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## A Legacy of Laughter

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# University of Dayton, Ohio (url: <http://www.udayton.edu/index.php>)

(url:

<http://www.youtube.com/embed/2rD1wMpn8k?wmode=Opaque>)

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## A Legacy of Laughter

**02.15.2011 | Campus and Community, Education** As a University of Dayton student, humorist Erma Bombeck heard "three magic words" from an English professor: "You can write!"

Today, the family of Bro. Tom Price, S.M., the English professor who inspired Bombeck, is making sure other aspiring writers — including one in their own family — receive the same encouragement.

Doug and Tracy (Hamberg) Jones and Greg and Cara (Hamberg) Holdener have made a major gift to build upon a \$100,000 endowment their parents started in 2004 for the University of Dayton's Erma Bombeck Writers' Workshop. Their mother, Cindy Price Hamberg, who died in 2010, was Price's cousin. Their father, Ralph Hamberg, a 1956 alumnus, died in 2006.

"We feel very strongly about this workshop and want to see it continue," said Jones, of Cincinnati. "That's what our parents would want."

Her 19-year-old daughter, Megan, just finished writing her first book, and has received advice from novelist Sophronia Scott, who served on the workshop faculty, on how to break into the young adult fiction market.

The family's ties to the University of Dayton span generations. Holdener's daughter, Anna, recently received her acceptance letter and plans to enroll in the pre-med program in the fall.

"UD was always a large part of our lives," said Holdener, of Belleville, Ill. "My dad felt strongly that UD gave him a chance. Without his education, he never would have accomplished all he had in his lifetime. And my mom loved Erma Bombeck. She read all her books and loved her writing. We want to make sure what they started continues."

The Erma Bombeck Writers' Workshop is the only one in the country devoted to both humor and human interest writing. Through the workshop, the University of Dayton and the Bombeck family honor one of America's most celebrated storytellers and humorists. Over the past decade, the workshop has attracted such household names as Dave Barry, Phil Donahue, Art Buchwald, Nancy Cartwright, Don Novello, Garrison Keillor and Gail Collins.

The bi-annual workshop draws writers nationally and has sparked national attention. Last spring, Mo Rocca and a crew from CBS Sunday Morning with Charles Osgood interviewed the Bombeck family and writers at the workshop for a Mother's Day tribute to Erma Bombeck.

"It is our hope to build the workshop endowment to at least \$1 million to ensure that Erma's legacy lasts forever. We want students and writers to find inspiration here the same way she found the encouragement to write," said Matthew Dewald, director of the Erma Bombeck Writers' Workshop. "We are so grateful for the generosity of Bro. Tom Price's family — and for their belief in our mission."

Added Jones: "The workshop is very inspirational. I'm not a writer, and I get inspired. I can only imagine if writing were your passion, how inspired you'd be.

The next Erma Bombeck Writers' Workshop is slated for April 19-21, 2012. For more information, visit the workshop on its website or Facebook.

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