

# FRIEND OF PHILANTHROPY

## The Donald & Alice Noble Family



Don & Alice Noble



Dave & Gayle Noble

It all began when fourteen-year-old Donald Noble saw an auburn-haired girl at a church youth group celebration. Working his way around the room, young Don managed to plant himself next to Alice Jackson. Living on opposite sides of town, their meetings were few, but Don knew Alice was the most beautiful girl he had ever laid eyes on and would spend whatever time he could talking with her. Five years later, Alice invited Don and his sister to attend her high school commencement ceremony. Before the night was over, Don had asked Alice for their first date – to go ice-skating at Brookside Park pond. While their courtship was infrequent, as both were working and attending school, Don managed to win Alice’s hand and they married in 1939.

In 1941, when The Wooster Rubber Company (later known as Rubbermaid) was looking for a new accountant, a banker with National City suggested they contact Don. Don accepted the position, and he and Alice, who was expecting the couple’s first child, moved from Cleveland to Wooster. After joining Wooster Rubber as the assistant treasurer, Don moved up through the management ranks to become chairman and CEO, a position he held for 20 years.

Don and Alice became prominent figures in Wayne County’s philanthropic world. Most of their gifts were made anonymously or otherwise out of the spotlight.

But by establishing the Noble Foundation in 1990, they institutionalized the Noble Family’s commitment to the community they loved.

The scope of the Noble Family’s philanthropic activities reflects the leadership, creativity, judgment, and discipline that the Family has collectively brought to bear on local philanthropy. Whenever community needs arise, one or more members of the Noble family have invariably stepped in to help. Never passive in their philanthropy, they often identify unmet community needs and take the lead to create a community response.

While their contributions to Wayne County are many, by far the most visible acts of Don & Alice’s generosity can be seen in the Knights Field pool and the Alice Noble Ice Arena. Upon hearing about a city pool being built on the north side of Wooster, Alice wanted to provide something equivalent for the residents on the south side of town. She single-handedly raised the private donations necessary to build the Knights Field pool. The Alice Noble Ice Arena was long part of the Nobles’ vision for the community. Having had their first date ice skating, the couple shared a love of skating with their family – and wanted to share it with the community. Through the Noble Foundation, the couple paid all the costs associated with the \$5.4 million ice arena, and the Noble Foundation continues to support its operation.



Don Noble II, his wife Theresa, and their two children, Nicholas and Stephanie



Matthew and Leslie Noble with their children, Charlotte and James

Don and Alice Noble set a standard of community involvement and giving for their children and grandchildren. Their son David now heads the Noble Foundation. A hallmark of David's leadership has been his willingness to acquire vacant land and hold it for future community use. This is how Oak Hill Park, Dave's signature piece, was born. He was responsible for saving the Lorson House, and renovating it into a men's recovery program for STEPS. Concurring with his father's belief that the best philanthropy encourages self-help, particularly by promoting the creation of jobs and supporting economic development, David has used his land acquisition strategy for advancing the economic growth of Wayne County – purchasing farm land that has facilitated expansion of the LuK USA Wooster Plant and encouraging Daisy Brand to locate in Wayne County. He and his wife, Gayle, are major supporters of Central American Medical Outreach (CAMO), The Village Network, The College of Wooster, Wooster YMCA, Wayne College, STEPS, Wayne Center for the Arts, Wooster City Schools, and a host of other nonprofits. In addition, Gayle is a founding member of The Women's Fund Advisory Committee.

The third generation is just as involved and active in the community as Don and Alice were. Their grandson Donald II has served on a variety of nonprofit boards, led various fundraising events, has been an instrumental part of the Rails-to-Trails of Wayne County, and sits on the Board of Education for Triway Local School District. Along with his brother, Matthew, he

serves on the board of the Noble Foundation. Matthew works in financial services in Chicago and helps with investments for the Noble Foundation.

Don and Alice left a legacy of community service for future generations. Together, the Noble Family has enhanced the quality of life of Wayne County citizens with their participation in a wide range of projects and programs. They have set a standard of generosity that few can match.

In establishing the Friend of Philanthropy Award, the Wayne County Community Foundation wanted to recognize the difference that individuals can make through personal commitment and leadership, taking into account the impact such individuals have on our community, and the role that their creativity and advocacy can play in a project's success. Members of the Noble Family exemplify the very best of all these qualities, and have repeatedly shared them with the members of this community. We are forever grateful.

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*The Friend of Philanthropy Award was created to honor those who make a difference in our communities with their philanthropic activities – the giving of time, talent or treasure – for the betterment of the Wayne County area. It will be presented each year at Wayne County Community Foundation's Annual Dinner. For more details on the award and nomination process, please visit us online at [WayneCountyCommunityFoundation.org](http://WayneCountyCommunityFoundation.org) or call 330.262.3877.*