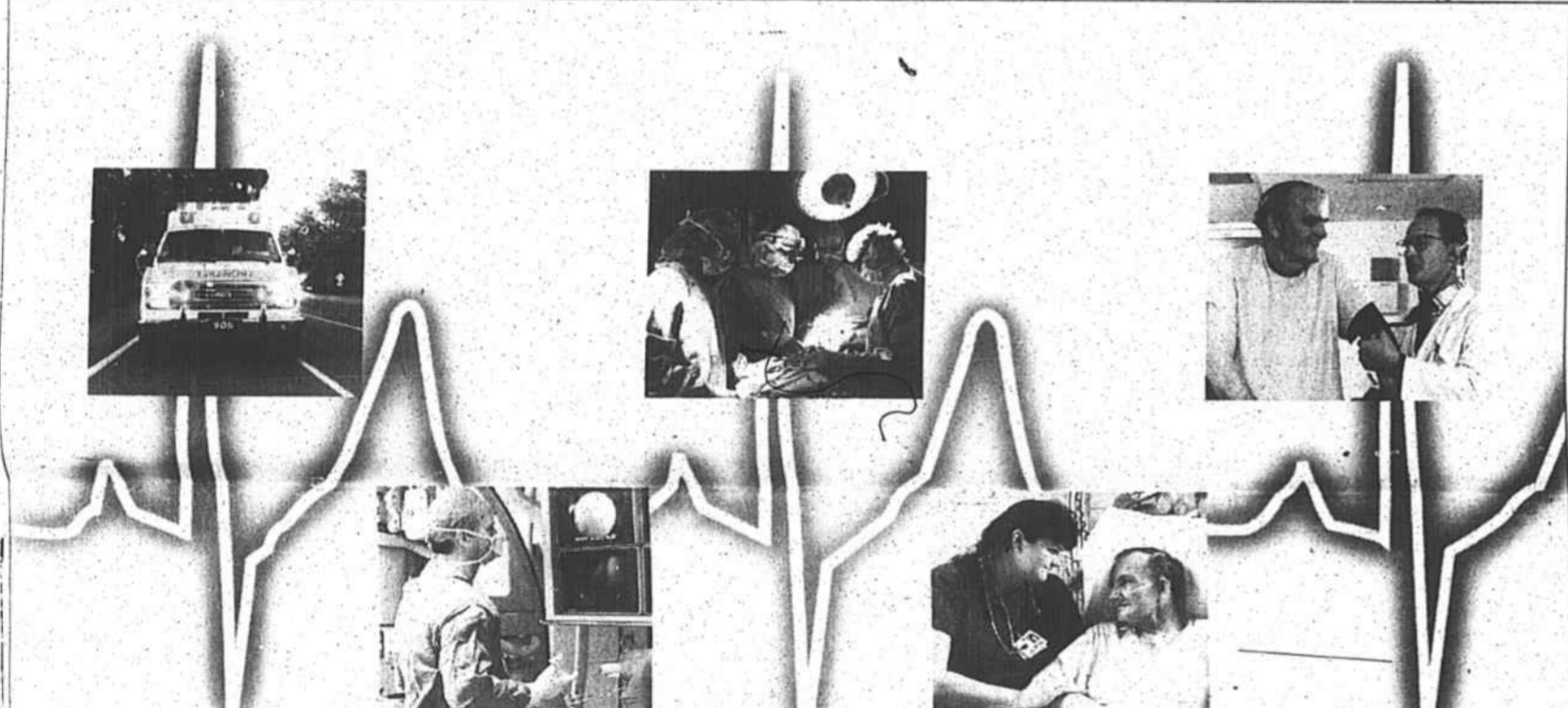
Also, it should be no surprise that a woman who spent her professional career helping people is one of North Carolina's celebrated philanthropists. A distinguished professorship of community social work at UNC-Chapel Hill bears her name. In a recent article for the Z. Smith Reynolds magazine entitled, "The Impulse to Give," Mrs. Beach listed among her favorite charities the Baptist Children's Home, Barium Spring Home for Children, the Salvation Army, Habitat for Humanity and her alma mater, UNC Pembroke.

A former UNCP Alumni Association president and Distinguished Alumna, Mrs. Beach has never forgotten her university.

"I am so grateful for the help Pembroke gave me," she said. "The University has done so much for the county. I don't believe people appreciated it enough."

"When they were considering changing the name of the University, they wrote this nice letter asking how I felt about it," Mrs. Beach said. "I said it doesn't matter what they call it, I'll love it just the same."

And love it she has done in a rare and dignified manner by funding the Martha Humphrey Beach Chair in Art. As a perpetual endowment and a fitting reminder of Mrs. Beach's lifetime of helping others, the new chair will help the community for a long time.



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