

New College of Education Hall Named

Written by Jane Nicholson, ASU News Bureau
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The Bryce and Izoria Gordon Gathering Hall will be one of the first areas faculty, students, staff and visitors will see in a new college of education building at Appalachian State University to be occupied next fall. The Gordons, both graduates of Appalachian, had long-time teaching careers in Forsyth County.

The gathering hall will be located on the building's first floor. With a seating capacity up to 300, the hall will provide meeting space for receptions, conferences, workshops and catered events, and can be configured into three smaller classroom areas.

Bryce Gordon, who died in August, earned a bachelor's degree from Appalachian in 1949 and a master's degree in 1950. Izoria Gordon graduated in 1949. She resides in Winston-Salem.

Bryce Gordon taught at the high school level early in his career, but found he preferred teaching younger grades after he was asked to fill in for a sixth-grade teacher for a year. Much of his career was devoted to serving as a teacher and assistant principal at the elementary level.

Izoria Gordon taught grades 3-7. She was widely recognized as an outstanding teacher and was known for her planning and teaching skills.

In 2003, the couple was recognized for their accomplishments as teachers with induction into Rhododendron Society, which honors alumni who have made exemplary contributions to the field of education.

"Bryce and Izoria have spent their lives bringing people together, particularly students, and providing support to them. It's fitting that we name this highly visible space in the new college of education building in their honor," said Dr. Charles Duke, dean of the Reich College of Education. "The Bryce and Izoria Gordon Gathering Hall will be used by a variety of groups to promote professional development, which the Gordons supported."

The couple's philanthropic focus over the years has been to assist future teachers enrolled in the Reich College of Education, as well as the college's ACCESS Scholarship for prospective teachers, which supplements students' financial aid and other forms of financial assistance to cover the entire cost of attending Appalachian.

"This is our legacy, helping to mold the teachers of tomorrow, and truly the highest and best use I can think of for our funds," Izoria Gordon said.

In interviews published prior to his death, Bryce Gordon said attending college changed his life.

The son of a sharecropper, Gordon recalled, "When I came here as a freshman in 1946, a friend bet me that I wouldn't last. I thought I would surely lose the bet. I had never had any real hope of attending college. No one encouraged me."

At Appalachian, Gordon said he met people who believed in him. "Professors who wanted me to

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succeed, people from all walks of life who inspired me to make something of myself.”