

Honoring The Legacy Of A Lifelong Educator

When his mother passed away in 2005, Gregg Wadley and his wife, Dr. Betsy Brackett, wanted to find a significant way to recognize Capitola “Cappi” Wadley’s lifelong connection to Northeastern State University. Not only had Cappi spent many years here (along with her husband, D.M. “Doc” Wadley, longtime NSU athletic director), but the 31-year teaching veteran was also noted for her philanthropy and a life interwoven with the tapestry of NSU and Tahlequah.

Last December, Gregg and Betsy announced a \$1 million gift to establish the Capitola “Cappi” Wadley Center for Reading and Technology on the Tahlequah campus, where young students overcome reading deficiencies and educators are prepared to help them learn to read. The milestone donation coincided with college administrators’ quest to find the best way to use the newly restored third floor of Bagley Hall, home to the College of Education. The gift will also be used to create two endowed chairs for Northeastern’s reading program.

“Reading is the common thread to educational success and lifelong fulfillment,” Gregg said. “Cappi knew how important reading was and how time-consuming and difficult it was to overcome reading deficiencies.”

She had spent a lifetime helping children and young adults receive an education. “We wanted to do something that would impact lives not only today, but would be monumental for generations to come, and something that Cappi would have loved and embraced,” he said.

Cappi’s dedication to her students through multiple roles – social worker, bus driver, teacher, cafeteria worker, coach, and friend – helped children develop the skills to survive in a complex world. “She was a tremendous woman and role model who earned a bachelor’s and two master’s degrees while trying to raise a family,” said Betsy.

“For years it has been our goal to ‘raise the roof’ at the College of Education, both in terms of bricks and mortar and expanding programs,” said Dr. Kay Grant, dean of the college. “The generosity of Gregg Wadley and Dr. Betsy Brackett has made it possible for us to meet our goals and continue the momentum at our reading clinic on the Broken Arrow campus. We are honored to be chosen as a way to perpetuate the memory of Cappi Wadley and her dedication to improving the lives of children.”



CAPPI WADLEY