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Brother Elmer C. Lackner, S.M. 1907-1984

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DAYTON, Ohio, July 2, 1984 -- Brother Elmer C. Lackner, S.M., special assistant to the president of the University of Dayton and retired vice president for university relations, died today at the C. H. Gosiger Health Center on the campus. He was 77 and endured a long battle with emphysema.

Known as "Mr. UD," Brother Lackner was awarded a special citation by the University's Board of Trustees at the time of his official retirement in 1972 for his long and dedicated service to the University of Dayton. He continued to work in fund raising activities until this past fall.

During his 43 years of continuous service to the University of Dayton, Brother Lackner held the positions of teacher, dean, registrar, director of evening classes, director of public relations, director of development and alumni affairs, assistant to the president, vice president for university relations, and special assistant to the president. He served on virtually every major council of the University during his career and was a part of most major decisions during the administrations of Reverend Andrew L. Seebold, S.M., and Reverend Raymond A. Roesch, S.M. He worked with seven UD presidents at various times in his long career, most recently as special assistant to UD President Brother Raymond L. Fitz, S.M.

As early as 1960, Brother Lackner anticipated the development of an area state university "in the next 10 years" and predicted a shift in UD enrollment from commuting to resident students. He identified the need for facilities to
accommodate a rapidly growing, resident student population and helped map plans for such facilities. He was the key figure in bringing organized development, fund raising, and alumni relations to the University in the early 1950s through the early 1970s as the means to build such facilities.

Brother Lackner organized four major fund raising campaigns for the University which resulted in the construction of Founders Hall, Sherman Hall, Wohlleben Hall, Kennedy Union, Miriam Hall, C. H. Gosiger Health Center, and the Eugene W. Kettering Engineering and Research Laboratories. Three residence halls were also built during this time with governmental loans. He developed endowment funds to support the ongoing costs of new facilities as well. The natatorium in the UD Physical Activities Center is named for Brother Elmer Lackner in recognition of his efforts on behalf of the campus facilities.

But Brother Lackner's favorite projects were the 150 endowed scholarship funds he established with University benefactors for students of the University of Dayton. These funds serve hundreds of UD undergraduate students each year. One such scholarship is the Elmer C. Lackner, S.M. Scholarship Fund started in 1972 by a group of friends and generously supported by his family. It serves to commemorate the service and dedication of the devoted "Mr. UD."

In addition to establishing endowments for buildings and scholarships, Brother Lackner helped to initiate endowed faculty chairs. Funds accumulated for endowment are resources which are preserved through investments. Only the earned income of these investments is used to support University programs. Endowments provide a source of income which is stable, predictable, and permanent. Brother Lackner was very committed to raising such endowment funds.
Brother "Elmer," as he was known by his friends and fellow Marianists, came to Dayton from his native Pittsburgh in 1920 at age 13. He entered the Marianists at Mt. St. John (Bergamo) and made his first vows in 1924. He graduated from the University of Dayton in 1927 with a bachelor's degree in social studies. He received a master's degree in history from Western Reserve University (Cleveland) in 1941 and in 1976 was awarded an honorary doctorate by the University of Dayton.

Before beginning his career at UD in 1940, Brother Lackner taught at Marianist elementary and secondary schools in Baltimore, Detroit, Dayton, Mineola (Long Island, New York), and Cleveland.

Brother Lackner was asked in 1976 to list the highlights of his career at UD. He identified the close relationship developed with community leaders, the development of the campus facilities, and the growth of endowed scholarship funds for students.

Brother Elmer Lackner, S.M. is survived by three brothers and two sisters: William (of Virginia), Loretta, Dorothy, Gilbert, and Louis (all of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania).

Funeral arrangements are pending. Westbrock Funeral Home, 1712 Wayne Avenue, is in charge. Donations to the Elmer Lackner, S.M. Scholarship Fund are encouraged.

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Brother Elmer Lackner, S.M.
Funeral Arrangements

Visitation
Thursday, July 5
4 p.m. to 8 p.m.
UD Chapel of the Immaculate Conception

Mass of Christian Burial
Friday, July 6
11 a.m.
UD Chapel of the Immaculate Conception

Burial
Following Mass
Queen of Heaven Cemetery (Bergamo)