

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**First Endowment Fund that Supports Students Created by Son of Long-time Peoria Riverfront Museum Volunteer**

The Mary Jean Bowman Student Endowment Fund will support Peoria Public School Lincoln K-8 School's participation in the museum's Every Student Initiative program.

PEORIA, Ill. – Today, Feb. 4, on the anniversary of longtime volunteer Mary Jean Bowman's birthday, Peoria Riverfront Museum announces the first endowment fund created to support elementary school students. Bowman's son, Andrew Wayne Bowman and his wife Dana Marie, along with the Mary Jean Bowman estate, committed \$70,000 to the Peoria Riverfront Museum for the creation of an educational endowment fund honoring his late mother.

The Mary Jean Bowman Student Endowment Fund will support Peoria Public School Lincoln K-8 School's participation in the museum's Every Student Initiative program. The late museum supporter and volunteer, who passed in 2021 at the age of 92, took a special interest in Lincoln School.

Never one to miss an exhibition, Bowman could be seen at every Art Club and event she was able to attend. She was a pioneer in establishing the senior morning program and was an early advocate for student involvement 30 years ago at the museum's predecessor, Lakeview Museum.

"Mary Jean was one of the giants of museum inspiration in the history of central Illinois. Her involvement spanned more than five decades. She ranks among the greatest donors and volunteers in our museum's history and her spirit will live on," said John D. Morris, Peoria Riverfront Museum president and CEO.

"When she was young, Mary Jean recalled the great museums in New York and elsewhere as a source of personal inspiration that stayed with her for life. She believed in giving that same feeling to everyone, especially the youngest students and the oldest learners of our community," said Morris.

About Peoria Riverfront Museum's Every Student Initiative

The Every Student Initiative (ESI) vision is to engage every student from every public, private and homeschool organization in Central Illinois with a curricula-inspired visit to the Peoria Riverfront Museum every year. Since its inception in 2017, ESI has provided more than 50,000 museum experiences at no cost to students. To learn more about Peoria Riverfront Museum's field trips, visit RiverfrontMuseum.org.

Peoria Riverfront Museum

The only multidisciplinary museum of its kind in the nation, the Peoria Riverfront Museum uses art, science, history and achievement to inspire confidence, lifelong learning, and talent. Since opening in 2012, the privately funded museum has provided more than one million experiences through major exhibitions, a permanent collection, interactive galleries, a dome planetarium, giant screen theater and educational programming including curricula-related student visits. The AAM-accredited, Smithsonian-affiliated private nonprofit museum is supported by more than 4,000 members and donors, and is housed in a county-owned LEED Gold-certified building on a campus overlooking the Illinois River.

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