

## First annual Marian Davenport Wynalda Teaching and Learning Institute a success

“Education was the center of their lives.” “Through this gift we hope to capture the spirit of Aunt Mame, a truly remarkable woman.” These words were spoken by Kathy Sneden, niece of Marian Davenport Wynalda and a Davenport University trustee, at the first annual Marian Davenport Wynalda Teaching and Learning Institute.

Wynalda was the daughter of M.E. and Mabel (Engle) Davenport. She grew up with what is now Davenport University at the center of her life. She and her sister, Margaret Davenport Sneden, and brother, Warren Davenport, all served the school in various capacities throughout their lives. Warren Davenport was killed in World War II and Warren Hall on the Grand Rapids campus was named in his memory.

The Marian Davenport Wynalda Teaching and Learning Institute was established in the spring of 2002 through a generous gift from the M.E. Davenport Foundation.

The focus of the institute is to ensure that the values and underlying philosophy that make Davenport University unique continue to be the foundation of learning. The University has always been devoted to making a difference in the lives of students by providing them opportunities to learn, develop skills for making a living, and give back to their communities.



**I. to r.) Cousins Kathy Sneden, Warren Wynalda, John Wynalda, Barbara Wynalda Southwell, and Anne Wynalda-Swink enjoy the evening together.**

Faculty repeatedly commented on the value of the group activities and the use of video clips of actual DU students. “The breakout sessions were wonderful because it provided an opportunity to share ‘best practices’ with other instructors.”

Throughout the years, it has always been the faculty who have been the greatest influence in the lives of the students.

“You are the chargers and energizers of the next generation,” commented Robert L. Funaro, Ed.D., executive vice president for academics and provost, at the opening of the institute.

He went on to remind the 150 faculty, department coordinators, division chairs, and academic deans, “You are the key to the quality delivery of the new curriculum.”

Those in attendance at the inaugural conference participated in a presentation on “Promoting Student Excellence in the Classroom: Creating the Environment to Motivate Student Learning.” The presenters, Ruth Small, Ph.D., and Marilyn Arnone, Ph.D., are nationally known experts in the field of student motivation from Syracuse University.

Video of current students commenting on how they learn and what they like in a classroom was taken prior to the conference. Clips were shown throughout the presentation, eliciting positive comments. “The meshed film clips of student interviews (were) very effective.” “Video was a great idea!”

Michael Wambach, director of faculty development, stated, “Participants left with a deeper understanding of the underlying concepts of student motivational theory and ideas for implementing the concepts in the classroom...”

Sneden said that she hoped the faculty left each conference “revved up and ready to go.”

In the words of one faculty member, “A big thank you to the Wynalda/Davenport family — this is a gift that keeps on giving.”



**Deanne Cranford (left) and Cynthia Ash share the motivation techniques from their group.**



**(l. to r.) Michael Wambach, Marilyn Arnone, Ph.D., and Ruth Small, Ph.D. take a break from the presentation.**